

**T.C.**  
**ANTALYA BİLİM UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION**  
**GLOBAL POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**  
**THESIS PROGRAM**

**TURKEY AS AN EMERGING MIDDLE POWER?**  
**AN ANALYSIS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY DURING**  
**JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY (2002-2018)**

**DISSERTATION**

**ALİM CENGİZ TOKAÇ**

**ANTALYA**

**2021**

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**ANTALYA**

**2021**

## APPROVAL/NOTIFICATION FORM

### ANTALYA BİLİM UNIVERSITY

#### INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

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Thesis Defense Date	: 04.11.2021	

## ÖZET

### TÜRKİYE BİR ORTA BÜYÜKLÜKTE GÜÇ MÜDÜR?

#### ADALET VE KALKINMA PARTİSİ DÖNEMİNDE TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASININ ANALİZİ (2002-2018)

Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplinde bir orta güç devletin tam tanımı, hali hazırda üzerinde bir fikir birliğinin olduğu bir tanım değildir. Aksine, orta güçlerin tanımı ve küresel siyasetteki davranışları, Uluslararası İlişkiler teorisyenleri arasında halen bazı fikir ayrılıklarının olduğu tartışmalı bir konudur. Bütün bu fikir ayrılıklarına rağmen, orta güç ülkeler iki şekilde sınıflandırılabilir: sert güç (veya askeri güç) kuvvetine, kabiliyetlerine, ve coğrafi ve jeopolitik konumları esas alınan birinci grup orta güç ülkeler, liderlik kapasitelerine veya dünya siyasetindeki olayları şekillendirme kabiliyetlerine bağlı olarak ikinci grup orta güçler. Giovanni Botero'nun tanımına göre orta güçler, başka devletlerden gelen herhangi bir ihtiyaç ya da desteğin yokluğunda kendi ayakları üzerinde duracak yeterli otorite ve güce sahip olan aktörlerdir. Orta güçlerin bu tanımından ve yukarıda bahsedilen birinci sınıflandırmadan hareketle, bu tez çalışmasının amacı yükselen bir orta güç olarak Türkiye'nin şu anki rolünü anlamaya çalışmaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, 2002 öncesi yıllarına da değinerek, Türkiye'nin Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Parti) hükümetleri dönemindeki dış politikası dört bölümde incelenmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Türkiye, orta büyüklükte güç, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, dış politika, uluslararası ilişkiler

## **ABSTRACT**

### **TURKEY AS AN EMERGING MIDDLE POWER?**

#### **AN ANALYSIS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY DURING JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY (2002-2018)**

The very definition of being a middle power state in the discipline of International Relations (IR) is not one on which there is already a consensus. Rather, it is a controversial topic about which there still exist some differences of opinion among IR theorists on the definition of middle powers and the way of their acts in the global politics. For all these disagreements, middle power countries can be classified in two ways: the first are those based on their strength of hard power (or military strength), capabilities, and their geographical and geopolitical positions, and the second are the ones that are based on having a leadership capacity or having the capability to shape events in the politics of world. For the definition of Giovanni Botero, middle power countries are actors having adequate strength and authority to stand on their legs in the absence of any support or need coming from other states. Based on this definition and the first classification of middle powers mentioned above, the aim of this thesis is to mainly attempt to understand Turkey's current role and place as a rising/emerging middle power. In line with this purpose, it collectively discusses the performances and the foreign policy of Turkey under four chapters after the Justice and Development Party (JDP) came to power in 2002, also touching upon the years of Turkey before 2002.

**Keywords:** Turkey, middle power, Justice and Development Party, foreign policy, international relations

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to my supervisor Assist. Prof. Murat KASAPSARAÇOĞLU for his invaluable support and assistance throughout my research. He has been a source of an irreplaceable academic assistance and intellectual support for my thesis. Without his guidance, this thesis could not be completed.

I would also like to express my special thanks to my family for their support throughout the process of my master study.

Last but not least, I would like to convey my thanks to Antalya Bilim University for offering the chance to fulfill a master's degree in Global Politics and International Relations.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANAP	: Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
ASALA	: Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia
ASEAN	: The Association of Southeastern Asian Nations
BRICS	: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
BSEC	: The Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CENTO	: Central Treaty Organization
DP	: Democrat Party
EEC	: European Economic Community
EC	: European Community
EOKA	: The Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston
EU	: European Union
FETÖ	: Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organization
FDI	: Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
IBSA	: India, Brazil and South Africa
IMF	: International Monetary Fund
IR	: International Relations
JDP	: Justice and Development Party
JP	: Justice Party
MENA	: Middle East North Africa
MINT	: Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGO	: Non-governmental Organizations
NSP	: National Salvation Party
OIC	: Organization of Islamic Cooperation
OPEC	: The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSCE	: The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PSI	: Proliferation Security Initiative
RPP	: Republican People's Party
SETA	: Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research
TAF	: Turkish Armed Forces
TOGG	: Turkey's Automobile Joint Venture Group Inc. (Türkiye'nin Otomobili Girişim Grubu Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş.)
TPAO	: Turkish Petroleum Corporation
TUA	: Turkish Space Agency (Türkiye Uzay Ajansı)
TBMM	: Turkish Grand National Assembly
TÜRKSAT	: Turkish Satellite
UK	: The United Kingdom
UN	: The United Nations
USA	: The United States of America
USD	: United States Dollar
WWI	: The First World War
WWII	: The Second World War
WTO	: World Trade Organization

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Ever since the first states were established, power for states has been a real measurement in their relations. To achieve it throughout history, states have had so many policies of their own that they follow. While some have tried to develop their economies with some practices like putting more attention to money in terms of economic power, others have tried to increase their population, believing that the more people they have, the stronger their nation or state will be. And some have invested a lot in armament and production, believing that what makes a state strong and powerful depends on its military power and local production, with which it is aimed to reduce the dependence on foreign sources. Out of all these criteria having been set by the states for centuries, economic power and military power have seemed to have come to the fore over years. Except for those powerful countries, there are also the group of countries called as middle powers as well as rising/emerging middle powers, which are below the powerful ones in many ways.

There are a wide variety of attributions to the concept of middle powers, but it is rare for Turkey to be labelled as a middle power.<sup>1</sup> However, now that one of criteria to be an emerging middle power is the capability of acting as a role model regionally and globally, and this is based on the quality of their economic development and democratization performance, such as South Korea<sup>2</sup>, which even has a less population than Turkey, then Turkey can be an emerging middle power with the developments in the last twenty years. Another justification of this study is that the exact definition of being a middle power is not one on which there is already a consensus in the literature. Rather, there still exist some differences of opinion among IR theorists both on the definition of middle powers and the way of their acts in the global politics. To put it another way, while

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<sup>1</sup> Emel Parlar Dal. Conceptualizing and Testing the ‘Emerging Regional Power’ of Turkey in the Shifting Global System. *Third World Quarterly*. 37:8, 2016, p. 1426.

<sup>2</sup> Ziya Öniş and Mustafa Kutlay. The Dynamics of Emerging Middle Power Influence in Regional and Global Governance: The Paradoxical Case of Turkey. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 71:2. 2016, p. 167.

there are plenty of studies on “*power over*”, this thesis study assumes that the literature lacks resources on “*power to*”. In other words, such factors as production, investments, energy resources and hard power capacity consisting of locally produced products are just as important for states to be labelled as a middle power as the diplomatic leverage. According to the positional approach, there is a hierarchy of states regarding their material sources of power. Here, power is degraded to the property of certain material resources. “In the positional approach, power is perceived very narrowly, not as an ability to assert one’s interests in resolving controversial issues in international politics, but as a proportion of the sum of the state’s material capacities in comparison to the capacities of other states”.<sup>3</sup> These capacities are sort of ones that can be quantifiable, such as the size of the territory, population, gross domestic product (GDP), military capacity, expenses of defense or available natural resources.<sup>4</sup> In addition to these, “measuring the capabilities of states involves examining their power in a number of areas: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence.”<sup>5</sup>

Speaking of power in the international relations between countries, one category of the power is the rising/emerging middle powers and regional powers. Defined as “rising powers” or “emerging powers” by some studies in the literature, rising/emerging middle power countries are generally defined as “the countries between developed and underdeveloped countries”. In time, some countries have become superpowers, whereas others have remained middle powers or they have aimed to be or become a middle power or a rising/emerging middle power, one of which is Turkey. However, as of 2002, when the industry 4.0 was started to talk and a new party called JDP, Turkey has had a new face with its technological and military investments and the policy it has followed, which has for the first time in its history paved the way for it to become both a middle and a regional power in its region in the near future.

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<sup>3</sup> Zdeněk Kríž and et al. 2019. The Middle Power Concept: Presenting a Complex Approach. *Politické Vedy*. [online]. 22:4, 2019, pp. 37-38.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Carr. Is Australia a middle power? A systemic Impact Approach. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 68:1, 2013, pp. 71-72.

<sup>5</sup> Robert W. Murray. Middlepowermanship and Canadian Grand Strategy in the 21st Century. *In Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* , 2013, p. 89.

This thesis is cognizant that there have been various attempts by IR theorists to make differentiation between the middle powers as “traditional” and “emerging” ones. It holds the view that, with its potential it has, Turkey should have so far been a strong middle power in the global arena of politics and a strong regional power in the geography and the geopolitical position in which it lies. However, Turkey is among the type of emerging middle powers today, which are also players in their regions, though it has taken remarkable steps towards being a strong middle and regional power especially in the last ten years or so. For all the diversities of the definition or identification of middle powers, middle powers can be classified in two ways: the first are those based on their strength of hard powers (or military strength), capabilities and their geographical and geopolitical positions. And the second are the ones that are based on having a leadership capacity or having the capability to shape events in the politics of world.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, as in the cited accounts of Daniel Flesher from T.V. Paul<sup>7</sup> on the preconditions of being a regional power in terms of having a balanced soft power compared to those of the USA, possession of necessary material and ideational power resources play an important role in the first group of middle power countries. With this in mind, Turkey has undeniable potential which it can use for its struggle to become a strong middle or regional power. And it has become one of the prominent regional powers in the region of Middle East North Africa (MENA) region, also regarded as one of the most promising “emerging powers” globally in both its economic potential and political clout.<sup>8</sup>

Particularly after the economic crisis of the year 2008 that had a huge impact on the economies of the countries around the globe and indicated that the economies of the world’s market are vulnerable to crashes<sup>9</sup>, Turkey wants to emerge as a middle power by taking some important steps like prospecting its own oil and gas, producing its own weapons by investing on its national defense industry and following intensive foreign policy strategies. Since Turkey has the necessary potential at its own disposal, it can be a

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<sup>6</sup> Meltem Müftüleri Baç. Middle power. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/middle-power>

<sup>7</sup> T.V. Paul. Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy. *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2005, p. 58.

<sup>8</sup> Rafał Wisniewski. “Military-Industrial Aspects of Turkish Defense Policy.” Nr.9. *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej*. 2015, p. 215.

<sup>9</sup> Gary Gorton. “Financial Crises.” Ten Years After Reflections on The Global Financial Crisis. *CFA Institute Research Foundation / BRIEF*. 2019, p. 6.

strong emerging middle power in its region and in the world. Considering these factors and the fact that the world is experiencing a time in which nation states are important, this thesis aims to give a contribution to the common definition of middle powers as “*having a leadership capacity or having the capability to shape events in the world politics*” in the literature from the perspective of the requirements of the first group mentioned above in terms of their strength of hard powers (or military strength), capabilities, and their geographical and geopolitical positions.

In chapter 2, a review in the literature will be carried out in order to be able to compare the definitions of the term that were made and given in the literature and the current emerging term in the discipline of IR. It gives a theoretical analysis of what is meant by the term “middle power”. As a term, middle power has been the kind of a subject which has been attributed different definitions and meanings.<sup>10</sup> This study adapts the term of middle power to the case of Turkey. In this regard, whether Turkey can be a middle power in its region and in the world politics in the sense of the political clout based upon its recent developments has been studied as the topic of this research paper. For the sake of justifying this, this study includes the developments in Turkey’s foreign policy in the direction of being or trying to be a strong middle power in the order of:

- theoretical analysis of middle power (Chapter 2)
- the years between 1923 and 2002 (Chapter 3)
- the years after 2002 (Chapter 4)

In Chapter 3, whether Turkey aspired to be or become a middle power during the years of 1923 and 2002 is discussed. Having been established as the continuation of the Ottoman Empire, which lasted for about six hundred years<sup>11</sup>, Turkey is a relatively young country in comparison to other powerful countries such as the United States of America (the USA), the Soviet Union<sup>12</sup> (Russia after 1991) and Germany. In this regard, this study

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<sup>10</sup> Hasan Basri Yalçın. 2012. “The Concept of “Middle Power” and the Recent Turkish Foreign Policy Activism.” *Afro Eurasian Studies*. 1:1, 2012, p. 198.

<sup>11</sup> The Ottoman Empire was founded in 1299 by Osman I. The state which he founded became the largest and the long lasting empire of the world and lasted until 1922, when the collapsed under the reign of Vahdettin, who was the last emperor of the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>12</sup> Having started with end of the Second World War in 1945, which lasted for 6 years between the years 1939 and 1945, the Cold War period ended in 1991, the biggest result of which was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the foundation of the Russian Federation or Russia.



handles what counts for a country to become a middle power in certain perspectives and adapts it to the case of Turkey. As is known from the history very well, the world had two main powers, also called two superpowers, between the years 1945 and 1991, one of both being the USA and the other being the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the Soviet Union).<sup>13</sup> These two powers established their own blocs, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact. However, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the USA remained as the sole superpower until the economic crisis of the year 2008, since when the hegemony of the USA has been discussed widely and the world has been in a process of emerging a multipolar world.<sup>14</sup> There are some other states, apart from the USA, which, though not as superpowers, have been emerging as middle powers both in their region and in the world, or countries that can make an influence in international affairs with the mediation of alliances and some coalitions, which can also be called the states affecting the system.<sup>15</sup> Based on this this political atmosphere, whether the governments in Turkey before 2002 had such kind of policies as to follow in order to make Turkey a strong middle power.

In Chapter 4, which is the main and longest one of this study, the period after the year 2002 will be analyzed in the context of Turkish foreign policy in the direction of becoming a middle power with JDP governments. The reason why this period is assigned a special chapter is that Turkey has, for the first time in its history, had a long-lasting governance of a single party period and has leapt forward in the fields of investments in military and technology. Still ruling the country, JDP's foreign policies and diplomacy towards making Turkey a middle power in its region and around the globe are discussed. To touch upon the definitions of foreign policy and diplomacy respectively, foreign policy is mostly defined as the area of discipline which examines the policies that a state actor pursues towards another state or the international clout<sup>16</sup>. Diplomacy is, on the other hand, the way of state behaviours to protect its interests and identities by way

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<sup>13</sup>, Muzaffer Ercan Yılmaz. 2008. "The New World Order: An Outline of the Post-Cold War Era." Alternatives: *Turkish Journal of International Relations*. 7:4, 2008, p. 44.

<sup>14</sup> Sidra Khan and Qurat-ul-Ain. "Transition from Unipolar to A Multipolar World: Implications for Pakistan's Foreign Policy." *ISSRA Papers*. 2016, p. 150.

<sup>15</sup> Pedro Cezar Dutra Fonseca, Lucas de Oliveira Paes and André Moreira Cunha. "The Concept of Emerging Power in International Politics and Economy." *Brazilian Journal of Political Economy*. 36:1. 2016, p. 53.

<sup>16</sup> Evren Balta. Küresel Siyasete Giriş. Uluslararası İlişkilerde Kavramlar, Teoriler, Süreçler. *İletişim Yayınları*. 2018, p. 323.

of a representative in another state.<sup>17</sup> So, in addition to Turkey's foreign policy as an emerging middle and regional power both in the world politics and in its region, Turkey's potential, as one of the first group of middle powers above, to be a middle power, such as energy potential, geopolitical importance, military capacity, and economic situation, will be analyzed as subsections. While the main three categories are being analyzed, other sub-topics such as geopolitical importance, economic energy competence and military power because Turkey's geographical and geopolitical position<sup>18</sup>, the on-going and never-ending conflicts and wars in the Middle East, the energy battle in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Coronavirus or Covid19 which has been wreaking havoc in the world since the end of the year 2019 have become more of an issue for Turkey's role in becoming a middle power in its region.

With all these in mind, this thesis study mainly attempts to try to understand Turkey's role as a rising/emerging power from the perspective of the first classification with a comparison of the performances of Turkey between the years before and after JDP under four chapters. It also touches upon the leadership of Turkey both in the global and its regional politics. It aims to take a brief look at Turkey's potential to become a rising/emerging middle or regional power both in its region and in the world. In this respect, it will assume that Turkey was not a strong middle power until the early part of the twenty-first century, but JDP governments have taken the necessary steps towards making Turkey a middle power in the years following 2002, when they first came to power. This is not to say that Turkey, in all its parts and in the strict sense, literally became a middle power in this period, meaning that it needs a little more ground to cover in the direction of being a stronger middle or regional power. Turkey has come to achieve most of its requirements of becoming a middle power especially in the last decade. To achieve its goal, in another saying, Turkey has been doing well of late, but should take a few further steps in some fields, such as putting an end to be able extract its own underground sources and finalizing its totally locally produced military equipment of all kinds.

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<sup>17</sup> Bilal Karabulut. Uluslararası İlişkiler. Kavramlar-Teoriler-Kurumlar. *Bariş Kitabevi*. 2016, p. 75.

<sup>18</sup> Turkey is in one of the most strategically important regions of the world, due to which it has experienced hard days. For more detailed information on the strategic importance of Turkey, see: <http://www.turkeydiscoverthepotential.com/en/news/get/news-08-strategic-location>

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

#### 2.1 States With Their Power

Mostly used as a term by political scientists in order for some political actors to be influenced by others, power dates back to the period of Niccolò Machiavelli and Hans Morgenthau, who were and have still been called as political theorists. However, before them, power was recognized by Thucydides, who particularly believed in power and hegemony<sup>1</sup>. For the right place for the middle powers in the realm of international politics, it will be to the point to mention the other powers being both above the middle powers and below them. As the classifications of power, we can mention here about five categories briefly:

##### 2.1.1 Superpowers

This term, dating back to 1940s, has mostly been used for two states: the USA, and the Soviet Union. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the USA has remained the sole superpower until today. Along with the USA, with its latest improvements, China has started to be called a superpower by some recently. Especially after these pandemic days resulting from Coronavirus, it is alleged that these two countries will be the two superpowers with a fierce competition between them.

According to André Munro, a superpower is the kind of a state which cannot be disregarded in the international relations, and their cooperation is essential in finding solutions to problems.<sup>2</sup> From the perspective of realist scholars such as Hans Morgenthau<sup>3</sup> and neorealist scholars such as Kenneth Waltz<sup>4</sup>, the most deciding determinant is the number of superpowers in international politics.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Ned Lebow and Robert Kelly. Thucydides and hegemony: Athens and the United States. *Review of International Studies*. 2001, p. 606.

<sup>2</sup> André Munro. Superpower. *Political Science*. 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/superpower>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Hans-Morgenthau>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kenneth-N-Waltz>

### **2.1.2 Great Powers**

Some countries and states, with their powerful economies, political influences and strong cultures, may have great influence on others. These countries, in historical accounts in particular, are called great powers, examples of which can be seen today as France, Japan, Italy, Russia, China, the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany. Japan, for instance, is most appreciated for their industriousness, diligence and discipline as well as their admired leading role in technology, which evoke admiration among many people around the world. In a study in the literature, one of the characteristics of great powers is specified in terms of their hard power capacity, stating that the Great Powers, as well as their economic capacities, differ from others in terms of their military power, influence, and behaviours over other actors.<sup>5</sup>

### **2.1.3 Regional Powers**

While great powers may have their influences on other states or countries globally, some countries may have their influences on the countries or states in the region in which they lie in. So, they are mostly called as the states that try to put the other countries under their influence. To exemplify it, South Africa is a regional power in location in South Africa and Egypt is another regional power in North Africa. To give other examples, Indonesia, Brazil, South Korea, Turkey, Israel and Mexico can be called as regional powers. The ones that are in the same region are mostly in a competition with each other in getting hold of other weaker states with their strong power capacities.

Regional powers enjoy the necessary ability as well as their capacities to play a leading role for their neighbours.<sup>6</sup> There are still so many debates on the topic of being labelled as a “regional power” in the literature. In a study on Turkey’s being an emerging regional power, it is underlined that there are some obscurities regarding the framework of the concept of regional power studies, putting emphasis on the fact that the literature on regional powers is in need of further resources about the criteria of regional powers.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Monday. E. Dickson. Great Powers and the Quest for Hegemony in the Contemporary International System. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 6(6). 2019, p. 170.

<sup>6</sup>, Detlef Nolte. How to Compare Regional Powers: Analytical Concepts and Research Topics. *In Review of International Studies*. Vol. 36:4. 2010, p. 890.

<sup>7</sup> Emel Parlar Dal. Op. Cit. p. 1425.

#### **2.1.4 Middle Powers**

The subtle difference between middle powers and regional powers can be said to be difficult to distinguish, so they are sometimes used in IR without making discrimination. Having the likelihood of being likened to regional powers<sup>8</sup>, middle power countries play a part between the superpowers and great powers. The reason for this is the fact that they are not foreign-dependent or non-sovereign countries. Speaking of the middle powers, they have a place after superpowers and great powers and can have a power of their own to have an influence on the developments in the realm of IR. To have an idea when the term “middle power” was first used, we can go back to the times of Giovanni Botero, a philosopher from Italy of the seventeenth century. He gave the definition of middle powers countries as actors having adequate strength and authority to stand on their legs in the absence of any support or need coming from other states.<sup>9</sup> However, it was in the Paris Conference in 1815 that these states or actors were first categorized as middle powers by taking part in the conference. Today, we can talk about a middle power from the perspective of some characteristics that they are expected to have so as to be called a middle power: its population, its economy, its hard power and geopolitical place on the geographical map of the world.

#### **2.1.5 Small States / Small Powers**

As can be understood by the word “small”, these countries can be said to be “not big countries” or “countries not having power in IR”. In the literature, what is meant by the term “small” for small countries can be uncertain. For some in IR, these countries can be the countries that do not own the necessary potential of power, effect or influence, but have the incapability to maintain its security matters.<sup>10</sup> For instance, in a study by Yonsei University on the Iraq war and its implications for small states, how a small state can be affected by a hegemon.<sup>11</sup> In another study in the case of Nepal as a small state, a small state is defined a small state between two big countries, China and India, both of which

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 1426.

<sup>9</sup> Dong-Min Shin. A Critical Review of the Concept of Middle Power. E-International Relations. ISSN 2053-8626. 2015, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> This study on Turkey as a middle power regards the term “small powers” as such in terms of making a comparison between Turkey as a middle power and other small powers because the main focus of the study is not to go into details of being a small power or a small state.

<sup>11</sup> Hinnebusch, Raymond. The Iraq War and International Relations: Implications for Small States. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:3, 2006, p. 459.

are accepted as great powers.<sup>12</sup> The author considers Nepal as a small state in terms of its population, poor GDP and defense budget. In another study in the case of Finland, however, being a small state can mean a positive meaning.<sup>13</sup> The study also states that, though Finland has a limited military power, it is regarded as one of the leading countries in terms of its industry.

## **2.2 Middle Powers In Literature**

### **2.2.1 Place Of Middle Powers In International Politics**

Power is measured by territory, position on Earth, natural resources, population, GDP, hard power, nationalism, and patriotism. It is hard to define the term “power”, for which we can mention two main factors. One is that the way to define the concept of power is that the limitations in the definition are endless. The other is the efforts to make a definition in qualitative and quantitative factors.<sup>14</sup> In an article by Jeffrey Hart, among the three main approaches to the power measurement of IR, the approach of control over resources is the one which is commonly used and accepted.<sup>15</sup> This is one of the bases of this study in that Turkey has come a long way in becoming a strong emerging/rising power in the last ten years. As has been stated before, one of the two classifications of being a middle power for states is the one based on their strength of hard powers (or military strength), capabilities and their geographical and geopolitical positions, the other being the ones that are based on having a leadership capacity or having the capability to shape events in the politics of world. From the perspective of the second classification, states may change, but their long-term political aims and interests do not change.

There is a diversity of approaches to the definition or conceptualization of the term middle powers. That is why middle power concept has been leading the researchers or scholars in IR to controversies, disagreements or contradictions at an unignorable level, which is called “a definitional ambiguity” by some<sup>16</sup>. The definitions of the term can be

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<sup>12</sup> Dhruva Raj Adhikari. A Small State Between Two Major Powers: Nepal’s Foreign Policy Since 1816. *Journal of International Affairs*. Vol. 2, No. 1. 2018, p. 47.

<sup>13</sup> Christopher S. Browning. Smart and Salient? Rethinking Identity in the Small States Literature. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:4. 2006, p. 674.

<sup>14</sup> Elif Merve Dumankaya. Uluslararası İlişkiler ve “Güç” Kavramı. Trend Analizi. *Thinktech STM Teknoloji Düşünce Merkezi*. 2019, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey A. Hart. Three Approaches to the Measurement of Power in International Relations. *JSTOR. University of Wisconsin Press, International Organization*, Spring, 30:2. 1976, p. 289.

<sup>16</sup> Zdeněk Kríž and et al., Op. Cit., p.36.

quite problematic since they do not literally go between “great powers” and “small powers”<sup>17</sup>, are confused conceptually and contested theoretically<sup>18</sup>, and they do not have a clarity of conception. D. Nolte gives the definition of middle powers as: “*While traditional middle powers are, first and foremost, defined by their role in international politics, the new middle powers are, first of all, regional powers (or regional leaders) and, in addition, middle powers (with regard to their power resources) on a global scale. Justifying a special position in the international system using the middle power rhetoric represents a very important similarity between the set of traditional and emerging middle powers*”<sup>19</sup>. Another classification of middle powers in the aftermath of the Second World War (WWII) is: “*The middle powers were those states who had fought alongside the Great Power allies and who had made a demonstrable commitment to the war effort. Being a middle power was a function of relative military capabilities sufficient to warrant inclusion in the post war peace negotiations, but clearly not as significant when compared to overwhelming military resources of the great powers*”<sup>20</sup>. One of the confirmations about the definition of middle powers is that accepting Australia and Canada to be classified as middle powers causes a tendency among the scholars in the IR literature in the direction of giving a definition of middle powers as such.<sup>21</sup>

Another concept related with power is the balance of power. Balance of power is preventing one actor from gaining excessive power. Having several meanings, it basically aims to try to balance the current system. One of the definitions of it is the equally growing of the developed state actors at the expense of the state actors below them in terms of the power capacity.<sup>22</sup> Another definition of the term is that the balance of power is an implication of the precondition to establish a balance of powers in order the peace and

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<sup>17</sup> Charles-Philippe David and Stéphane Roussel. “Middle Power Blues”: Canadian Policy and International Security after the Cold War, *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 28:1-2, 1998, p. 134.

<sup>18</sup> Allan Patience. Imagining Middle Powers, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 68:2, 2014,

<sup>19</sup> Detlef Nolte. How to Compare Regional Powers: Analytical Concepts and Research Topics. *In Review of International Studies*. Vol. 36:4. 2010, p. 890.

<sup>20</sup> Carl Ungerer. 2007. The “Middle Power” Concept in Australian Foreign Policy. *Australian Journal of Politics and History*: 53:4, 2007, p. 548.

<sup>21</sup> Zdeněk Kríž, Urban, Janaovská and Brajerčíková. Stanislava. Op. Cit., p.36.

<sup>22</sup> Randall L. Schweller. The Balance of Power in World Politics. *Politics: Oxford Research Encyclopedias*. 2018, p. 3.

order to be established and sustained in the international system.<sup>23</sup> In his article of balance of powers, Oğuzlu said:

“When the condition of balance has been established, states will not fight against each other and they will try to sustain and keep the current status quo. On the other hand, if the measurable material power capabilities of any country increase in a way that it breaks down the balance, other states will try to balance the given state, either through their own means or collaboration with each other.”

Upon delving into the literature, we can say that there exist multiple definitions of middle powers. As a definition, the word “middle” already means being neither “bottom” or “top”. To adapt this word to countries, we can say that middle power countries are those that are neither developed, strong or fully self-sufficient nor underdeveloped, weak or fully foreign-dependent. To speak of middle powers in general, they can be said to be those countries having a place between great powers and small powers.<sup>24</sup> However, we can see that there are limited number of studies which handle and categorize the concept of being a leader in regional status.<sup>25</sup>

We can see different approaches to the definitions of middle powers in literature, most of which focus on the term of middle powers from the perspective of their behaviours in international politics, their influence in their regions and seeking their status. Some define them those states as influential ones but not possessing the necessary economic and hard power competence or capacities the same as those of major powers<sup>26</sup>. Also underlining that it is not that much easy to say that a country is a middle power or not, Sandal gives the definition of middle powers as follows:

“I define middle powers as the countries that:  
-are among the most sizeable economies in their region;  
-have working democracies;  
-have claimed leadership or representation of a group of countries, or defined a policy niche area that is integrated to their foreign policy agenda.”

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<sup>23</sup> Tarık Oğuzlu. “Güçler Dengesi”, *Güvenlik Yazıları Serisi*, No.15, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Adam Chapnick. The Middle Power. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 7:2. 1999, p. 73.

<sup>25</sup> Emel Parlar Dal. Conceptualising and Testing the ‘Emerging Regional Power’ of Turkey In the Shifting International Order. *Third World Quarterly*. 37:8, p. 1426.

<sup>26</sup> Nükhet A. Sandal. Middle Powerhood as a Legitimation Strategy in the Developing World: The Cases of Brazil and Turkey. *International Politics*. 2014. 51, 696.



While there are some who think that there is a need to focus on the analysis of middle powers from the point of their behaviours of foreign policy owing to theorising middle powers intensely as a source in the literature<sup>27</sup>, there are others who focus on power resources of new or emerging middle powers, in which this study assumes Turkey is. D. Nolte states:

“While traditional middle powers are, first and foremost, defined by their role in international politics, the new middle powers are, first of all, regional powers (or regional leaders) and, in addition, middle powers (with regard to their power resources) on a global scale. Justifying a special position in the international system using the middle power rhetoric represents a very important similarity between the set of traditional and emerging middle powers.”<sup>28</sup>

Middle powers are a different category of countries, among which this study will accept that Turkey can be said to be as a rising/emerging nontraditional middle power with its recent capacities in different fields. It does not seem to be so easy to categorize those countries by treating them all the same, but one way of categorizing can be according to their hard power capacities<sup>29</sup>. Not all countries with, say, a trillion dollars of GDP are eligible to be recognized a typical middle power. In addition to middle power capacity, we also need other non-material factors to describe those countries as middle powers. It is a kind of an ideational role category. We can assume that there are super global powers, middle powers and small powers. Middle powers are assumed to act in a particular way in foreign policy. The consensus in the literature is that those countries define themselves in between small powers and superpowers not only in terms of their military power capacity but also their approaches in international politics. They are kind of those countries acting responsibly in that none of the global powers escalate one particular crisis to a level in which it will be impossible to escape its negative consequences, as in the Cold War years. If a war should occur between the USA Russia, they cannot stop at a particular moment. From the perspective of a middle power, such kind of a scenario would be catastrophic because they are the ones that will be affected

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<sup>27</sup> Moch Faisal Karim. Middle Power, Status-Seeking, And Role Conceptions: The Cases of Indonesia and South Korea. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 72 (4). 2018, p. 344.

<sup>28</sup> Detlef Nolte. Op. Cit. p. 890.

<sup>29</sup> Håkan Edström and Jacob Westberg. The Defense Strategies of Middle Powers: Competing for Security, Influence and Status in An Era of Unipolar Demise, *Comparative Strategy*, Routledge. 39:2, 2020, p. 180.

the most, so it is their responsibility to make sure that a global crisis will not escalate. Traditional middle powers are supportive of this international order. So, in terms of the principles, they believe that they are the constitutive elements of the liberal international order<sup>30</sup>. Many of them are happy with the liberal international order and have it in their countries. Many of them are members of NATO. Those that are not NATO members develop bilateral security relations with the USA, for example Japan, South Korea or Thailand. After the Cold War period had ended in the 1990s, we stepped into a new international environment. Even though there were a limited number of middle powers during the cold war period, the number of potential middle powers increased significantly<sup>31</sup>. The middle powers today have their own leadership goals and aspirations, thinking that they are entitled to play such kind of a role in their environment. Today we have two groups of middle powers: traditional ones and non-traditional ones. Such countries as Canada and New Zealand are traditional middle powers because they were also the same in the past. Nontraditional ones, like Iran, Brazil, India and Turkey, are predisposed to play assertive regional leadership roles in their environments. They tend to think that they are entitled to have a sphere of influence in their own environment<sup>32</sup>. Traditional middle powers are categorically against the idea of sphere of influence, but regional hegemons like Turkey is quite receptive of this sphere of influence mentality. In a particular sense, there is a huge difference between traditional and nontraditional middle powers.

It is not easy to say that neither traditional or nontraditional powers are important in the present environment because it is known that the USA and China, called as G2 by some, are acting as two global powers in a commanding position in today's global environment, particularly with the outbreak of Covid19, after which a new world order led by the USA and China is said to be established and nothing will be the same as it was. For some, middle powers are not important, but the USA and China are important. Whether they are in conflict with each other or share the same points, these two determine

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<sup>30</sup> Eduard Jordaan. The Concept of a Middle Power in International Relations: Distinguishing between Emerging and Traditional Middle Powers. *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies*, 30:1, 2003, p. 168.

<sup>31</sup> Eduard Jordaan. The Emerging Middle Power Concept: Time to Say Goodbye?, *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 24:3, 2017, p. 396.

<sup>32</sup> Eduard Jordaan, Op. Cit., p. 175.

the future of the international global politics. On the other hand, there are some who say that the groups of countries like G-7, G-8 or G-20 must come together as a group of potential middle powers to find solutions to global problems.

### **2.2.2 Middle Power Organizations**

Today we can see some organizations consisting of middle powers. One of them is founded by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS). After the end of the Cold War with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, especially as of 2003 under the reign of the Presidency of George W. Bush, the USA followed a forceful policy by launching the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)<sup>33</sup>. Much as it received very little support at first, the followers of PSI increased with many countries from all over the world. Some traditional middle powers like Germany and Canada gave their supports to the new international liberal order led by the USA. In contrast to them, there were some other countries that were not as supportive and happy with the liberal international order as those traditional middle powers like Germany and Canada, and they had a very problematical approach to it since defining themselves as middle powers would negate and contradict themselves for their claims for regional leadership and hegemony. BRICS countries, or other group of countries like Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey (MINT) and India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA), are those that are not happy with the international liberal order which is led by the USA and they feel that they have something to voice in the international arena.

Formed by two giant powers, China and Russia, in 2006, though not called middle powers, BRICS, defining themselves somewhere in between global powers, is not a typical international organization like the European Union (EU). Russia and China compete with each other in terms of leading the organization, contrary to the Shanghai Corporation, which is led by China, so they still do not have a legal and institutional executive. Even though they are in struggle of doing so by holding summit meetings among themselves, they seem to be far away from being called an international

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<sup>33</sup> Cooper, David A. 2011. Challenging Contemporary Notions of Middle Power Influence: Implications of the Proliferation Security Initiative for “Middle Power Theory”. *Foreign Policy Analysis*. 2011, p. 317.

organization. Instead, they are usually called as “a club of countries”<sup>34</sup>. As for Turkey’s relation with BRICS, Turkey and BRICS did not initiate an official attempt for the participation of Turkey in BRICS, though BRICS is sometimes called as BRICS-T. In fact, it is not a historic event for Turkey to join in BRICS as it is not that difficult to form “club of countries” like BRICS. Therefore, we can define BRICS as soft balancing countries rather than hard balancing ones.

MINT is organization that Turkey is a member of. The four countries consisting of MINT share the same characteristic of having a rapid economic growth. For this reason, the term MINT was first used and made popular by an English economist Jim O’Neill in 2011. The MINT countries were selected using their potential for future growth as base, and their featured characteristics as geography, demography, and economies. There have been some positive prospects for the MINT in that they have all future plans to be in the top ten economies of the world by the end of the first half of this century and although Turkey experienced hard times in the past, there are some economics analysts who are optimistic about Turkey’s current position as viable in terms of investments due to Turkey’s latest precautions of averting the times with depression.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Gökhan Bacık. Turkey and the BRICS: Can Turkey Join the BRICS? *Turkish Studies*, 2013. 14:4, p. 760.

<sup>35</sup> Will Kenton. 2019. MINTs (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey). Investopedia. Retrieved from: [https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/mints-mexico-indonesia-nigeria-turkey.asp#:~:text=MINT%20\(Mexico%2C%20Indonesia%2C%20Nigeria,to%20realize%20rapid%20economic%20growth.&text=The%20acronym%20is%20similar%20to,Russia%2C%20India%2C%20and%20China.](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/mints-mexico-indonesia-nigeria-turkey.asp#:~:text=MINT%20(Mexico%2C%20Indonesia%2C%20Nigeria,to%20realize%20rapid%20economic%20growth.&text=The%20acronym%20is%20similar%20to,Russia%2C%20India%2C%20and%20China.)

As previously mentioned, middle power countries are predominantly studied in IR literature with reference to their foreign policies and influences, or clouts, in the world politics and in their regions. Besides the given definitions of middle powers depending upon their having a leadership capacity or having the capability to shape events in the world politics, they can also be classified based on their strength of hard power (or military strength), capabilities, and their geographical and geopolitical positions. To add, middle power countries can too be defined, according to Giovanni Botero, as actors in accordance with their having adequate strength and authority to stand on their legs in the absence of any support or need coming from other states. On the strength of these definitions, the aim of this chapter is to mainly attempt to understand Turkey's current role and place as a rising/emerging middle power, and to give an overall account of the performances and the foreign policy of Turkey after JDP came to power in 2002, also touching upon the years of Turkey before 2002.

This study presumes that Turkey has, on the whole, come a long way since 2002 with some improvements in different fields, which were made in a limited way before 2002 for its aim to be a strong rising/emerging middle power in the world and a strong regional power in its geography, though there have been some failures and reactions by people in certain practices. Accordingly, as the main and the longest chapter of this thesis study, it involves an overall foreign policy and the practices during the JDP governments after 2002, when they first came to power and set goals towards making Turkey a middle and a regional power. It also touches upon the potential which Turkey already has that it can take advantage for its goal to be a middle power. Before going into the details of the practices of the JDP governments after 2002, I find it acceptable to touch very briefly on what we mean by middle powers, depending on their capacities and capabilities since countries are now labelled as "super", "great", "middle" and "regional" in terms of their powers in the current world of IR.

Particularly after the WWII, it can be observed that a new multipolar world has been emerging until these days in which the world is experiencing a different environment in terms of the behaviours and powers of nation-states. In this regard, there can be said to be four categories in IR in terms of the power capacity of states: superpower, great powers, middle powers or regional powers, and small powers or small states. What kind of potential should a country have in order to be able to be called a superpower, great

power, middle power or a regional power? Each power category has its own must-haves, such as its region, underground and aboveground resources, its GDP, its hard and soft power capacity and its population in order for them to be called so. Lying in one of the most crucial geographical and geopolitical positions in the world, Turkey has all these requirements and is giving a harsh struggle these days to become a complete middle power by trying to fulfill the necessary requirements. In this chapter, I handle all these struggles in an objective way, keeping in mind that this study *does not* aim to give any political support to the JDP governments, but it *does* intend to project an objective outlook upon the years between 2002 and today, which have been ruled by only JDP governments. The following will justify the allegations and assumptions of this thesis study in a way that most of the practices, though not all, having been fulfilled by JDP are sort of those that can only be achieved by a country that *does* regard itself as a strong middle or regional power.

- Turkey's potential to be called as a middle power
- Practices during the JDP governments after 2002
- Foreign policy and global governance during the reign of JDP

## **2.3 Turkey's Potential To Be Called A Middle Power**

### **2.3.1 Geopolitical And Geographical Position**

Geography is the position of a country on the world map. While there are some countries whose geographies do not pose any problems for them because of the position, there are other countries whose geographies do pose serious problems. Turkey is one of those countries whose geography and geopolitical position have been a serious issue for hundreds of years, especially regarding oil and natural gas.<sup>36</sup> Hence, when we talk about Turkey's geography and geopolitics, we need to talk mostly about "energy resources" as well as its geographical and geopolitical position. So, in this section, geography and geopolitical position of Turkey are combined with energy resources, which have, with a high degree of probability, been the most leading issue for about one and a half centuries.

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<sup>36</sup> Ali Tekin and Iva Walterova. Turkey's Geopolitical Role: The Energy Angle. Middle East Policy, 14:1, 2007, p. 87.

If we had the chance to make a survey with the people all around the world on the geopolitical importance and asked which country or the countries in the world are the most geopolitically important, two out of every three people would possibly refer to Turkey. Indeed, if we have a close look at the world map in a scrutinizing way, we cannot help but say the same thing. That being the case, the main question to be asked here is: What should Turkey do to make best use of its invaluable geopolitical position in the direction of its aim to be called a middle power in the world and a strong regional power in its geography? Turkey, naturally, aims to be a *powerful* country, as every country does. But how does *the power* come and what should it do to attain it?

Being the continuation of the former Ottoman Empire, having prevailed in Asia and Anatolia for 600 years, Turkey lies in a very important geographical and geopolitical position in the world (Figure 1) and has very important geographical features (Table 1). It is bounded by eight strategically important countries, some of which have been in the limelight since the Turkish Republic was founded. Greece and Bulgaria are two countries that are full member to the EU. This means Turkey is the first neighbour of the EU in the east of Europe and this is specifically important for Turkey in the sense of its full membership process to the EU. Syria and Iraq, former Ottoman territories, are the two countries in the southeast that have remained on the agenda of the world politics due to the never-ending wars in the Middle East. Again, Iran is another country which has been on the agenda of the USA and the EU countries for years on the grounds that it is going nuclear year by year, which creates tension in the region and, naturally, gives harm to Turkey indirectly. Another contentious country is Armenia in the east, which was founded in 1918<sup>37</sup>. The geography where Turkey is located has been a controversial place since the first engine was invented and, with that, oil was discovered. After it was understood that the lands in the Middle East were filled with oil and other underground resources like natural gas, conflicts never stopped in the region. These conflicts turned into wars particularly after 1980s, one of the famous of which was the Iran-Iraq war, having started in 1980 and ended in 1988. Today, the same has been witnessed in Syria, which started as a civil war in 2011 and is still continuing. There is no certain consensus on when this

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<sup>37</sup> Having gained its independence after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, Armenia has always tried to accuse Turkey of the so-called massacre. Since this is not true, Turkey and Armenia relations have never been normalized because of Armenia's this accusation.

brutal war will come to an end. One of the negative reflections of this war on Turkey, though it has never been directly in the war itself, has been that millions of Syrian citizens fled from their countries and took refuge in Turkey. It can be concluded from here that if Turkey were not a neighbour of Syria, it would not have been affected that much negatively by the war. However, this geopolitical fact, unfortunately for Turkey, cannot be changed and this war is still occupying the agenda in Turkey both from the perspective of the Turkish government itself and the other nongovernmental organizations and the Turkish citizens all over Turkey<sup>38</sup>.



Figure 1: Turkey’s geopolitical location. Source: <https://iakal.wordpress.com/>

**Table 1: Geographical features of Turkey**

Square Land Area	783,562
Coastline Coverage	7,200 km
Shared Borders	2,816 km
Usable Waterways	1,200 km

Source: <https://www.globalfirepower.com>

<sup>38</sup> For the negative impact of the Syrian War on Turkey, see: Kemal Kirişçi, Jessica Brandt and M. Murat Erdoğan. 2018. Syrian refugees in Turkey: Beyond the numbers. *Brookings*.



### 2.3.1.1 The Black Sea

The Black Sea is an inland sea in the north of Turkey (Figure 2). Turkey is the only country in the world that has two geographical straits, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. These two seas are defined to be important crossroads and they connect the Black Sea to the world<sup>39</sup>, and they each have such an important role for the countries neighbouring Turkey that they have always been a matter of debate since 1900s.<sup>40</sup> Countries having borders with the Black Sea, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia, have no alternative but to use these two straits of Turkey in order to transport commercial goods to the other countries in the world.<sup>41</sup>



Figure 2: Geopolitical position of the Black Sea

Source: CSIS (Centre for Strategic & International Studies)

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<sup>39</sup> NATO Review, (2018). Newsletter. Retrieved from : <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2018/Also-in-2018/the-black-sea-region-a-critical-intersection-nato-security/TR/index.htm>

<sup>40</sup> Domna Lyratzopououa and Grigoris Zarotiadis. Black Sea: Old Trade Routes and Current Perspectives of Socioeconomic Co-Operation. *Science Direct. Procedia Economics and Finance*, 9, 2014, p. 75.

<sup>41</sup> Boşneagu, Romeo et al. Black Sea - The Geopolitical, Economic, Social and Military Importance. 2018, p. 2.

In addition to its geopolitical importance, the Black Sea has strategic importance in terms of the matter energy, which has been one of the main debates in the past 30 years. Especially the Asian and the Middle eastern countries, which are rich in energy, export their energy to the countries that do not oil or natural gas in their own lands, particularly to Europe<sup>42</sup>. In order for them to do so, they, naturally, need to transfer the energy to those countries, either by ship or through pipelines. At this point, the Black Sea gains a lot more importance.<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, the Black Sea itself has remarkable hydrocarbon reserves<sup>44</sup>, and it is also the route of the Russian natural gas to be transferred to Europe through pipelines under it, which is called Blue Stream Project (Figure 3).<sup>45</sup> In the context of its geopolitical importance, the profile of the Black Sea is foreseen to increase in the years to come.<sup>46</sup>



Figure 3: The Blue Stream Project between Russia and Turkey

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org>

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<sup>42</sup> As can be known very well, European countries has very little energy sources in their lands. For the dependency of European countries on energy sources, see the report: EU imports of energy products - recent developments, Statistics Explained at : <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-2c.html>

<sup>43</sup> Bülent Karadeniz. Security and Stability Architecture in The Black Sea. *Perceptions*. 2007, p. 96.

<sup>44</sup> Volkan Özdemir. The Blue Stream Natural Gas Pipeline: Implications on Energy Security and Foreign Policy. *OAKA*, 2:3, 2007, pp. 143-144.

<sup>45</sup> Idib.

<sup>46</sup> TEPAV. A 2020 Vision for The Black Sea Region: A Report by the Commission on the Black Sea. 2010.

As for the importance of the Black Sea and its natural sources in terms of Turkey's being a middle power, Turkey, for the first time in its history, searched for natural gas in the Black Sea and found one in the Gas field of Sakarya in 2020, which is said to have 320 billion cubic meters of natural gas. This created a tremendous impression in the world<sup>47</sup>. In the live press conference of the start of the drilling the natural gas, Turkish President announced that they would go on to drill more gas resources in the Black Sea and they aimed to make it available for Turkish people by 2023. In the meantime, Turkey has a fleet of five seismic drilling ships within the body of Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO). Turkey has a feature of being one of the few countries in the world having the capacity and the capability of drilling its own natural gas and petroleum resources with its own seismic ships<sup>48</sup>. When the amount of money spent on the yearly import of the natural gas and petroleum products is taken into consideration, this discovery will help Turkey decrease its budget deficit given that Turkey has been a heavy gas and petroleum importer for about a hundred years, which will, of course, help its GDP.

### ***2.3.1.2 The Mediterranean Sea And Cyprus***

Being at a unique crossroad of Europe, Asia and Africa, the Mediterranean is of tremendous significance in many respects, such as transportation, fishery and underground resources. One of the geopolitical crises or issues that Turkey has to face is the Mediterranean. Having been reported to have a large scale of oil and natural gas reserves, this sea has been an engagement zone for about ten years. All countries having borders with the Mediterranean have been staking out for the natural resources there (Figure 4). On top of it, the two major countries, the USA and Russia, not having borders with the Mediterranean, have been in the area for no reason (Figure 5). As it were not enough for Turkey to fight a cold war against the countries neighbouring the Mediterranean, it is also scrambling with them. This, too, heightens the tension between Turkey, Russia and the USA. Greece, which was, and has still been, a nemesis of Turkey during the Independence War<sup>49</sup>. Taking the EU countries into its service, Greece has been

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<sup>47</sup> For the detailed news about the natural gas exploration of Turkey in the Blacks Sea, see: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/turkiyenin-karadenizdeki-dogal-gaz-kesfi-dis-basinda-genis-yer-buldu/1949534>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/ekonomi/turkiyenin-denizlerdeki-enerji-filosu/1949802>

<sup>49</sup> Having lasted for five years, from 1919 and 1923, the Turkish Independence War (TIW) is accepted as the date when the foundation of the new Turkish Republic was laid. For more details on TIW: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory2/chapter/ataturk-and-turkish-independence/>

harassing Turkey claiming that Turkey cannot claim any possession on the natural resources in the Mediterranean<sup>50</sup>. This, as a matter of course, increases the tension between the two countries every now and then.



Figure 4: The location of the Mediterranean: countries neighbouring the Mediterranean

Source: IENE (Institute of Energy)

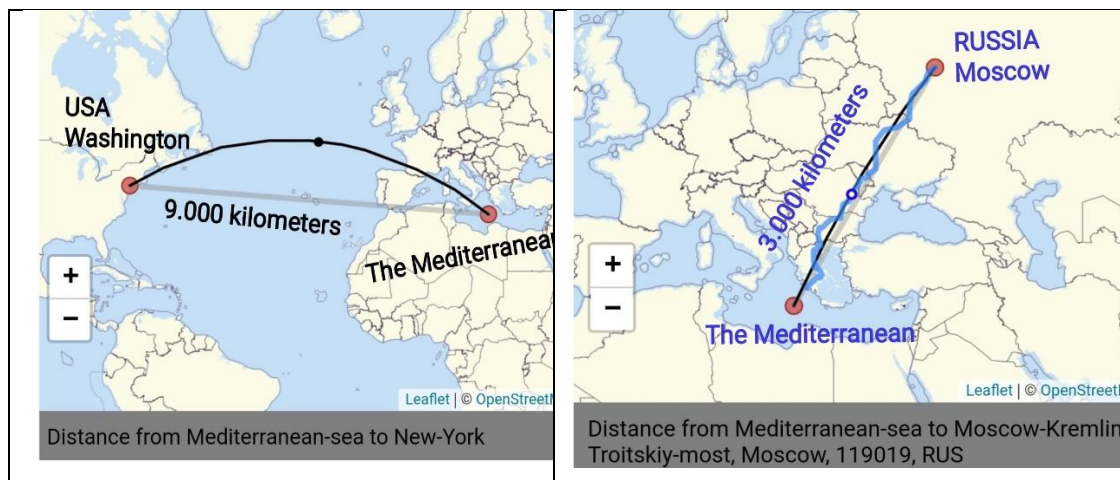


Figure 5: The distance from the Mediterranean to the USA and Russia<sup>51</sup>

Source: <https://www.distance.to/>

<sup>50</sup> Although there were a few attempts in the direction of normalizing Greece-Turkey relations, Greece has always kept its hostility to Turkey although it was one of the major countries that tried to invade Turkey in the early 1900s. So, Turkey-Greece relations have never improved in the past one hundred years.

<sup>51</sup> Source: Maps retrieved from <https://www.distance.to/> and drawn on them remade by the author of this study

Cyprus has been a case that attracted a great deal of concern as an issue in the Mediterranean between Turkey and Greece since 1974, when Turkey performed a military operation in Cyprus.<sup>52</sup> On the island live two nations now, Turks in the north and the Greek in the south<sup>53</sup>. Neighbours of Cyprus, as can be seen on the map in Figure 6, are Lebanon and Syria in the east, Israel and Palestine in the south east and Egypt and Libya in the south. This island is again on the agenda in terms of the underground sources in the waters around it. Cyprus has always been very important for Turkey due to its geopolitical position. Turkey has military bases there and helps Cyprus on all occasions<sup>54</sup>, and Greece does the same for the Greek part of the island. Hence, this sometimes causes tension and troubles between Turkey and Greece (Figure 7). But the real tension started when it was claimed that there are rich sources of natural gas around Cyprus, and this time Israel was involved in the issue, putting in a claim for the energy sources in the sea with the support of the USA, for the USA has always been in favour of the survival of Israel.<sup>55</sup>



Figure 6: The geopolitical position of Cyprus

Source: <https://www.quora.com/>

<sup>52</sup> Erhan Bora. Cyprus in International Law. *Ankara Bar Review*. 2013, p. 39.

<sup>53</sup> Greece has maintained its hostility to Turkey through Cyprus and it has always hindered the full membership of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to the EU even though it did its best for the Greek part to be a full member.

<sup>54</sup> Bryant, Rebecca and Hatay, Mete. 2015. Turkish Perceptions of Cyprus: 1948 to the Present. Prio Cyprus Center (PCC) Report 1/2015. *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)*.

<sup>55</sup> Aylin Güney. The USA's Role in Mediating the Cyprus Conflict: A Story of Success or Failure? *SAGE Publications*, 35:1. 2004, p. 35.





Figure 7: The dispute over energy sources in the east Mediterranean between Turkey and Greece

Source: <https://medium.com/>

### 2.3.1.3 The Middle East: The Never-Ending Hot Spot Of The World

Once not attracting much attention or known by many people, the Middle East came to the fore all of a sudden after the engine was invented and the oil was discovered. Upon finding out that the Middle East region has one of the richest oil reserves of the world, many countries, especially militarily and informatively powerful countries such as the USA and England, took a sudden interest in the region<sup>56</sup>, and unrests and wars by and by started there. Unfortunately for Turkey, the Middle East is within the earshot of Turkey. Inevitably, Turkey has been negatively affected by these chaoses for years and, since its economy was bad and it was mostly dependent on outside militarily, it could not do anything but just watch the goings-on and did not have the powerful influence to intervene in the matters.<sup>57</sup> All this was because of the lack of power of Turkey after the harsh political changes in the aftermath of the Cold War. These chaoses came until today and are reaching the climax day by day instead of ending.<sup>58</sup> If there had been a candidate

<sup>56</sup> Yannis A. Stivachtis. Conflict and Diplomacy in the Middle East. External Actors and Regional Rivalries. *E-International Relations*. 2018, p. 10.

<sup>57</sup> Tayyar Arı and Ferhat Pirinççi. Turkey's New Foreign Policy Towards the Middle East and the Perceptions in Syria And Lebanon. *Akademik Bakış*. 2010, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> Saman Zulfqar. Competing Interests of Major Powers in The Middle East: The Case Study of Syria and its Implications for Regional Stability. *PERCEPTIONS*. 2018, p. 123.

of a middle power like today's Turkey in the region instead of a weak one, the picture today would be totally different than the past.

What is in the past is in the past for the goals of Turkey to be a strong middle power. As can be seen and understood from what has already been told above, the lack of power might end up with being intervened from outside.<sup>59</sup> Thus, in order for Turkey, on the one hand, to be able to survive these *tough* geopolitical messes all around it and, on the other hand, thrive as a *powerful country*, both economically and militarily, it has to set its goals in the direction of *how to be a powerful country* because no other geopolitical region has been on the agenda of the world as much as the geopolitical region in which Turkey lies.

### **2.3.2 Turkey's Energy Potential**

#### ***2.3.2.1 Turkey As An Energy Route***

It is a widely accepted fact that energy has been a determinant factor over the last one hundred years in the global arena as it has become one of the most basic and indispensable needs of people. In this regard, countries that have energy potential in their territories are regarded as rich countries, which remarkably boost their economic data. Turkey has been doing some oil and gas drillings especially in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Thrace and the Eastern Mediterranean as well as in the eastern part, already known to have oil and gas reserves. According to recent research, the Mediterranean has been found to have enormous energy reserves.<sup>60</sup> To add more, the Thrace region is said to have billions of cubic gas potential.<sup>61</sup> Turkey should further develop its drillings and try to become a self-sufficient country in terms of its energy needs, for it is known that Turkey spends huge amount of money on importing energy from foreign resources, especially from Russia and Azerbaijan, and the intense consumption of the amount of this energy sources increases its income per capita, though not as high as that of Organization for

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<sup>59</sup> Anoushiravan Ehteshami. Middle East Middle Powers: Regional Role, International Impact. *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 11:42. 2014, p. 31.

<sup>60</sup> Elias Boustros. "Natural Gas in East-Mediterranean Basin - Changing the Energy Landscape." 2018, pp. 23-24. See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329453610>.

<sup>61</sup> Temizer, Murat 2018. Valeura Forecasts Vast Gas Find in Turkey's Thrace Basin. Retrieved from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/energy/energy-projects/valeura-forecasts-vast-gas-find-in-turkeys-thrace-basin/22532>

Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).<sup>62</sup> This is what a country that aims to become a strong middle power or a regional power should do for its aims to be achieved. Another geopolitical superiority of Turkey is that it is right in the middle of Asia and the Middle East, where the most energy sources exist, and Europe, which is in need of the energy in Asia. The only way for Europe to have the gas, except for the shipment by oil ships, is either through pipelines through the Black Sea or the Mediterranean, and these two options can only be achieved only thanks to Turkey's geography and geopolitics (Figure, 2). In this way, Turkey has a golden chance to be an energy hub and this chance is progressively increasing<sup>63</sup>, as a result of which it is highly likely to get a big chance to be a stronger regional power and a middle power.

### 2.3.2.2 *Natural Resources*

Called "energy" as a broad term, oil and gas have become one of people's most basic needs today. Turkey has long been known to be a country that is foreign-dependent in the matter of its energy needs and has spent billions of dollars on importing energy from outside for years and years. Even though it is sometimes uttered by some media organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGO) that Turkey, in fact, *does* have oil and gas in its lands but *cannot* or *is not allowed to* extract them due to *some* political reasons, this claim was beyond an ordinary Turkish citizen until recently. However, considering the attempts and discourses of Turkey in the last ten years, this claim seems to be true. Further, Turkey has already started to drill oil and gas in the Mediterranean and in the Thrace region<sup>64</sup>. Energy sources, probably the most expensive entity these days, give a country power in many ways. If a country has enough energy for its own use, let alone exporting, then it can be regarded as a *powerful* country. Given the geopolitical position of Turkey, it may seem ridiculous to any Turkish citizen that Iraq, Iran and Syria, bordering Turkey, *does* have oil and gas but Turkey *does not*, and it really is (Figure 8). In a recent research, the Mediterranean has been found to have enormous energy reserves in its territory.

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<sup>62</sup> World Energy Council. 2016, 14.

<sup>63</sup> Esen, Ömer. Security of The Energy Supply In Turkey: Prospects, Challenges and Opportunities. *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy*, 6:2, 2016, p. 283.

<sup>64</sup> The Thrace is part of Turkey in the west which lies in the European part of Turkey. In addition to the importance of this region in terms of having the only customs gate that connects Turkey to Europe, it is now on the agenda of Turkish population with its natural gas resources that is claimed to exist there.



According to the statistics of Global Fire Power (GFP)<sup>65</sup>, Turkey's petroleum resources for 2019 is as follows:

Oil Production	245,000 bbl/dy <sup>66</sup>
Oil Consumption	845,000 bbl/dy
Proven Oil Reserves	341,600,000 bbl

Source : GFP

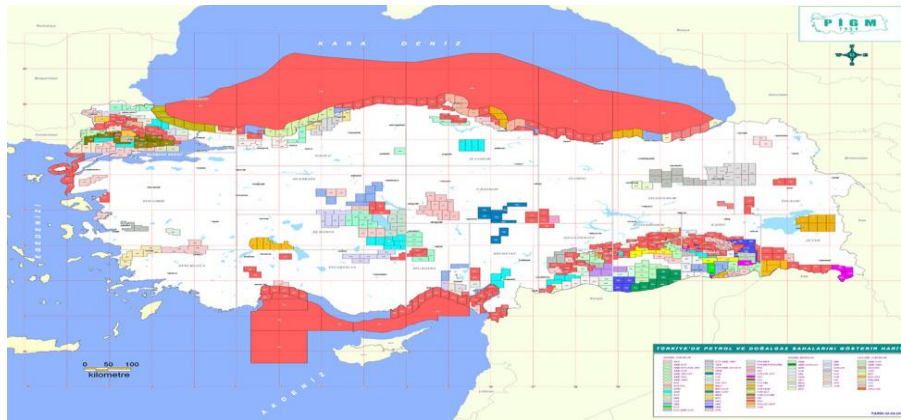


Figure 8: Energy reserves of Turkey

Source: General Directorate of Petroleum Affairs (PIGM)

Another geopolitical superiority of Turkey is that it is right in the middle of Asia and the Middle East, where the most energy sources exist<sup>67</sup>, and Europe, which is in need of the energy in Asia. The only way for Europe to have the gas there is either through pipelines or the Black Sea or the Mediterranean, which makes Turkey an energy bridge to be an energy hub. Since this energy transportation can only be achieved only thanks to Turkey's geography and geopolitics (Figure 9), then Turkey has a golden chance to be an energy hub.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> More detailed information can be obtained at : [https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country\\_id=turkey](https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=turkey)

<sup>66</sup> BBD/DY: Barrels Per Day

<sup>67</sup> For the distribution of countries producing the most oil and gas, see the *Global Energy Statistical Yearbook 2019* at : <https://yearbook.enerdata.net/natural-gas/world-natural-gas-production-statistics.html>

<sup>68</sup> Katinka Barysch. Turkey's Role in European Energy Security. Centre for European Reform. 2017, p. 2.

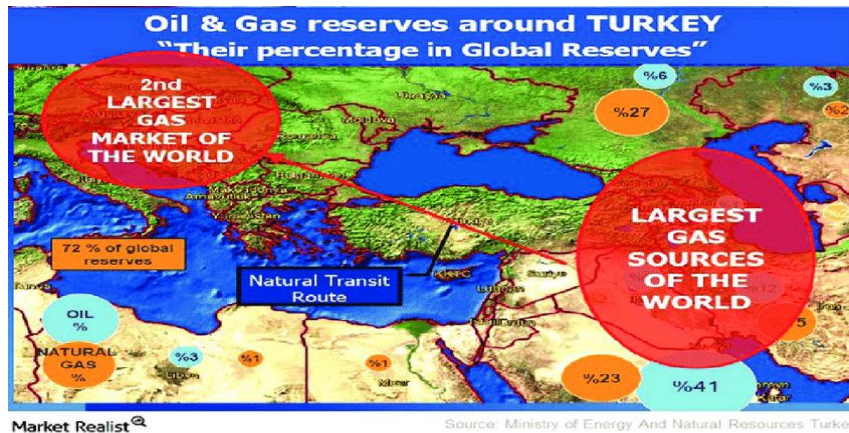


Figure 9: Turkey’s geographical and geopolitical position for energy transportation

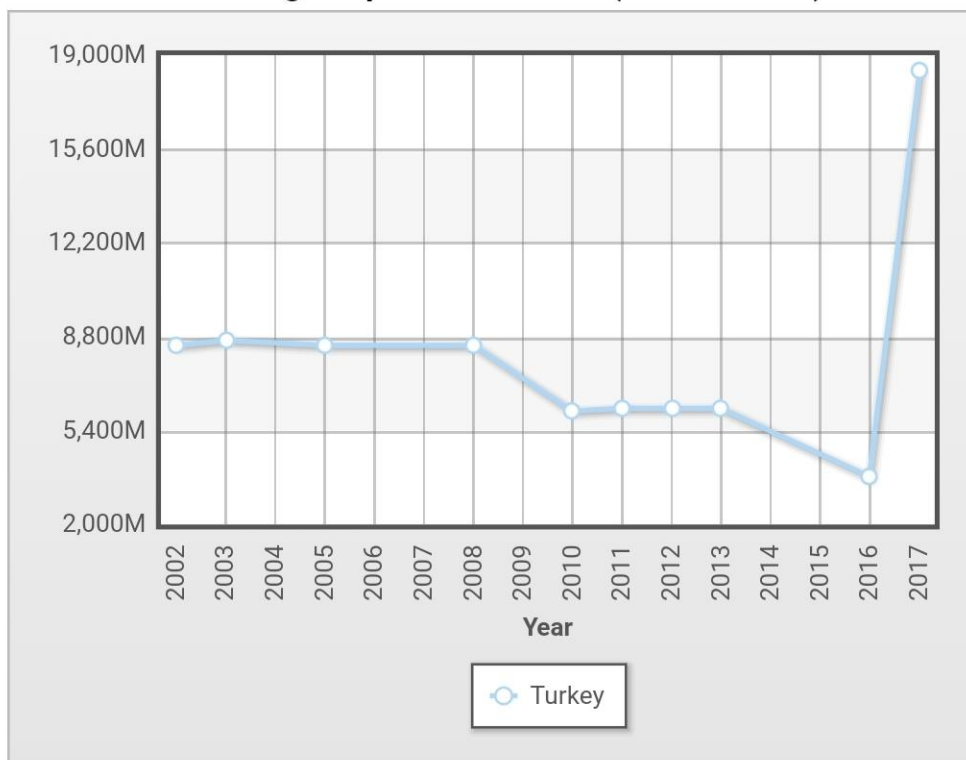
Source: Ministry of Energy and Natural Sources

The main focus here is that Turkey should, on the one hand, extract its untouched proven energy reserves<sup>69</sup> (Figure 10) and, on the other hand, it should become an energy hub almost immediately. Also, it should lose no time in doing so if it really wants to be a powerful country. This will enable it to not import energy from outside, or at least minimize the amount, meaning that it will spend far less on energy and lower the Gross National expenditures.

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<sup>69</sup> Proved reserves are those quantities of petroleum which, by analysis of geological and engineering data, can be estimated with reasonable certainty to be commercially recoverable.

**Natural gas - proved reserves (cubic meters)**



2	2013	2016	2017
10,000	6,173,000,000	3,708,000,000	18,490,000,000

Figure 10: Turkey’s proven gas<sup>70</sup> reserves for 2017.<sup>71</sup>

Source: [www.indexmundi.com](http://www.indexmundi.com)

### 2.3.2.3 Battles For Natural Gas: A Brief History

Battles have been fought, for one reason or the other, for thousands of years between people or countries. Countries fight battles for land, for borders or other reasons. In today’s world, we witness “cold” battles rather than “hot” ones, one of which is seen in the Eastern Mediterranean between the countries neighbouring this region.” Indeed, “a harsh battle” has been fought for the natural gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean lately, and Turkey, one of the countries that has the longest coast of Mediterranean, is

<sup>70</sup> “Proven or proved reserves are quantities of reserves estimated to exist in a region by analysis of geological and engineering data with a high degree of confidence.” (indexmundi, 2019).

<sup>71</sup> For more detailed information, see: <https://www.indexmundi.com/g/g.aspx?c=tu&v=98>

right in the middle of this battle. The countries having coasts of the Mediterranean are making their claims on the natural gas reserves in the sea, and so is Turkey with its god-given right.

Occurring in a gas mixture in a natural way in the Earth's crust<sup>72</sup>, natural gas is the cleanest fossil fuel and has become one of the main and hot items on the agenda of the international relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and has been one of the main factors in the policies of states throughout the world.<sup>73</sup> First discovered and named in the USA in the seventeenth century<sup>74</sup>, natural gas is today's most popular energy source. Countries having natural gas is today's wealthiest countries and the ones which do not have it pay billions of dollars to those countries<sup>75</sup>. This, naturally, puts them financially in a difficult standing. One of the regions which abounds in natural gas is the Eastern Mediterranean, where there has been a harsh battle between the countries having a coast on the Eastern Mediterranean (Figure 11), including Russia and the USA, though they do not have a coast on it<sup>76</sup>. Turkey is one of those countries having a coast on the Eastern Mediterranean and it is putting up its own fight with the other countries for the natural gas in the region.

Having been an energy importing country since the oil was discovered, Turkey has spent billions of dollars on energy so far, including natural gas.<sup>77</sup> As such, the natural gas resources in the Eastern Mediterranean will be of vital importance to Turkey in the event that it is extracted, and it will play an important role in determining Turkey's energy dependency on outside and give big support to the Turkish economy<sup>78</sup>. Additionally, the gas in the region can be transferred to Europe more easily, which is heavily dependent on

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<sup>72</sup> Arun Kishore Eswara and et al. 2013. Introduction to Natural Gas: A Comparative Study of Its Storage, Fuel Costs and Emissions for a Harbor Tug. Conference Paper. Presented at the Annual Meeting of Society of Naval Architects & Marine Engineers (SNAME) on 8 November, 2013 at Bellevue, Washington, USA.

<sup>73</sup> Shaffer, Brenda. A Guide to the Application of Energy Data for Intelligence Analysis. *Studies in Intelligence*. 61:4, 2017, p. 45.

<sup>74</sup> Abu Bakar Wan Azelee Wan and Rusmidah Ali., 2010. Natural Gas. DOI:10.5772/9804

<sup>75</sup> For detailed formation about the volume of production of natural gas by countries, see: <http://www.worldstopexports.com/petroleum-gas-exports-country/>

<sup>76</sup> For the distances from the Mediterranean and the USA and Russia sperately, visit: <https://www.distance.to/Mediterranean-Sea>

<sup>77</sup> World Energy Council, 2016.

<sup>78</sup> Ömer Esen. Security of the energy supply in Turkey: Prospects, Challenges and Opportunities. *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy*. 6:2, 281-289. 2016, 287.

the Russian gas.<sup>79</sup> For this, there are two main routes from the Eastern Mediterranean to Europe, one through Greece, which is about 2000 km and the other through Turkey, which is about 500 km. If Turkey can make use of this opportunity, it can both be an energy hub and may have to buy less gas through the Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP), which mostly weighs against Turkey as it is. To make sure Turkey does this well, it can conduct positive and constructive negotiations. Though tougher than it seems because of the conflicts between the countries, it can be achieved in a *constructive* way. As may be known by many, constructivism in IR mainly puts emphasis on the fact that states can follow a social policy in the international relations with one another.<sup>80</sup> The same, of course, holds true for the other countries in the region as well since Turkey has its aims to be a strong middle and regional power.



Figure 11: Countries bordering the Mediterranean

Source: Udan

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<sup>79</sup> Finon, Dominique and Locatelli Catherine. Russian and European Gas Interdependence. Can Market Forces Balance Out Geopolitics? *Laboratoire d'Economie de la Production et de l'Intégration Internationale*. 2007, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup> Hoyoon Jung. The Evolution of Social Constructivism in Political Science: Past to Present. *Sage Open*. 2019, p. 2.

### 2.3.2.4 Natural Gas in the Eastern Mediterranean And Countries Vying For it

Particularly in the last twenty years, it has been alleged that the Eastern Mediterranean has huge natural gas reserves remaining to be extracted (Table 2).

**Table 2. Natural Gas Volumes in the Offshore Eastern Mediterranean Country Billion Cubic Meters (bcm)<sup>3</sup>**

Israel	
Tamar	280 (reserves proved)
Leviathan	500-550 (reserves estimated)
Other fields	85 (reserves estimated)
Cyprus	Aphrodite 85-140 (reserves estimated)
Syria	250
Lebanon	850
Gaza Marine	28 (reserves estimated)

**Source:** <http://www.gmfus.org/publications/can-new-energy-supplies-bring-peace>  
(Retrieved: 11.12.2019)

Cyprus, around which it is alleged that there are big gas reserves<sup>81</sup>, is the center of the conflicts since it is almost in the middle of the Eastern part of Mediterranean and is nearly equally in the same distance to its neighbours. There seems to exist some controversial parts of the gas discovery in the region, like which countries are entitled to conduct drilling facilities and which route will be used to transfer the gas to Europe. In this regard, countries neighbouring the region have been in a kind of struggle for this priceless resource. However, as of today, this process has not been running in a *constructive way*.

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<sup>81</sup> Theodoros Tsakiris, Sinan Ülgen and, Ahmet K. Han. Gas developments in the Eastern Mediterranean: Trigger or Obstacle for EU-Turkey Cooperation? FEUTURE Online Paper.

### ***2.3.2.5 How Turkey Can Survive the Harsh Battle of Energy with its Foreign Policy And Diplomacy***<sup>82</sup>

As can be remembered from the examples in the past, wars have hardly been a clear-cut solution to international relations. Given this fact at hand, it would not be wise for the countries to do the same for the share of the gas reserves. Given the fact that political governments exist for the interest of their country and citizens, the first channel for them should be that they negotiate among themselves in a constructive way on how they will share the reserves apart from the fact that how the gas to be extracted ahead can be transferred or exported to the countries in need of it. The best way for countries in the region to do this is to follow a compromising position, which can be achieved by following the constructivism in IR<sup>83</sup>.

The same holds true for Turkey, which is one of the most important countries in terms of its geopolitical position. First, it should take a firm action towards the positive negotiations on the political table, irrespective of the political conflicts with other countries. We are saying this on the basis of the fact that political governments are for the interests of their countries and citizens. For a country, having conflicts with a country or countries is one thing, but pursuing a policy in the direction of its interests is quite another thing. In addition to that, Turkey is a country aspiring to be a trading hub. This is a feasible goal considering its geopolitical position. Presently, it is doing so with TANAP and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline, transferring the Azerbaijani gas to Europe, the Blue Stream, transferring the Russian gas to Europe via the Black Sea, and the Eastern Anatolian Main Transmission Line with Iran, transferring the Iranian gas to Europe. Turkey can do the same for the Eastern Mediterranean gas. One of the possible routes for the Eastern Mediterranean gas to be transferred to Europe is the one through Crete and Greece, which is a total distance of about 2000 kilometers. However, if this gas were to be transferred through Turkey, it would be much shorter than that, which is about 500 km. to Turkey. This is also a big advantage for the possible gas producing countries mentioned above in terms of the benefit-cost.

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<sup>82</sup> There are other sources that characterize the Eastern Mediterranean with other words similar to “battle”. For an example to this, check: <https://www.tim.org.tr/en/articles-evaluation-turkey-may-untie-the-knot-in-the-eastern-mediterranean.html>

<sup>83</sup> For *Constructivism in IR*, see: [https://www.ia-forum.org/Content/ViewInternal\\_Document.cfm?contenttype\\_id=0&ContentID=8773](https://www.ia-forum.org/Content/ViewInternal_Document.cfm?contenttype_id=0&ContentID=8773)



As the other countries in the region have done, Turkey, having the longest borderline to the Mediterranean, has been undertaking its gas exploration works in the north of the Cyprus<sup>84</sup> lately (Figure 12).

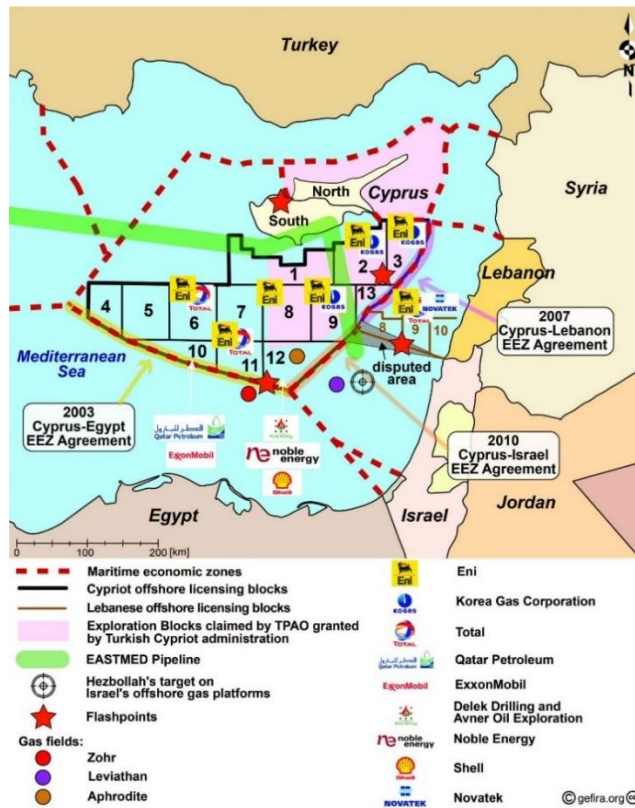


Figure 12: Natural gas regions in the Eastern Mediterranean

Source:

<https://gefira.org/en/2018/02/23/natural-gas-sets-the-stage-for-an-armed-conflict-in-the-east-mediterranean/>

However, this has created several political problems<sup>85</sup> among other countries, some of which even declared it as casus belli. Turkey has declared that it has the right to search for gas in the region belonging to its continental shelf.<sup>86</sup> This has not been accepted by Greece and Israel, having a cooperation between themselves on the gas extraction in

<sup>84</sup> Cyprus is a binational island; the Turks in the north and the Greeks in the south. Though separate from Turkey, the Republic of Northern Cyprus has always been regarded as a foster-land by Turkey, being regarded as the old country or home country.

<sup>85</sup> For the detailed information of the conflicts between Turkey and other countries, check: <https://gefira.org/en/2018/02/23/natural-gas-sets-the-stage-for-an-armed-conflict-in-the-east-mediterranean/>

<sup>86</sup> Sharma, Guarav. 2019. Turkey won't 'back down' in pursuit of natural gas in Eastern Mediterranean. Forbes. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gauravsharma/2019/10/08/turkey-wont-back-down-in-pursuit-of-natural-gas-in-eastern-mediterranean/#64a1c19463ab>



the region.<sup>87</sup> As might be known, there has been a serious political conflict between Greece and Turkey since the Turkish Independence War. This conflict has later carried on with the Cyprus issue. European Union's recognizing the Southern Cyprus, the Greek part of the island, but not doing so for the northern part, the Turkish part of the island, has been creating political problems since the war in Cyprus stopped. Another political conflict is between Israel and Turkey on Israel's invasion of Gaza, Palestine, which has seriously been opposed by the incumbent Turkish government. Under these conflicts, the countries have been acting in the direction of their national interests with regard to the gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean and this is creating a "harsh gas battle" in the region, which, in fact, can be resolved in *constructive* ways.

#### ***2.3.2.6 Boron Resources: The Fuel of Future***

Boron has emerged as a popular alternative fuel to oil lately and it is regarded as promising energy sources of the future<sup>88</sup> One of the most prominent assets for Turkey to use on its way to be a middle power and a regional power is its "boron potential", which can boost both Turkish economy and its popularity in IR if, of course, it is handled correctly. Not having been known much by many people until recently, boron has already become one of the most important energy resources of late. It has been used in so many product-makings like nanotechnology, nuclear energy, chemistry, automotive industry, space industry and electronic equipment. Turkey has the most boron reserves, 73%, in the world (Figure 13), which is a tremendous amount that can contribute hugely to Turkish economy. Other countries having the most boron reserves after Turkey are Russia, Southern American countries the USA. Of all the areas of usage of boron, this study pays the most special attention to the use of boron in the field of battery. Today, batteries are expected to be used in most products such as mobile phones, cars, and military vehicles. Above all, it has started to produce its completely domestically produced full-electric car. If Turkey, as the leader boron owner of the world with this capacity of 73% of all the world, manages to produce and export batteries to the other countries, this will contribute to its economy and GDP. Economic stability, which this study also assumes is the weakest

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<sup>87</sup> Reuters, (2019). Timeline: Turkey's gas exploration off Cyprus raises tensions. Retrieved from : <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cyprus-turkey-ship-timeline/timeline-turkeys-gas-exploration-off-cyprus-raises-tensions-idUSKBN1WT20L>

<sup>88</sup> Ayhan Demirbaş. 2003. Current Advances in Alternative Motor Fuels. *Energy Exploration & Exploitation* · 21:5, 2003, p. 481.

part of Turkey on the way to be a strong middle and regional power, seems to be the only and the most important obstacle in front of Turkey in achieving its goal to be an undisputed middle and regional power. Once it has done so, Turkey will have minor problems to be solved in the future. Turkey, thankfully, has been investing in boron products in line with this objective for the last fifteen years, particularly via ETI Mine Works, a publicly owned company all of whose shares were transferred to Turkish Sovereign Wealth Fund in 2017. Apparently, Turkey has been aiming to produce boron products and export them rather than export boron as a raw material. For this, the foundation of a very important factory was laid in 2019<sup>89</sup>. This investment will enable Turkey to produce most of the import-products itself, mostly electronic devices and military equipment. In this regard, Mükerrerem Şahin, who is the head of the team and an assistant professor in the Middle East Technical University (METU) said<sup>90</sup>:

“There have been very important research and development studies regarding boron in recent years, and the most valuable product that is developed from boron is 'elemental boron'. It is a well-known fact that these kinds of products are widely used in the space and aviation defense industry and in long-range missiles. As a result of our studies which have been ongoing for a while, the laboratory and industrial conditions of the boron have been finalized and it is now at the production stage. The necessary approval and accreditation process is ongoing. A facility to develop elemental boron with this new technology has been constructed. This represents the first facility to be established, and thanks to it, we learnt that Turkey is able to develop this technology at an industrial scale. In the end, we are able to construct the system to develop our product with 96 percent purity. Product analyses showed that the product with such purity can be used in long-range missiles and space rockets. This is very important since there are only three to five countries which produces pure boron on such a scale. Therefore, this product will contribute to Turkey's export potential. We now aim to construct a bigger facility to produce this elemental boron.”

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<sup>89</sup> <https://www.etimaden.gov.tr/haber/balikesir-bandirma-bor-karbur-uretim-tesisi-nin-temel-atma-toreni-gerceklesti> or <https://www.etimaden.gov.tr/en/all-news>

<sup>90</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/economy/turkey-to-become-high-purity-boron-producer/685590>

## Boron Reserves

The important factor for industrial application of boron minerals are  $B_2O_3$  content.

Total world boron reserves are 1,176 million tons. With a share of %72.50, Turkey has a total boron reserves of 851 million tons on the basis of  $B_2O_3$  content .

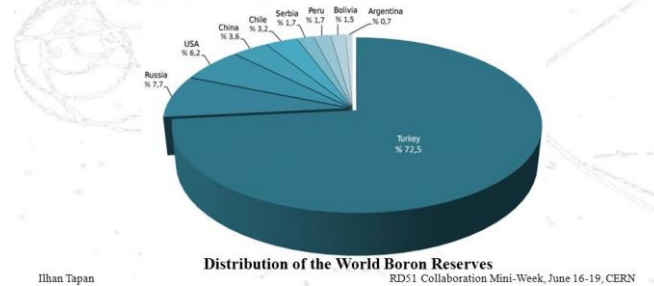


Figure 13: Boron minerals: Distribution of the world boron reserves

Source: Uludağ University Physics Department, Turkey<sup>91</sup>

## 2.3.3 Military Potential of Turkey

### 2.3.3.1 Hard Power

Turkey has always been a foreign-dependent country on military basis (Table 14). Especially for the developing countries like Turkey, being militarily weak may lead to failure.<sup>92</sup> The same holds true for Turkey, being a developing country. Turkey produced very little portion of its military needs through its own means in its past. This, of course, has led to many drawbacks for Turkey, such as being an unimportant country in its most critical geography. Interestingly, the military is among the most trusted institutions in Turkey<sup>93</sup>, and every Turkish citizen wishes the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) to be as strong as possible. With this, the stronger the TAF is, the happier and the more secure the Turkish citizens are<sup>94</sup>.

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<sup>91</sup> <https://slideplayer.com/slide/5298845/>

<sup>92</sup> Chretien Jean-Paul. et al. The Importance of Militaries from Developing Countries in Global Infectious Disease Surveillance. *Bull World Health Organ.* 85:3, 174–180. 2007.

<sup>93</sup> Zeki Sarigil. Deconstructing the Turkish Military's Popularity. *Armed Forces & Society.* 35:4. 2009, p. 709.

<sup>94</sup> Traditionally, being a soldier is a national service and every healthy Turkish man who is 20 years old serves in the army in a proudly. This is because Turkish history is full of wars and successes. In other words, there is a saying in Turkey as: "Every Turk is born as a soldier."

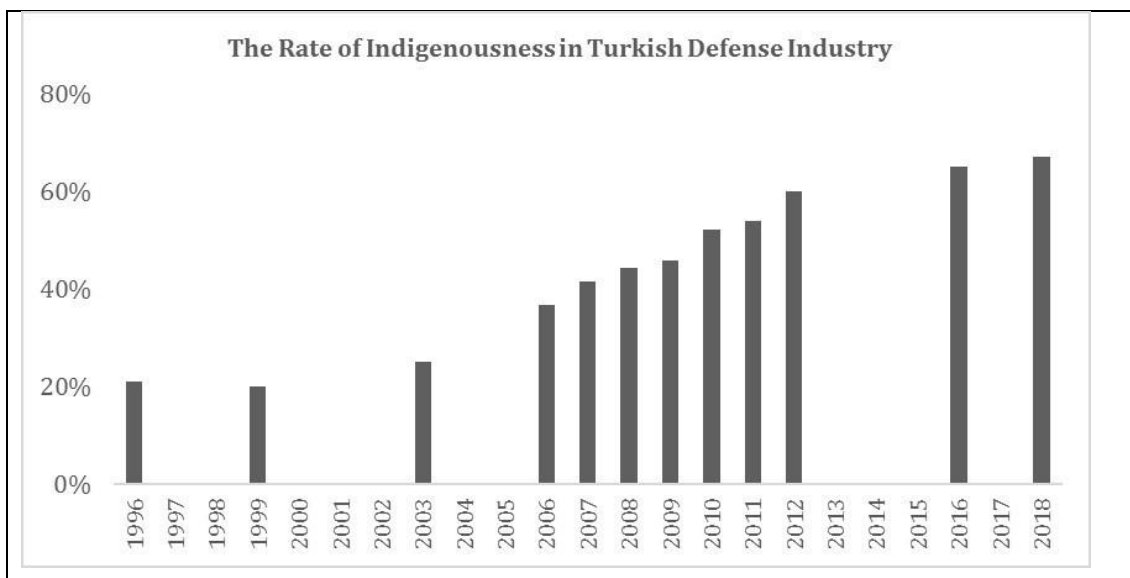


Figure 14: The rate of indigenusness in Turkish Defense Industry

Source: Turkish Policy Quarterly (TPQ)

Commonly divided into four as hard, soft, smart and sharp power, power is one of the most critical issues in IR and has different definitions and attributions. Some define the power as the ability and the capacity of actors or states to utilize military or material resources they have so as to be able get other states to do what they otherwise would not.<sup>95</sup> It is known that what is meant by hard power is to follow a power politics, using or adopting force and violence, mostly coming with the IR theory of Realism. War and power are the consequences of the competitiveness between the states as well as the amount of power instruments that a state has.<sup>96</sup> Hard power is related to the military power of a country and can be based on some characteristics such as the intervention of military, imperative or compulsory diplomacy and economic sanctions.<sup>97</sup> Additionally, especially for a developing country like Turkey, having been a NATO member since 1949, being militarily weak may lead to failure in the context that it has many conflicts with some

<sup>95</sup> Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall. "Power in International Politics." JSTOR. International Organization Foundation. 59:1, 2005, p. 40.

<sup>96</sup> Matteo Pallaver. "Power and Its Forms: Hard, Soft, Smart." The Department of International Relations of *The London School of Economics and Political Science*. The degree of Master of Philosophy. 2011, p. 46.

<sup>97</sup> Jan-Philipp N. E. Wagner 2014. *The Effectiveness of Soft and Hard Power in Contemporary International Relations*. ISSN 2053-8626. Retrieved from: <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/05/14/the-effectiveness-of-soft-hard-power-in-contemporary-international-relations/>

countries.<sup>98</sup> This confirms the idea that Turkey should have the necessary hard power capacity in order to be called a middle power because, now that the hard power is the capacity and the capability to move of a state to be able to influence others in a way it wants it to be, Turkey should take the necessary steps in this direction. China, now heading towards being a superpower as a rival for the USA, can be given as an example for this. China has invested a lot in improving its military power since the 1980s and it has been paying special attention to modernizing its military power as well.<sup>99</sup> Turkey's military power is not negligible, though it cannot be compared to China's.

According to the statistics of Global Fire Power (GFP)<sup>100</sup>, Turkey's military strength for 2021 is as follows:

**Table 3: MANPOWER**

Total Population	82,017,514 (ranked 18 of 140)
Available Manpower	41,874,832 (51.1 %)
Fit-For-Service	35,174,859 (42,9 %) (ranked 16 of 140)
Reaching Military Age Annually	1,406,994 (1.7 %) (ranked 15 of 140)
Total Military Personnel	895,000 (est.) (1,1 %)
Active Personnel	355,000 (0.4 %) (ranked 15 of 140)
Reserve Personnel	380,000 (0.5 %) (ranked 16 of 140)
Paramilitary	160,000 (0.2%) (ranked 17 of 140)

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<sup>98</sup> Rafal Wisniewski. Military-industrial aspects of Turkish defence policy. *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej*, 9:15. 2015, pp. 215-216.

<sup>99</sup> Kamal Tasiu Abdullahi and Joseph Phiri. "Study on The Rise of China as A Dangerous Superpower." *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*. 2019. 6:1, p. 135.

<sup>100</sup> More detailed information can be obtained at : [https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country\\_id=turkey](https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=turkey)

**Table 4: AIRPOWER**

Total Aircraft Strength	1,056 (ranked 9 of 140)
Fighters / Interceptors	206 (ranked 15 of 140)
Attack	207 (ranked 14 of 140)
Transports	80 (ranked 8 of 140)
Trainers	289 (ranked 9 of 140)
Total Helicopter Strength	492 (ranked 8 of 140)
Attack Helicopters	94 (ranked 6 of 140)

**Table 5: LAND STRENGTH**

Combat Tanks	3045 (ranked 9 of 140)
Armoured Fighting Vehicles	11,630 (ranked 6 of 140)
Self-Propelled Artillery	943 (ranked 6 of 140)
Towed Artillery	1,200 (ranked 13 of 140)
Rocket Projectors	407 (ranked 14 of 140)

**Table 6: LOGISTICS**

Labour Force	31,300,000
Merchant Marine Strength	1,285
Major Ports / Hubs / Terminals	9
Roadway Coverage	352,046 km
Railway Coverage	8,699 km
Usable Airports	98

**Table 7: GEOGRAPGHY**

Square Land Area	783,562
Coastline Coverage	7,200 km
Shared Borders	2,816 km
Usable Waterways	1,200 km

Source: <https://www.globalfirepower.com>

### 2.3.3.2 Soft Power

Being another kind of power for states in IR, soft power is another factor that Turkey should consider while putting up its fight to become a middle power. As a definition, soft power is the ability of a state to try to make others think and change their choices as the way it does.<sup>101</sup> On the basis of this statement, it comes into prominence that activities of cultural diplomacy, lobbying and other actions are quite important to make a state attractive in others' eyes. Turkey as a republic is considered as the continuation of the Ottoman Empire<sup>102</sup>, which might have caused Turkey to be a soft power rather than a hard one, and it can be as strong as the Ottoman Empire.

Tourism is one of the most important soft power elements for Turkey. As is known, Turkey is a popular tourist destination especially among the holiday makers living in Europe. There are some arguments that Turkey cannot make use of its tourism potential as necessary and only the southern parts of Turkey are chosen by foreign visitors.<sup>103</sup> Because there are also many historical places worth visiting in the other parts of Turkey, particularly in the eastern part of Turkey, this may partly be true, but what this claim lacks is that there is an important reason behind this. Turkey has been struggling with a terrible ongoing issue of terrorism for about forty years. If there were not for the issue of terrorism, there is no doubt that there would be many tourism destinations in the eastern part of Turkey now as well.

Another indicator of Turkey's soft power is its humanitarian aid to the needy countries in Africa and embracing the Syrian refugees after the Syrian civil war having started in 2011. These two movements of Turkish soft power policy have made great contribution to its soft power capacity in the context that it gives the impression that only those countries having power can do that. There have been, of course, some counter-arguments against this soft power policy of Turkey, saying that the Syrian refugees affected Turkey in a negative way<sup>104</sup> and this is definitely a borne-out theory, but it would

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<sup>101</sup> Joseph S. Jr Nye. "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616; 94. 2008, p. 95.

<sup>102</sup> Tarık Oğuzlu. "Soft power in Turkish foreign policy." *Australian Journal of International Affairs*. 61:1, 2007, p. 85.

<sup>103</sup> Nurullah Gür 2014. "Yeni Türkiye'nin Yumuşak Güç Unsuru: Turizm." Sayı: 58 Temmuz 2014. *SETA Perspektif*.

<sup>104</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Doğu Şimşek. "Syrian Refugees In Turkey: Towards Integration Policies." *Turkish Policy Quarterly*. 15:3. 59-69. 2016, p. 61.

not be wrong to say that most of the world have appreciated this humanitarian act of Turkey, which has increased its soft power capacity and made a contribution. As a counter-argument to this, there are also some scholarly studies that underline the fact that Turkey is trying to improve international position by giving aid to some African countries, which makes Turkey a rising power rather than a regional power<sup>105</sup>

### ***2.3.3.3 Turkey's Geopolitical And Geographical Position As "Power"***

There have been wars between states since the beginning of the civilization and many of them were waged for territorial, geographical and geopolitical reasons. In this context, it would not be wrong to claim that, notably in these days in which many actors are in conflict with one another owing to some issues of interests, the geopolitical and geographical position of a country is somehow related to its hard power capacity. In this sense, the geopolitical and geographical position of Turkey<sup>106</sup> can be said to be in a very conflictual place on the world map. If we had the chance to make a survey with the people all around the world on the geopolitical importance and asked which country or the countries in the world are the most geopolitically important, two out of every three people would possibly refer to Turkey. Indeed, if we have a close look at the world map in a scrutinizing way, we cannot help but say the same thing. That being the case, the main question to be asked here is: What should Turkey do to make best use of its invaluable geopolitical position? Turkey, naturally, aims to be a powerful country, as every country may wish to do. But how does the power come and what should be done to attain it? The answer for Turkey is to be able to produce its own need of military power without being dependent on foreign sources.

The process of globalization has been another aspect of Turkey's strategic, geopolitical and geographical position, which is completely open to any development in terms of globalization since Turkey is right in the middle of a geography connecting East to the West and the North to the West. When considered in detail, this will be seen to be

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<sup>105</sup> Pınar Tarık. *The Concept of Rising Powers. Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center (NOREF)*. 2012, p. 3.

<sup>106</sup> For a detailed analysis for the importance of Turkey's geopolitical importance, see: <https://mepc.org/journal/turkeys-geopolitical-role-energy-angle> by Dr. Tekin, an assistant professor of International Relations at Bilkent University, Ankara and Ms. Walterova a graduate student at the Department of International Relations, Bilkent University



an unmissable opportunity in that it will give great contribution Turkey's power on the basis of economic income on its way to become a stronger middle power.

In the light of the geopolitical and geographical cases mentioned above, it is imperative that TAF be as strong as possible. For this, any incumbent Turkish government should invest in domestic military industry by making domestic weapons instead of buying from outside as the geopolitical and geographical position of Turkey requires this. This, luckily, has been succeeded step by step lately and Turkey is now thirty per cent foreign-dependent in terms of military needs. For every nation, the defense industry principally plays three main important roles: military, political and economic. Therefore, Turkey should go on and on making its own weapons.

## CHAPTER 3

### YEARS WITH JDP GOVERNMENTS

#### 3.1 Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Being A Middle Power Between The Years 1923 And 2002

##### 3.1.1. The RPP Period (1923-1950)

Having been the years of a newly born state, this period is known to have been the harshest times of Turkey. So, there were not sufficient conditions, under those difficult political atmospheres, in order for Turkey to be a middle power at the time. Having been soldiers in the Ottoman Empire and having saved the country from invasions, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü<sup>1</sup> established the new republic with a new political party called the Republican People's Party (RPP) as the rulers and the decision makers of the time. As the foreign policy, the two leaders did not pursue an expansionist policy, which has continued until today, with the aim of protecting the status quo.<sup>2</sup> However, there was a strong Ottoman heritage in the Turkish Republic despite the fact that the regime was completely new. There existed main problems having risen after the First World War (WWI), such as territories, capitulations, Mosul question and the straits and the Ottoman debts. The new Ankara government were trying to solve those problems. In addition, the Mudros Armistice and the Sevres Treaty were signed with the Ottoman Empire. The majority of these problems were solved with the Lausanne Treaty, which is the turning point in this process and the guarantee of survival, independence and the territorial integrity of Turkey. Having been the head of the Turkish delegation, İsmet İnönü represented the new Turkish state or the new government in Ankara during the Lausanne negotiations. However, since the Allies defeated the Ottoman Empire in the WWI, the negotiations were very tough for the decision makers to get rid of all those problems. There remained some problems to be solved, like the Mosul question, having been left to

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed information about the first two Presidents of Turkey, see: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkish-presidents.en.mfa>

<sup>2</sup> Mustafa Bıyıklı. Türk Dış Politikası– Cumhuriyet Dönemi. Bilimevi Basın Yayın Ltd. Şti. 2015, p. 102.

the jurisdiction of the League of Nations, which is now the UN<sup>3</sup>. The reason for its establishment after the WWI was to protect world peace and security.

Rather than set political and economic objectives to make Turkey a middle power or a regional power in its geography, there were vigorous efforts for the reconstruction and restoration of the Turkish foreign policy during the 1920s and the 1930s, when Turkey's main ally was the Soviet Union, with which Turkey had some common objectives in the international arena. "Peace at home, peace in the world" was the main policy, which was truly in place under those circumstances when examined from the then weak power of Turkey in case of any armed conflict with the western powers after a fierce battle until 1922. In fact, there were the expectation by the people in the direction of a stable country with peace and an established and solid foreign policy. In this direction, Turkey exerted itself to consolidate its power as a new republican state and solve such problems as the population exchange, with the efforts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, between Greece.

During the 1930s, under the threat of Great Depression<sup>4</sup>, when there were the footsteps of the threat of the WWII, with his prudence and careful calculation, Turkey chose to develop its relations with its neighbours, for Atatürk could foresee what would happen to Turkey in case such a war broke out. Concordantly, Turkey even signed, as a buffer zone between Turkey and the Balkans, the Balkan Pact with Greece, Yugoslavia and Romania against the Italian threat to the Balkans as well as the Sadabad Pact in 1937 with Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. Therefore, we can say that all these helped the role of Turkey in world politics, its prestige and its influence to rise. Those times can be said to have been the years of reconstruction and restoration for Turkey, not just in domestic politics but in foreign policy as well. To add to this, Turkey became the member of the League of Nations upon invitation and through the recommendations by the Soviet Union and other European countries. One other good success was the annexation of Hatay, which was one of Atatürk's dreams.

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<sup>3</sup> Sevtap Demirci. Turco-British Diplomatic Manoeuvres on the Mosul Question in the Lausanne Conference, 1922–1923. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 2010. p.60.

<sup>4</sup> Seckin Baris Gulmez. 2017. Turkish Foreign Policy As An Anomaly: Revisionism And Irredentism Through Diplomacy in the 1930s. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 44:1, 30-47. p. 40.

Speaking of the years after Atatürk died in 1938, İsmet İnönü took over the Presidency of the Turkish Republic and he ruled the country until 1950s as the head of RPP. Again, Turkey was not in a position to pursue a foreign policy to become a middle power in this period since this period was the dark years of the WWII and he managed to rule the country in a successful way. All through this period, being non-belligerent was the policy of Turkey by not taking either side, so on account of the fact that it was not then powerful enough to wage any war both economically and militarily, it resisted to the end<sup>5</sup>. Even during the worsened period after the Battle of Barbarossa in the late 1942, Turkey encountered the pressure to join the war with the ally side, particularly by Winston Churchill, the then Prime Minister of the UK, by being offered certain military and economic assistance. Considering such diplomatic efforts to take Turkey into the war, this can be regarded as a success thanks to the good foreign policy. Otherwise, that could have led to results which Turkey might not have carried through in the later years. However, fortunately, İsmet Pasha, careful enough with his experience from the WWI, knew that there was no possibility for such kind of supports. After all, the Axis powers were defeated by the allies.

In the aftermath of the WWII, a new era appeared, called the Cold War Period having lasted until 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed. The world witnessed the harsh struggle between capitalism and communism or between the USA and the Soviet Union in this forty-five years' period. Turkey did not have such an option to be in-between or not take a side as it did during the war. Moreover, apart from the fear of communism, there were some claims by the Soviets for the straits, where they had been intending to establish some bases. Having been intimidated by this, Turkey turned its face to the West and chose its side with the USA during the Cold War. Even though the decision makers of the USA had seemed somewhat unwilling to provide Turkey with some economic and military support, they had to do so, including Greece and Turkey as a buffer zone because they realized that the Soviet Union would pose a threat to the security of the Middle East oil, which was indispensable for industrial production and the technological innovation

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<sup>5</sup> Murat Kasapsarçoğlu. Harmonization of Turkey's Political, Economic, and Military Interests in the 1950s: Reflections on Turkey's Middle East Policy. *Turkish Studies*. 2015. Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 333.

in the west.<sup>6</sup> What was in the mind of the USA was the fear of letting Turkey be on the side of the Soviet Union as Soviet Union was the leading country with its allyship for Turkey from the War of Independence to the end of WWII.<sup>7</sup> In this regard, they included Turkey in Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan to help to reconstruct Turkish economy. In this way, Turkey's foreign policy became USA-centric following the start of the Cold War Period.

### **3.1.2. The Democrat Party (DP) Period And Beyond (1950-1980)**

When it comes to the domestic politics of Turkey, after a twenty-seven years of single party period of the RPP, a new era started with the DP government, led by Adnan Menderes, who was coming from the same school of the RPP. In spite of the long one-party period, the change of administration happened in a very peaceful way, which was something good for Turkey, and the Turkish citizens were very hopeful about the development of democracy and tolerance. However, these hopes failed to be fulfilled and this DP age of democracy came to an end with the first military intervention in 1960, when the then Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was executed. This phenomenon was not at all good for domestic politics.

Regarding the foreign policy of DP, they pursued three main topics of policies. The first one is Turkish American relations. It would not be wrong to say that what DP had been aiming was to make Turkey like the USA. For this, as well as sending troops to the Korea War at the instigation of the USA, they paid special attention to trying to develop Turkey's relations with the USA and they did not question Turkey's USA-centric foreign policy, as a result of which Turkey's membership to NATO came in 1952. This membership as well as the relations with the USA also helped to shape the Middle East policy of Turkey and Cyprus. The Middle East was the second policy of the DP administration. Unfortunately, resulting from changes of regimes, the Arab nationalism and some military interventions in countries like Egypt and Syria, the Middle East politics was not stationary or in good order during the 1950s. In this sense, the atmosphere of the

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<sup>6</sup> Mustafa Sıtkı Bilgin. 2017. Turkey's Foreign Policy towards the Middle East in the 1950's and Its Impact On Turco-Arab Relations. *Akademik Bakış*. 11:21, p. 248.

<sup>7</sup> Murat Kasapsaraçoğlu. 2019. Definition of Turkey's National Interests in the Early Cold War Era: Divergence and Convergence Between DP And RPP in the 1950s. *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, Cilt 74, No. 4, 2019, p. 1357.

Middle East politics was inconstant and unstable. For these reasons, what Turkey did in those years was to tackle the Middle East issues by acting with the USA decision makers. While main concern in the Middle East for Turkey was the fear or the likelihood of the expansion of communism, the Arab-Israeli dispute reshaped the Middle east politics with the foundation of Israel in 1948. This meant that there was a difference, a mistake, or a miscalculation for the Democrat Party government regarding the issues or concerns about the Middle Eastern countries. And in those arduous conditions, Turkey signed the Baghdad Pact with Iraq and Pakistan. But, with the withdrawal of Iraq upon the military intervention in Baghdad in 1958, its name was changed as Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and its headquarters were moved from Baghdad to Ankara. The Arab nationalism had created tension and crises in the Middle East in the late 1950s, one of them being the Suez crisis and the other being Turkish-Syrian border crisis in 1957. Particularly with the military interventions in Iraq, intervention of the USA in Lebanon and the UK intervention in Jordan, the Middle East policy of DP can be said to have failed.

The third issue was the chronic problem Cyprus, originally started in the 1940s upon the UK's leaving the rule of Cyprus Island with the end of the WWII. The island accommodated both Turks and Greeks, who were, in fact, living together until the realization of the Enosis by Greece and the Greek community in Cyprus. This was, on no account, acceptable by the Turkish last RPP governments and early DP governments. They were of the opinion that there was no such problem as Cyprus. However, despite all, Cyprus problem broke out and did not calm down<sup>8</sup> until London and Zurich agreements in 1959, after which the independent Cyprus Republic appeared in the 1960s. Because of the political turbulences and economic problems stemming from the military intervention in 1960 and social polarization in connection with these, there were not any stable governments in those twenty years. Then, no party was able to come to power alone and, inevitably, Turkey was ruled by coalitions, only excluding the years between 1965 to 1971, during which the Justice Party (JP) of Süleyman Demirel (Demirel) government was in power alone. What is more, there was an economic policy change in Turkey by

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<sup>8</sup> Murat Kasapsaraçoğlu. 2019. Definition of Turkey's National Interests in the Early Cold War Era: Divergence and Convergence Between DP and RPP in the 1950s. Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi, Cilt 74, No. 4, 2019, p. 1371.

moving from liberal economy to import substitution, which obviously meant that Turkey had economically become heavily dependent on foreign exchanges and there were many fluctuations in the event of any problem in Turkey's foreign policy. Even though this economic system collapsed in the late 1970s, the worse was on the way for Turkey: the social polarization between the leftists and the rightists as a political grouping, for which they even did not refrain from killing each other. This carried away Turkey into a civil war. There was even a memorandum, in 1971, during these harsh years, which was followed by the military intervention on September 12, 1980.

The Cyprus issue, having resulted from the tense relations between two communities on the island and got worse in 1963, continued to be a relevant one in terms of Turkish foreign policy.<sup>9</sup> There were many trouble spots where the Turkish national groups and the Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA) terrorists were coming face to face with each other since EOKA were killing the Turks. Plus, there was the famous bloody Christmas of the Greeks. Making use of its right of being a guarantor state by London and Zurich agreements, including Greece and the UK, what Turkey was intending to do was to intervene in the island, though it did not have the necessary strong military power to be able to do such an operation, whereupon İsmet İnönü got in touch with the USA by sending a letter and hoping that Turkey would not feel the need to intervene in the island in the event that the USA was involved in the issue. However, what Lyndon Johnson, the then President of the USA, wrote to Turkey as a reply was nothing but a harsh one with an implicit threat in it, let alone meet the expectations, which came to be known later as Johnson's letter. In his letter, President Johnson was underlying the fact that if Turkey attempted such an operation to Cyprus, it could not use its weapons which had been given to Turkey by the USA for use of NATO purposes only. He even went too far by highlighting the fact that if the Soviet Union were to pose a threat at any given time, Turkey would be all on its own. Upon this, by using its own rights to intervene in, Turkey bombed some bases on the island with some fighter jets with the aim of suppressing the tension between the two communities. That was not enough because three years later, Cyprus issue reappeared once again and at the time the ruling government in

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<sup>9</sup> Kıvanç Ulusoy. The Cyprus Conflict: Turkey's Strategic Dilemma. The Cyprus Conflict: Turkey's Strategic Dilemma. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*. 2016. 18:4, p.394.

Turkey was the JP. However, resulting from the lack of the necessary support behind Turkey, as well as some other problems, Demirel government had to give up that military intervention. When the year 1974 came<sup>10</sup>, it was realized by Bülent Ecevit government that it was now the time for Turkey to do something with that chronic issue as the EOKA terrorists were continuously killing Turks and there was no longer a guarantee for them to be able to save their lives and survive. Turkey performed the military operation to save the people, at the end of which the island was divided into two.

From 1960s onwards, after Adnan Menderes having been executed, Turkey had a transition period. Having been one of the toughest ones during the DP governments, Cyprus continued to be one of the main issues in this decade, most of which was governed by coalition governments. Greece's desire to include the Aegean issue to the Cyprus problem as a Greek lake in 1963 made more tension between the parties. Another crisis in terms of Turkish foreign policy between 1961 and 1963 was the reflection of Jupiter missile crisis or Cuban crisis<sup>11</sup> between the USA and the Soviet Union. Turkey was made a matter of negotiation with this crisis. Then, in 1964, Ismet İnönü had a letter speaking softly but carrying a big stick from the then President of the USA, Johnson, assuming that Turkish military forces would intervene in Cyprus. In 1965, Armenian diaspora living in foreign countries held meetings claiming that the Turkish killed their ancestors in 1915, which would then be made mention of by Armenian diaspora as "genocide". This occurred at the same time as the last days of İnönü governments. In October 1965, Demirel of JP became the Prime Minister, who would be in office until the military memorandum in 1971. Cyprus issue increasingly continued to occupy the agenda, one of which was for the Demirel government was whether Turkey should intervene in Cyprus or not in 1967. Ihsan Sabri Çağlayangil, who was the foreign minister of JP the government, followed a close relation with France and a pro-Arab politics by excluding Israel a little in the Middle East. Regarding the relations with the USA in this period, there was a tension with the USA on the opium farming. The USA wanted Turkey to stop to grow opium, claiming that their youths were affected by it. However, Demirel rejected

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<sup>10</sup> Kıvanç Ulusoy. The Cyprus Conflict: Turkey's Strategic Dilemma. The Cyprus Conflict: Turkey's Strategic Dilemma. Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies. 2016. 18:4, p.395.

<sup>11</sup> The USA and the Soviet Union confronted each other because of a deployment of certain missile crisis in 1962. For the details, see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban\\_Missile\\_Crisis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban_Missile_Crisis)



this and said that they would go on to grow opium. It can be said that this crisis with the USA led Turkey to come close to the European Economic Community (EEC), especially France. This close relationships with the EEC is said to have caused some generals from the Turkish military, having been said to be pro-American, to have given a memorandum which put an end to the JP government.

Having been called *Détente* of the Cold War period in the world politics owing to the efforts of President Nixon to try to decrease the tension between the USA and the Soviet Union in using nuclear weapons, 1970s did not witness any relaxation in Turkish domestic politics. Between 1971 and 1973, as in 1960 and 1962, there was a transition period again because of the military memorandum and a half-military regime. As of 1973, we see the coalition government of RPP, led by Bülent Ecevit, and National Salvation Party (NSP), led by Necmettin Erbakan. This decade can be said to have been, as the phrase is, a tentalazing phase for the study of IR as there were so many regional conflicts and stunning developments throughout the world, one of which was the crisis of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Speaking of the reflections of these developments in the foreign policy of the very young Turkish coalition government of RPP and NSP, they held the Cyprus Peace Operation in 1974, which was one of the events that sweated the then-Turkish foreign policy the most. Upon this, the USA decided to lay embargoes on Turkey, and Turkey, in return, closed all the military bases of the USA as an exception of Incirlik, which could only be used by NATO.<sup>12</sup> This went on until the military coup in 1980, after which all the military bases of the USA were reopened. Another development of this kind was that, as a contiunation of the meetings of Armenian diaspora in other countries, Turkish Chief Consul to Los Angeles was murdered in January of 1973 by an old Armenian in the USA. Then, an Armenian terrorist organization came out of thin air in 1975, called Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), who murdered Turkish Ambassadors to Vienna and to Paris in just two days in October of 1975. The new coalition government had to deal with these issues of foreign policy as well as with Cyprus issue. As a result of the intervention in Cyprus, the USA, wanting Turkey to stop the operation, started to threaten Turkey not

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<sup>12</sup> Ayşe Ömür Atmaca. The Geopolitical Origins of Turkish-American Relations: Revisiting the Cold War Years. *All Azimuth*. 2014. V3, N1, p. 30.

to use any weapons of NATO. As the Prime Minister of the coalition government, Bülent Ecevit did his best to find a solution to the Cyprus issue by visiting the USA. However, he and his partner Necmettin Erbakan had no choice but to perform the peace operation by force of the international law as part of Zurich and London guarantorship agreements in 1960. Generally speaking without going into much detail, this decade was a period of political and economic instability, terror and chaos for Turkey. Because of that, Turkey did not have the relevant conditions to set a goal to become a strong middle and regional power.

In concern with Turkey's relations especially with the Middle Eastern countries, there was a tendency to develop its relations with the neighbouring countries, as opposed to the DP's USA-centric policy, particularly by recognizing those newly independent states like Algeria. What Turkey had been aiming to do with such a foreign policy was that it needed some alternatives especially after Johnson's threatening letter. As Turkey's import substitution was mainly based upon oil and Turkey did not have enough resources for paying this oil to the Middle East countries, it was slanted towards being given privileges by its neighbours. Therefore, during those Arab-Israeli wars in 1967 and 1973, Turkey took a stand with the Arab countries with the aim of developing relations with them in face of the reaction of the USA and Israel. Then came the year 1980, when there was the Iran-Iraq war in the Middle East. In the meantime, those years of government coalitions period ended in Turkey with the military intervention and the military junta ruled the country for three years between 1980 and 1983. During those three years of the junta government, Turkey's alignment with the USA was reformed and restructured. One of the most important developments in Turkish foreign policy was Turkey's giving up its abstention for membership of Greece to NATO once again. In those years, there were USA-centric policies in Turkey once again after the 1950s.

### **3.1.3 The Years Of Motherland Party (ANAP) (1980-1991)**

After the government change with the new Turkish Constitution of 1980 and the withdrawal of the military government, Turkey turned its face to the USA, as in the 1950s, with Turgut Özal of ANAP, who won the general elections in 1983. This can be considered as the revival or rebirth of Turkish-American relations because Özal, as the new Prime Minister, knew that Turkey was in immediate need of money and support for

Turkish economy so as to be reconstructed again<sup>13</sup>. For him, this money would come from the USA as he was aware of the fact that the most possible way for his government to reconstruct Turkish politics and Turkish economy as well as Turkish military was to develop the relations with the US. So, Turkey turned its face to the United States rather than try to balance the relations between two superpowers in the 1980s. As a foreign policy diplomacy, Turkey did not take sides during the Iran-Iraq war, which took eight years between 1980 and 1988, and aimed to benefit from this neutral policy. Conversely, when the Gulf War broke out in 1990, Turkey was on the side of USA by joining the group of countries by led the USA, which were then applying pressure and laying an embargo on Saddam-led Iraq after the invasion of Kuwait by him.<sup>14</sup> But, of course, the fact that Turkey sided with the USA, which also made it responsible for the instability in Iraq, especially in the northern part, cost Turkey some undesired results, such as the rise of terrorist organizations in northern Iraq especially after the second half of 1980s.

As foreign policy developments, 1983 was also the year in which Northern Republic of Cyprus was formed under the leadership of President Rauf Denktaş and in 1987, Turkey applied for EEC membership again after its first application in 1957 and then Ankara agreement which was signed between EEC and Turkey in 1963. As a consequence of all those economic and political turbulences in Turkey, the membership application process of Turkey delayed until the 1990s although it was tried to be revived by Özal in 1987 by applying for the European Community (EC) at the time. Upon being rejected again, Özal took aim at applying to the Customs Union for the membership, at the end of which Turkey became the member of Customs Union in 1995. Turkey has a privileged status in the EU in terms of the fact that it is the only country which is not a member of the EU but a member of the Customs Union. Even though the then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller set the goal that Turkey would be the member of EU in three years, it has never come true thus far. Even though the same process livened up once again with JDP government in 2005, it still remains to be undecided. Today, it is an ongoing process despite some problems.

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<sup>13</sup> Sinem Eray and Sonat Bayram. The Role of Turgut Özal in Turkish Foreign and Economic Policy During 1983-1993. *International Social Sciences Studies Journal*. 2018, 4(28), p, 6623.

<sup>14</sup> Cameron S. Brown. Turkey in the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003. *Turkish Studies*. 2007. Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 87, 88.

### 3.1.4 The 1990s

1990s were the years dominated on Turkish politics by the army because Turkey's main concern in the international relations was then to fight against terrorism. The rising terrorism in Turkish territories caused the dominance of the army on politics to accelerate more and more. And also, those years were also the coalition years in terms of the governance. And the end of the Cold war came in this decade, in 1991, with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, Turkey tried to develop its relations with the old communist countries, having gained their independence after the fall of the Soviet Union, especially in Central Asia, Caucasia and the Balkans. There was a special focus on founding a group of Turkic States or a Turkish World from the Balkans to China, especially with the countries in the Central Asia<sup>15</sup>, which was often articulated by Demirel and Özal as "a dream". By doing so, their aim was to integrate all these Turkic countries under the flag of a Turkish State.

With the millennium of 2000s, a totally new era started for Turkey. For such a long time, there was a government having been elected alone for the power, JDP. During the first decade of the 2000s, there were good relations with the US, but during the second decade, which has still been the case since then, the relations with the USA can be said to have been fluctuating. Regarding the Middle East policy of Turkey, it was eagerly aiming to maximize its interests in the Middle East and to expand its power, but especially after the Syrian civil war, Turkey's Middle East policy could not reach its objectives as a result of some miscalculations at the same time with some changes in international and regional dynamics.

In the light of the above mentioned, regarding pursuing a foreign policy in the direction of making Turkey a middle power notably before 2002, all governments were fighting for Turkey's life, let alone make Turkey a middle power or a regional power in its harsh geography because of the unsteady and inconsistent economic situation and, particularly, weak military power.

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<sup>15</sup> Sertif Demir, Ayça Eminoğlu and Arzu Y. Aslantürk. The Evolution of Turkey's Foreign Policy Toward Turkish Republics Post-1990s. *Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 2018. Cilt 20 Sayı 2, p. 392.

### **3.2 A Brief Outlook On How JDP First Came To Power**

Speaking of independent of giving a political support to the JDP governments, as have been stated before, this study aims to have a broad look upon the JDP years after 2002, when it first came to power. As the author of this thesis study and a Turkish citizen who have personally experienced the years before the 2000s and the ones beyond, I would just like to assess the long period in which JDP governments have been in power for twenty years by strictly avoiding from being regarded as “a subjective researcher”. I also aim to shed light on why almost half of the Turkish people have shown favour to JDP governments, have voted for them in every election having been held within this period, and thus, they have been in power alone by winning almost every election since they first came to power in 2002. At the end, I will put forward my reasons and justifications of whether Turkey can become a middle power or a regional power in the geography in which it lies.

To mention the governments which came to power alone between the years 1923 and 2002, RPP was in power alone between the years 1923 and 1950, and DP was in power between the years 1950 and 1960. The most memorable one was ANAP period with Özal between the years 1983 and 1991, when the party was sustainably in power alone in this period. The other years were mostly coalition years for the Turkish parties. Therefore, Turkey had been ruled mostly by coalition governments as it was rare in Turkish political elections for a given party to come to power alone due to the domestic political disturbance inside the country until 2000s. It would not be exaggerative to say that Turkish people were almost fed up with elections, after which no political party mostly had not constituted the majority in Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) and a coalition government had to be formed almost after every election. The long government formation process because of the disagreements between the parties and the economic and political chaoses during these undesired processes were, as we say, the icing on the cake. Most probably the worst of all, Turkey suffered some big economic crises with a big devaluation in Turkish currency. As a result of the one in 2001, which was seen as the biggest one by some, so many businesses went insolvent. This made most Turkish people feel anger against those coalition parties. In the meantime, having served as the Mayor of Istanbul between 1994 and 1998, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Erdoğan ), who formed JDP on August 14 2001, was favoured and found successful by, though not all,

many people in Istanbul. He won favour in their eyes as well as many other people from all around Turkey. This success of his, when combined with the people's anger because of those economic crises and never-ending coalition negotiations between parties, paved the way to a big win in the first election in 2002 and his party's coming to power alone.

### **3.2.1 An Overall Assessment Of The Twenty Years With JDP Governments**

In the first four years of its rule, the first JDP government did really do so many reforms which had been expected by the people who voted for them. As a result of the economic crisis in 2001, the interest rates had jumped to 7500 percent daily and the inflation was about 75 percent. As the first data of their strict fiscal discipline that they started to pursue immediately after they came to power, the rates of interest and inflation started to drop dramatically, which then led the six zeros to having been omitted from Turkish currency in 2005. These good performances and works as well as many others, the details of which can be found on the relevant Internet web pages, people started to have a purchasing power with the low interest rates. These good days went on until the first election in 2007 after they had come to power in 2002, and people voted for them, making JDP come to power alone again. However, there was an international economic crisis<sup>16</sup> in 2008, starting from the mortgage credits in the USA and spread across the entire world. Although this caused some trouble throughout Turkey for them, people were understandable to JDP as the crisis affected badly not only Turkey, but almost all countries in the whole world.

In the general election which was held in 2011, people voted for JDP again, with a voting rate of 49,83.<sup>17</sup> The first turbulence for JDP ruling can be said to have started after this election. They had to give battle against FETÖ<sup>18</sup> with the year 2012, which has been still going on as of today. Known as 17-25 December by the public, the first FETÖ

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<sup>16</sup> A global economic crisis affected the whole world and the economies of the world. After this crisis, the international liberal order was questioned by some countries and there was a rumour on a new multipolar world order. For the detailed information on the 2008 economic crisis, see:

[https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/lasting-effects-financial-crisis-have-yet-be-felt?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIxLSUkNC46AIVSrDtCh0HWgR7EAAYASAAEgLyvvD\\_BwE](https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/lasting-effects-financial-crisis-have-yet-be-felt?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIxLSUkNC46AIVSrDtCh0HWgR7EAAYASAAEgLyvvD_BwE)

<sup>17</sup> For the results of all elections in Turkey, including general, presidential and local ones, between 2002 and the year 2019, as of which no elections have yet been held, please check:

<https://www.sabah.com.tr/secim-sonuclari>

<sup>18</sup> Known as Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organization by the public in Turkey, FETÖ waged war against JDP ruling starting from 2012. For more information about FETÖ, please see:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G%C3%BClen\\_movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G%C3%BClen_movement)

attempt to overthrow JDP was the first turbulence in Turkish economy and internal politics. As a result of this, in the general elections that was held on 7 June 2015, JDP government received a vote rate of 40,87, which was not enough to make them come to power alone again though it seemed a high rate of vote. That year, JDP could not, for the first time since they came to power in 2002, receive the necessary majority in TBMM to form a government alone as it was in the previous elections. After unsuccessful three-month coalition negotiations between parties following that election, another general election was held only five months after July 7. This time, JDP received a voting rate of 49,50 and came to power alone again. However, after only nine months, FETÖ attempted a military coup on July 15, 2016, which was broadcast live by many TV channels throughout the world that day. As a result of this turbulence, there have been harsh ups and downs in the rates of interest, inflation, and foreign currencies, which has caused instability in consumer prices since then. The worst outcome of this instability in Turkish economy can be said to have been the drastic rises in exchange rates, which had a tremendous negative effect as rises in trade goods in the domestic market which were obtained only through importing in foreign currency, mainly in the United States Dollars (USD). These drastic rises in exchange rates led to high costs of living by way of increases in prices. As a consequence, most basic needs of people have gotten expensive, which can be said to be the case as of the year 2021. Most probably as a reaction to these economic fluctuations and instability, people, for the second time, JDP lost some of their support among people, and this time they lost so many votes in local elections, the most painful result of which was, quite likely, losing Ankara, the capital, and Istanbul, which had been governed by mayors of JDP since 1994 as well as some major cities of Turkey.

As of today, economic instability and turbulence, the ups and downs in interest rates and inflation and rises in consumer prices are going on and the next elections will be held in June, 2023. As for the political support to JDP today, due to all their success in foreign policy, revolutionary investments in certain fields like technology and military, which this thesis study will below assume the justifications and reasons for Turkey having been made a middle power by JDP governments, most people seem to sustain their political supports to them, though there are some who would tend to not support a JDP government if there were an election because of this high cost of living when we examine the general atmosphere in social or some mainstream media. Ironically, in spite of all bad effects of the Coronavirus pandemic process on the economies of all the countries

throughout the world, Turkish economy was one of the two world economies which grew in 2020, the first being China by 2,3% and the second being Turkey by 1.8%. This is what most people are trying to make sense in the presence of the negativity in prices mentioned above. Also, according to the reports of the International Monetary Fund (the IMF), Turkey ranks as the fourth country, with an estimated growth rate of 6%, which is expected to grow most in 2021, after India, China and Malaysia<sup>19</sup>.

### **3.2.2 Practices During The JDP Governments**

As stated above, most Turkish governments between the years 1923 and 2002 were coalition ones, so they could not pursue a steady domestic and foreign policy. Particularly after 1960s, there were right and left ideologies in both the politics and among the people throughout the country. This, of course, led to fierce street fights among people and arduous negotiations among parties and the processes mostly necessitated a third way to assure the stability. With their coming to power with a big support and expectation, the first practice, naturally, was to put an end to these chaos atmospheres. Thus, this allowed them to set the necessary targets in the direction of making Turkey first a self-sustained and then a strong country which could be one of those candidate countries to be a middle and regional power by following their own free policies. As well as the important improvements in the atmosphere of Turkish politics and among people, this study will analyze JDP practices under the headings below:

- Practices in Turkish economy
- Investments

#### ***3.2.2.1 Practices in Turkish economy<sup>20</sup>***

It is an undeniable fact that economy is, most probably, by far the best indicator of a country being a powerful one in order for it to be able to continue their existence.<sup>21</sup> A country that has a strong economy will feel safe and secure in its relationships with other countries in terms of hard power and soft power policies. The place of a country in

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<sup>19</sup> For the detailed estimated growth rates of IMF of countries for 2021, please see in Turkish and English: <https://tr.euronews.com/2021/01/26/imf-ye-gore-bu-y-l-hangi-ulke-ne-kadar-buyuyecek>

<sup>20</sup> Economy is a topic which is discussed in details under the umbrella of Economics. Here, only the economic practices of JDP governments will be discussed.

<sup>21</sup> Lauren M Phillips. "International Relations in 2030: The Transformative Power of Large Developing Countries." Discussion Paper. *German Development Institute*. 2008, p. 16.



the international economic architecture determines its capability and ability to move if the international system is to be called a “game”.<sup>22</sup>

### ***3.2.2.2 Fight Against Devaluated Turkish Currency Against Foreign Currencies***

Economy is, most probably, the biggest distinctive feature of countries for their goals in becoming a powerful country. Having set this goal, another biggest factor for them is the local production, which allows a country to reduce foreign dependency. Countries that do not, at least to a certain degree, have sufficient economic power and capacity of local production are almost impossible to be called powerful countries. Leading the subject to Turkish economy and broadly speaking about the years for Turkey before 2002, especially between 1980 and 2001, Turkey mostly had to deal with high inflation, interest rates and unemployment rates, which can be named as “instability in economy”. Particularly as a result of the disagreements between the political parties between 1990 and 2000, Turkey suffered an economic crisis in 1994 and another one in 2001, most probably the biggest economic crisis of all time.<sup>23</sup> One of the things that JDP government first did was that they followed a disciplined and tight fiscal policy. This way, they managed to curb the increasing inflation and interest rates first, and then lower them gradually. As a consequence of this, they managed to omit six zeros from the Turkish currency, which was a currency full of zeros until 2001. And Turkish people started to use their new currency with a high appreciation or value. This was a historic step towards protecting the value of Turkish currency against the foreign currencies, especially as of 2005, when six zeros were omitted from Turkish currency (Table 8).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Gökhan Özkan. “International Relations and Observable Dimensions of Power: An Assessment from A Realist Perspective.” *Electronic Journal of Social Sciences*. 9:34. 2010.

<sup>23</sup> This economic crisis in 1994 and 2001 is a very big reasearch in itself. But, for a general outline of it, see: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-45226072>

<sup>24</sup> Koray KAPLICA, 2020. <https://www.dogrulukpayi.com/bulten/turkiye-nin-tarihsel-olarak-kur-degisimleri>

**Table 8:** Value of Turkish Lira against USD, Euro and English Sterling.

Year	USD	Euro	English Sterling
2002	1505839,53	1.429.766,05	2.268.903,91
2003	1493067,76	1.685.301,16	2.435.905,40
2004	1422341,23	1.767.685,88	2.604.425,86
2005	1,34	1,67	2,44
2006	1,43	1,80	2,64
2007	1,30	1,78	2,60
2008	1,29	1,90	2,38
2009	1,55	2,15	2,41
2010	1,50	1,99	2,32
2011	1,67	2,32	2,67
2012	1,79	2,30	2,84
2013	1,90	2,53	2,97
2014	2,19	2,91	3,60
2015	2,72	3,02	4,15
2016	3,02	3,34	4,08
2017	3,65	4,12	4,69
2018	4,35	5,20	5,88

Source: <https://www.dogrulukpayi.com/bulten/turkiye-nin-tarihsel-olarak-kur-degisimleri>

As can be seen in the table, the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 symbolize the former Turkish Lira which was issued with multiple zeros as a result of the high inflation. From the year 2005 onwards, we can see the new Turkish Lira in its new form. Having a look at the years between 2005 and 2012 from the stabilized exchange rate, we can say that the tight fiscal policy brought its results, which was one of the complaints and expectations of Turkish people before 2002.

### ***3.2.2.3 Fight Against High Rates of Interest, Inflation, And Unemployment***

Interest rates are almost inevitable in most countries in the current economic world. Any person from all walks of life may take loans from banks and meet their needs, whether that is being a government official, a tradesperson or one who works for any private sector. For this to be sustainable in terms of the repayment capacity of people, the economic stability in a country must be strong and not be fluctuating. They must not feel uneasy, fearful or troubled in paying the loan back to the bank as the credit period may be up to 120 months, which requires people to lead a balanced life according to their budgets. This was what exactly Turkish people had after 2002. They, naturally, compared

the then-purchasing power with the one in the years before 2002 because the interest rates throughout the country were about 75% on average during the years before 2002. As of 2002, they started to fall dramatically.



Actual	Previous	Highest	Lowest	Dates	Units	Frequency
19:00	19:00	500	4.50	1990-2021	percent	daily

Figure 15: Interest rates<sup>25</sup> in Turkey by years

Source: <https://tradingeconomics.com/turkey/interest-rate>

As it is shown in the figure 15, the years before 2002 were the ones in which interest rates were high and instable, and they started to drop after 2002.<sup>26</sup> After 2002, the first JDP government paid attention to the issue and the interest rates started to drop dramatically, which brought a steady purchase power to Turkish people. In fact, we can say that they were not used to living in such an atmosphere of low interest rates. When the interest rates fell from 70% to below 1%, most people started to take loans from banks and buy their needs such as houses, flats or cars. Therefore, in the following years, they kept favouring them in the upcoming elections.

<sup>25</sup> The fluctuation in the rates of interest is a field that ranges far in Economics. The aim here is to provide an overall outlook on the practices of Turkey after 2002. For more in-depth details in Turkish, see: <https://www.yillaragore.com/yillara-gore-turkiye-de-faiz-oranlari/> and in-depth details in English, see: <https://tradingeconomics.com/turkey/interest-rate>

<sup>26</sup> Mustafa Torun and Muhammet Karanfil. 1980-2013 Dönemi Türkiye Ekonomisinde Enflasyon ve Faiz Oranı Arasındaki İlişki. *Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi / Journal of Administrative Sciences*. 14:27. 2016, p. 475.

#### ***3.2.2.4 Turkey's Paying off its Debt to the IMF<sup>27</sup>***

Another justification of this study for Turkey's becoming a middle power after 2002 is the issue of Turkey's debt to the IMF, which was founded in 1947. Turkey became a member of the IMF in the same year, but it took its first loan from the IMF in 1958 during the DP years. Most governments after DP went on to take loans from the IMF until 2002. Today, Turkey is one of the few countries in the world which has already managed to pay off its debt to the IMF (Figure 16), which can be regarded as an economic success not only for the JDP governments but also for any government ruling its country. Here, this will be regarded as one of the most prominent economic successes of JDP governments, so, before talking about Turkey's never-ending debt to the IMF until May 2013, it would be to the point to touch on the debt burden of the developing world and what the IMF is as the leading institution to give loans to the countries, particularly developing and underdeveloped ones, that are in need of financial aids. Also, countries still having debts to such institutions as the IMF cannot set a goal to become a middle power country. So, debt burdens of the developing world and reasons of it are one of the main economic and political problems in the world regarding the financial structure because when we talk about the financial structure, we need to underline the main problems of the developing world from the financial perspective and their debt burden to the IMF.

Because of the three geopolitical problems at the end of 1970s, 1979 Iranian revolution, Iran-Iraq war and second oil shock, there was an inflation in the USA and the main response of the American government to this inflation was to increase the interest rates. So, with these increased interest rates, the main expectation was that credits would be more expensive so no one would take credits or spend money more than enough. To put it another way, when the interest rates are on the increase, the main assumption is that the people will not be willing to take credits. There will be less demand, there will be less consumption and the prices will go down. This was the main expectation. But the increased interest rates not only increased the trade deficit of the US, but it also had an impact on the developing world like the then-Turkey, which was the starting point of the debt burden of the developing world. For the oil importers, it was, again, a big burden

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<sup>27</sup> For the detailed information, see: <https://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/2013/06/art-572657/>

because the prices increased after the second oil shock. They had massive bills to cover their debts, so they had to take credits with those high interest rates. For the oil exporters, on the other hand, they had borrowed heavily to industrialize their economies after the oil crisis and they also suffered a lot from these increased interest rates. For example, Mexico officially declared that it would not be able to pay back its loans. So, this is the starting point of debt burden crisis developing world has still been facing since the end of 1970s.

The solution was loans from the IMF, but only with a condition. In return for the IMF loans, states agreed to undertake economic reforms. Until 1980s, the IMF was able to give credits or loans, but there was no condition because after the WWII, under the Bretton Woods System, the IMF was one of the financial institutions to help the countries that are facing budget deficits. But starting from the 1980s, there is a change in the task of the IMF, which was the neoliberal ideology. In return for the IMF loans, those developing states were forced to adopt neoliberal policies. Since they needed money and they had debts, they did not have any other choice but open their economies and adopting those neoliberal policies. So, 1980s were considered in the literature as the lost decade of development because many African, Asian and Latin American countries were busy paying their debts and their interest rates. Most of these developing countries were even poorer in the 1980s and 1990s. In this period, the debts of those countries were so big that there were few resources to be spent on health, education, etc. They could not allocate any money for their social services from the budget. In the last decade, the debt payment of those countries has increased even more.

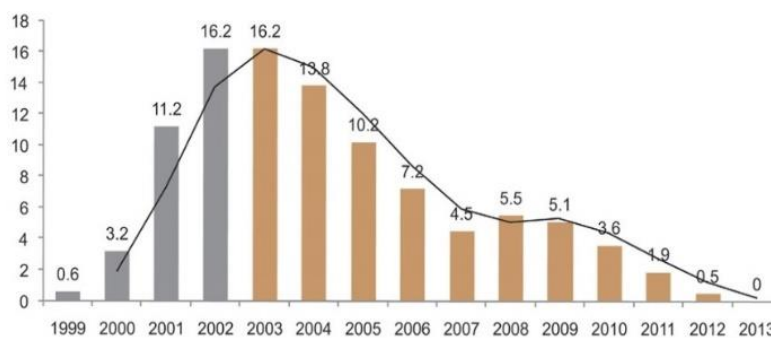


Figure 16: Turkey's debt to IMF by years

Source: SETA ANALYSIS<sup>28</sup> (2013)

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.setav.org/en/>

### 3.2.3 Investments

#### 3.2.3.1 Investments In Technology

There is no doubt, as well as being a crystal-clear fact, that technological capability matters in international competition, particularly these days in which digitalization is one of the main agendas of international actors as a consequence of this Covid 19 process. In the future, it will be most significant for countries to what extent they will be able to include the technological innovations and adapt them to their systems in certain deterministic fields like production and production cycles, so new forms and relations regarding production will have a decisive influence on the future course of international relations. Being reliant on smart machines or artificial intelligence rather than labour force is certain to come to the fore. Those who will be able to do so will have great advantage in terms of competition over those who will not. Just as the industrial ages, starting at the end of the 1800s as 1.0, was each left behind by the newer one, so the age of 3.0 of 1970s will be done so by the industrial age of 4.0., which can be said to have started after the 2000s and after this Coronavirus process in particular. The states who will fail to adapt themselves to the industrial revolution of 4.0 in terms of production cycle will lose its power competition. Being able to produce technologically incentive goods and making profits by selling them to others *do* seem to be of the main importance. Although there are some allegations that globalization has created so many worldwide problems and that the global supply chains should be stopped for a while, it seems a groundless fear in that what is important is to be able to find producers cheaply for the products that states will design, which requires outsourcing. For this, the amount of labour power spent for production should be taken down but the amount of knowledge should be increased. The amount of intelligence and knowledge that will be put in the production of goods is directly related to the benefits that will be obtained. That is why new methods of production will matter a lot in the future. At this very point, this study bases its allegation on the fact that Turkey has taken steps towards these developments since 2002, when JDP came to power.<sup>29</sup> Thus, this study will analyze Turkey in the context of “a

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<sup>29</sup> This study *does not* aim to politically assess all the performances and practices that JDP governments have made since 2002, but it *does* aim to assess only the investments and services in an objective manner towards being a powerful country, alias being a middle power, under the current technological developments having started with the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

middle power” under these developments in the history of power of the states and Turkey’s potential as a middle power in the emerging multipolar world in a chronological order, starting with the years between 1923, when the Turkish Republic was founded, and 2002, when JDP came to power.

### ***3.2.3.2 Investments In Producing its Own Full-Electric Domestic Car, Turkey's Automobile Joint Venture Group Inc. (TOGG)***

Domestic production, in whatever field it is, means reducing foreign dependency for any country, which means that the money which is spent on a product will stay inside the country, directly affecting the GDP<sup>30</sup> of that country. Thus, the more a country produces its own products, the less GDP it will have, which requires assiduously investing in domestic production. This is what Turkey has been doing since 2002 and particularly as of 2010. One of these investments has been to decide to produce the domestic car of Turkey. The first steps towards producing a fully-electric Turkish car, TOGG, being the first Turkish domestic car, were taken through negotiations between the government and the candidate companies at the beginning of this decade. After long negotiations, the first signatures were officially put to the protocol of the Company of TOGG on 2 November, 2017. After the necessary official works for the production, both parties, the state and the company, entered into the agreement of the land where the manufacturing facility of TOGG will be built. The first prototypes<sup>31</sup> of different segments of TOGG were unveiled and introduced to the public in a press conference in which the Turkish President himself participated on December 27, 2019. Also, C-SUV model of TOGG achieved a gorgeous success by winning and receiving *IF Design Award* in mobility<sup>32</sup>. The first produced TOGGs are expected to be in the market at the end of 2022.

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<sup>30</sup> Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is one of the main subjects of Economics. For all the details about GDP, see: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gdp.asp>

<sup>31</sup> For all the visuals of the prototypes of TOGG in English, see: <https://www.euronews.com/2019/12/28/erdogan-unveils-prototypes-of-togg-turkey-s-first-domestic-car> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1wjlWzn1xQ>

<sup>32</sup> For the details of this big award of TOGG C-SUV Model, for English, see: <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/automotive/togg-becomes-1st-turkish-brand-to-win-if-design-award-in-mobility> and for Turkish, see: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/ekonomi/togg-mobilite-alaninda-if-tasarim-odulunu-alan-ilk-turk-markasi-oldu/2212587>

To justify the domestic car production of Turkey, it is important to underline the fact that importing cars for the countries that do not have their local ones is one of the leading factors of budget deficits. The more cars a country imports, the more money they will pay to the car exporting countries. When considered from this point of view, Turkey has been a car importer since the first automobiles were invented, though it has had some foreign direct investments (FDI) in car manufacturing since 1980s. In this sense, TOGG bears a historical meaning for Turkey. At this point, Turkey has taken an important step in the direction of regarding itself a middle power because TOGG will be a transnational company rather than a multinational company. Multinational corporations are a kind of merger of capital from more than one nation. So, it is actually about the nationality. For example, a corporation in any sector may be established with the capital of two different companies from two different countries. Transnational companies, on the other hand, is that the owner of the capital and the controlling of the share is owned by one nation. As an example, a company which is owned by a country has its own capital and has a voice in the production. Turkey, when viewed from this aspect, will have a say in the production of TOGG, for which this study assumes Turkey a middle or regional power.

As for the FDIs from the perspective of TOGG, an FDI is an investment which a company makes outside the home country in which the control over the resources transferred remains with the investment. In FDIs, control is also transferred. However, if there is an investment but no control, then it is called “an indirect investment” or “portfolio investment”. When a country receives an FDI, it is called inflows and the country is called host country, but when it sends an investment, it is called outflow and the country is called home country. From the point of this study, FDIS actually reduce the sovereignty of the state because these transnational companies interfere in domestic politics, so it has a negative impact though there are some who claim the otherwise. In the case of TOGG, however, Turkey will not face the same difficulties as it has had with the FDI automobile companies in Turkey since 1980s. A 40% decline in 2020 and 2021 is expected in the the volume of FDIs due to Coronavirus crisis<sup>33</sup> although how long further the extent of the uncertainty will go on cannot be predicted yet.

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<sup>33</sup> Gaurav Bhattarai and Binita Subedi. Impact of COVID-19 on FDIs, Remittances and Foreign Aids: A Case Study of Nepal. *Millennial Asia*, 1–17. 2006, p. 5.



### 3.2.3.3 Investments In Satellites And Space Program

Commonly accepted as an indicator of being a developed country by most of the public, very few countries in the world are mostly known for their satellite and space studies, such as the USA, Russia, China and Japan. These countries are all developed countries. There have been other attempts of some developing countries in this field of investment and development in recent years, one of which is Turkey. Turkey has spent a lot on producing its own satellites and sending them to space for different purposes such as communication and military. Although there were some few attempts to produce its own satellites before the 2000s, they were weak ones. However, the most prominent steps have been taken in the last fifteen years, as it is shown below (Table 9).

**Table 9: Turkish Satellites<sup>34</sup> produced after 2002**

NAME OF SATELLITE	DATE OF LAUNCH
TÜRKSAT 3A	2008
RASAT	2011
GÖKTÜRK-2	2012
TÜRKSAT 4A	2014
TÜRKSAT 4B	2015
GÖKTÜRK-1	2016

Source: <https://www.turksat.com.tr>

<https://uzay.tubitak.gov.tr/tr/uydu-uzay/imece>

<https://tua.gov.tr/tr>

Another space program which has excited Turkish people was the explanation of the incumbent government that Turkey will land on the moon in 2023, which will be the one hundredth year of the foundation of the Turkish Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Turkish Space Agency (TUA) will develop the related projects on the National Space

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<sup>34</sup> Turkey has a few institutions dealing with space programs and satellites. Abstaining from getting off the point, this thesis study has given an overall information about Turkey's space and satellite works. For more detailed information, the following can be visited in Turkish and English :

<https://www.turksat.com.tr>

<https://uzay.tubitak.gov.tr/tr/uydu-uzay/imece>

<https://tua.gov.tr/tr>

Program of Turkey. In relation with these programs, Turkey has tested its rocket engine<sup>35</sup> which will be used for landing on the moon (Figure 17).



Figure 17: Turkey's test of rocket engine

Source: [www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com)

### ***3.2.3.4 Investments In Military Power***

Military power has been one of the indicators of power for states throughout history. Of the mainstream theories of IR, realism is the most prominent theory that attaches importance to the military capacities of states. Mostly because of its difficult geographical position and not feeling safe<sup>36</sup>, Turkey has had to keep its military power as strong as possible especially since the two world wars. To do so, it mostly purchased the military equipment from other producer states in the world and it has had to allocate a large sum of its annual budgets to this. However, this allocation started to fall after 2002 when the JDP governments came to power and decided to reduce its military foreign dependency as much as possible. For this, they have been investing in producing the local military equipment since 2002, which has brought Turkey to the forefront around the globe in its struggle to be called as a strong middle and regional power since that day.

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<sup>35</sup> For the detailed information, please check: <https://www.dw.com/tr/t%C3%BCrkiyede-ay-i%C3%A7in-roket-motoru-testi/a-57161350>

<sup>36</sup> Korhan K. Gökmenoğlu and et al. 2015. Military Expenditure and Economic Growth: The Case of Turkey. *Procedia Economics and Finance, Science Direct*. 2015, p. 455.

This is regarded as a great success since Turkey now produces 70% of its military power locally and it is estimated to reach up to 75% by 2023.<sup>37-38</sup>

Turkey is the second military force in NATO and sixth in the world in terms of its military power<sup>39</sup> and it has a critically important status in terms of its geographical and geopolitical position in world politics and it is hard to estimate its exact military power due to the weak measurement methods.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, Turkey has become one of the heavily military equipment producers of the world lately and has already started to export its products to some countries. It also supplies systems to some countries in the Middle East, Far East and also in NATO<sup>41</sup>. Since the main theme of this study is to provide some data regarding the importance of the military power of Turkey for its goals to become a strong middle and regional power, an overall analysis will be made on the subject of Turkey's investments in domestic defense industry.

The most leading success of domestic production of Turkish military power after 2002 was the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), both armed and unarmed. The President of Turkish National Defense, Mustafa DEMIR, said that Turkey's success in producing its own helicopters, tanks, armed and unarmed UAVs, armed drones and missiles will go on increasingly in the future and Turkey will become one of top four exporting countries in the military equipment<sup>42</sup>. He also stated that Turkey has had experience in UAVs and will use this experience for producing the country's fifth-generation fighter jets<sup>43</sup>.

Turkey's recent success in producing its military equipment has been appearing in the world press and media of late:

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<sup>37</sup> Tapia, Felipe Sánchez. 2021. The Turkish Defence Industry. *First-Class Strategic Asset. IEEE Analysis Paper* 2021, p. 13.

<sup>38</sup>[http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs\\_analisis/2021/DIEEEA06\\_2021\\_FELSAN\\_IndustriaTurca\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_analisis/2021/DIEEEA06_2021_FELSAN_IndustriaTurca_ENG.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.worldmilitarydatabase.com/top-20-military-powers>

<sup>40</sup> Balci, Ali and Çelik, Cahit. Turkey's Military Power in the 2000s: An Assessment for Measurement Methods. *Turkish Policy Quarterly*. 18:2, 2019, p. 102.

<sup>41</sup> For the whole article, please check: <https://www.defensenews.com/native/turkish-defence-aerospace/2020/07/21/how-turkey-became-one-of-the-worlds-leading-manufacturers-of-weapons-systems/>

<sup>42</sup> For the whole interview, please check: <https://www.savunmahaber.com/en/prof-dr-ismail-demir-president-of-defence-industries-answers-questions-from-members-of-the-press/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkey-to-use-uav-helicopter-experience-in-national-fighter-jet-development>

- “In recent years, Turkey has developed an impressive local drone industry. Armed Turkish-built Bayraktar TB2 and Anka-S drones have proven themselves in combat in operations in Syria, Iraq, and as far afield as Libya”<sup>44</sup>.

- “Turkey’s present Unmanned Aerial System trends are fairly promising, suggesting that the nation will further accelerate its robotic warfare transformation in the coming decades (Kasapoğlu, 2020)”<sup>45</sup>.

- “During the 2000s, the Turkish shipbuilding industry witnessed substantial growth, driven by dynamic financing by local banks and economic stability. Turkish shipyards focused notably on building relatively small oil and chemical tankers during this period.”<sup>46</sup>

- “Today, our industry produces high-tech and highly capable products. When we examine the ships produced by the Turkish Naval Forces in recent years, the activities are carried out for almost all kinds of surface and underwater elements. This design diversity shows Turkey’s determination to design, develop and produce all kinds of modern and highly capable warships”<sup>47</sup>.

### **3.3 Turkey’s Foreign Policy And Global Governance**

#### **3.3.1 An Overall Outlook On Turkish Foreign Policy And Global Governance After 2002**

Although there was a bipolar international environment between the years of 1950 and 1990, on the one hand the USA and western powers, representing the community of liberal democracy and capitalist countries and on the other hand the Soviet Union, representing socialist bloc, the USA was the most powerful country. During this Cold War era, Turkish foreign policy was mostly NATO- and West-oriented. After the collapse

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<sup>44</sup> Paul Iddon. 2020. Turkey’s Drones Are Coming in All Sizes These Days. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/pauliddon/2020/10/04/turkeys-drones-are-coming-in-all-sizes-these-days/?sh=3123a82e2004>

<sup>45</sup> Can Kasapoğlu. 2020. ANALYSIS – Turkey’s robotic warfare future in the skies. ANALYSIS. *Anadolu Agency*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/analysis-turkey-s-robotic-warfare-future-in-the-skies-/1832430>

<sup>46</sup> OECD Council Working Party on Shipbuilding (WP6). The Shipbuilding Industry in Turkey. September 2011

<sup>47</sup> Naki Polat. 2021. The Rise of The Turkish Naval Industry. Turkish Defense & Aerospace. Retrieved from: <https://www.defensenews.com/native/turkish-defence-aerospace/2020/09/21/the-rise-of-turkish-naval-industry/>

of the Soviet Union, the USA appeared as the sole superpower and dominated the global politics under the liberal international order until 2008<sup>48</sup>, when an economic crisis hit the world economy. Since there were two different types of governance in Turkey before and after 2002, this transitional period was a historic period in terms of Turkey's foreign policy and global governance.

First of all, the dynamics of the period between 1991 and 2008 did not exist in many countries of the world, like the third world countries. The free market-oriented capitalism, the security activities under the USA hegemony with a coalition and alliances like NATO with certain countries are some of them, as well as political values and the notion of human rights such as separation of power, primacy of human beings and representative democracy. Upon considering the number of the countries in the world, these dynamics seem to be very limited rather than being an international order<sup>49</sup> because, in order for something to be called "international", it should include most of the countries rather than a certain number of countries, called western countries. In addition, this order owes its existence, to a significant extent, to the unrivalled capacity of the USA in many respects. But, throughout the Cold War, those countries that were seen as traditional allies of the USA were influenced in a negative way by the accelerating power of the USA.<sup>50</sup> It tends to be a period under liberal American hegemony, even though the USA did not impose it to the members and alliances. Another thing is that globalization is defined as "Americanization of global values", which seems to be a period of the USA only. Also, this period can be said to have been one in which human beings seemed to have become customers or consumers by this homo-economicus environment. Although there were some people who were, and still are, happy about this period and thought that it would last for a long time, there are some claims that it would not last for a long time as it was a unipolar world and we have been living in a multipolar environment. As of today, the USA does not seem to occupy the most important position in global politics anymore and cannot behave in the direction that it wants. Therefore, we can observe that we are slowly

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<sup>48</sup> Muzaffer Ercan Yılmaz. "The New World Order: An Outline of the Post-Cold War Era." *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*. 2008. Vol. 7, No. 4. p. 45.

<sup>49</sup> Constance Duncombe and Tim Dunne. *After Liberal Order*. *International Affairs*. 2018. 94: 1, pp. 26-27.

<sup>50</sup> Tarık Oğuzlu. Tarık Oğuzlu (2008) *Middle Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West?*. 2008. *Turkish Studies*, 9:1, p. 7.

moving towards a multipolar environment, meaning that it was a liberal international order until 2008, but a post-liberal international order after 2008.

To mention briefly the Turkish foreign policy until the year 2002 for the sake of comparing the Turkish foreign policy behaviours before and after the year 2002, there was the RPP single party period and there was the dominance of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü as the head of the state when we look at the early years of Turkish Republic. But, naturally, these two actors were regarded as the savers of the state from foreign invasions and intervention. In fact, they were busy with the reconstruction of the Turkish Republic.<sup>51</sup> Their roles were therefore considered as very heavy factors in the Turkish foreign policy and the decision-making mechanism. There were some other ministers, but they were like the supporters or helpers of the President of Turkish Republic as the main decision maker. Then, there was the dominance of Minister of Foreign Affairs in the 1950s because the DP period opened a totally different era for Turkish politics as well as foreign policy. With this in mind, all the old staff were changed with the new ones such as new Member of Parliaments and new ministers. Although they came from the same background with the RPP, those people were ruling the state in a different fashion, from which the role of Minister of Foreign Affairs resulted.

In 1960s, as a result of political polarization or ideological polarization, not only in Turkey but also in the world, two ideological poles appeared in Turkey, the rightist and the leftist movements, or the nationalists and the communists. In this period, the public opinion on Turkish foreign policy increased with the liberal principle of the constitution in 1961, which was changed after the military intervention in 1960. In addition, we can observe the importance attached to human rights, liberties or freedom and other things when we look at the constitution in 1961. So, in the 1960s and 70s, as a result of the ideological polarization or the rise of the ideological politics, we see the rise of the impact of public opinion on Turkish foreign policy. The Cyprus issue, as well as the Cuban missile crisis, was the main issue in the 1960s and 70s<sup>52</sup> and this drew the attention of the public opinion, which led to different meetings and protests reflecting the ideas of the public opinion regarding the foreign policy.

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<sup>51</sup> Aydın, Mustafa. 2019. Op. Cit., p. 369.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 371.

With the 1980s, Özal became the Turkish Prime Minister. Having been the head of the State Planning Organization before the military intervention in 1980 and who would be the President of Turkey in the early 1990s, Özal was an economic man and his main target was the Turkish economy<sup>53</sup>, so he was trying to base the Turkish foreign policy on economy. So, we witness an increase in the number of businessmen or the rising influence of economy on Turkish foreign policy. When we look at the 1990s, especially after the Gulf War, the power vacuum in Northern Iraq and the emergence of terrorist organizations, there was a hegemony of Turkish military on the Turkish foreign policy. As they fought against terrorism and they tried to protect the survival and the sovereignty of the state, their hegemony gradually increased in the 1990s as a result of this fight against terrorism. When we come to the 2000s, the hegemony of the military gradually declined and the accumulation of power was in the hands of decision makers, especially the Prime Minister and the President Erdoğan, who became the dominant figure in the formulation and the implementation of foreign policy. Turkey has gone through a serious change and transformation since 2002, in terms of not only with its certain breakthroughs in certain fields for a goal of a strong middle power in the world politics and regional power in its region, but also with its unusual foreign policy when compared to the years before 2002, as having been stated in the previous section of this study.

In connection with the developments stated above, Turkey employed a different foreign policy and global governance after 2002, being quite different from periods before 2002. It all began with the establishment of new party in August 2001, JDP, by the former mayor of Istanbul, Erdoğan, with his close friends. Not long after the establishment of the new party, in the elections of November 2, 2002, JDP came to power alone with a voting rate of 35%. It was the first time in Turkey for an Islamist-rooted political party to come to power alone. There were also some who called JDP as “Neo-Ottomanist”.<sup>54</sup> Erdoğan had some troublesome days at the beginning of his government. He was put in prison for three months for reading a poem claimed to have involved some Islamic content. As a consequence of this, his deputyship was not accepted by the law. His close friend, Abdullah Gül (Gül ), became the Prime Minister and Yaşar YAKIŞ was the Minister of

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<sup>53</sup> Sinem Eray and Sonat Bayram. The Role of Turgut Özal in Turkish Foreign and Economic Policy During 1983-1993. *Social Sciences Studies Journal (SSSJournal)*. 4:28, 2018, p. 6623.

<sup>54</sup> Aydın, Mustafa. 2019. Op. Cit., p. 369.

Foreign Affairs in the absence of Erdoğan. However, Erdoğan later became a deputy in the renewed elections and became the Prime Minister<sup>55</sup>. When he took office, Gül became the first Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2003 while Erdoğan was in his office.

As of 2003, Erdoğan's very young government, which is also called the first Erdoğan period between the years 2002 and 2007, started to work at full strength. They followed a multifaceted foreign policy in the first five years. Erdoğan, Gül and the other ministers paid so many visits to other countries as much as possible. In this period, the first Erdoğan government affiliated with the EU and the USA in terms of the foreign policy. JDP government showed a maximum effort and developed Turkish-EU relations under the Foreign Ministry of Gül and entered into negotiations with the EU in 2005, which further approached Turkey to the EU. As a result of these negotiations, some chapters for the full membership to the EU were opened. During this period, Turkey developed a new discourse of democracy in the domestic and the foreign policies, which was a mingled connecting policy. This was one of the biggest foreign policy successes of the first Erdoğan government.

Turkey has been a member of NATO since 1952. After the 9/11 attacks, the USA held a military operation in Afghanistan under the Presidency of George W. Bush, putting the fifth article of NATO<sup>56</sup>. Fifteen months later, the USA attacked Iraq on the grounds that they took democracy there. The USA wanted to use the Persian Gulf in the south and Turkish territory in the north for this operation. This was the first test of the very young JDP government in terms of Turkish foreign policy. The USA wanted Turkish soldiers to participate in the operations in Iraq along with the American soldiers. JDP took this to TBMM on 1 March, 2003, which is known as the Memorandum of March 1. Surprisingly, although Turkey and the USA had good relations at the time, TBMM, 65% of which consisted of JDP deputies, rejected this and the request of the USA was not approved by the assembly.

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<sup>55</sup> This is a subject of domestic policy of Turkey at the time. For further information the domestic developments at the time, see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recep\\_Tayyip\\_Erdo%C4%9Fan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recep_Tayyip_Erdo%C4%9Fan)

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2006/issue2/english/art2.html>



The first JDP government paid a lot of attention to the Middle East in this period. From 2005 onwards, they wended their way to the Middle Eastern countries with an increasing effort. Erdoğan visited Israel in 2005 and came together with the then Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, in Jerusalem. Erdoğan and Gül held intense official talks with the aim of contributing to the peace policies of the region. Erdoğan wanted the question of Palestine between Israel and Palestine to be solved in a peaceful way. He also pursued a policy in the direction of contributing to the establishment of peace between Israel and Syria. This was an important initiative policy in terms of foreign policy because Erdoğan and his friends pursued a policy of zero problems with the neighbours. Additionally, they followed a Cyprus initiative policy in Cyprus, but it failed because of the fact that the Greeks in Cyprus refused the Kofi Annan Plan, which JDP government supported.<sup>57</sup>

After 2005, alongside the Middle East initiative, the first JDP government pursued an Africa initiative policy within the frame of military, political, socio-cultural and commercial foreign policy goals.<sup>58</sup> This was one of the most important diplomatic initiatives and demarches in the history of Turkish Republic since Africa was one of the regions that Turkey had neglected in terms of foreign policy in the past. Indeed, Turkey did not have a consulate in most of the African countries, let alone embassy. This period was the years in which Turkey started to increase its influence in Africa, which still goes on today. Within the scope of African initiative, JDP government carried through a big initiative for the other African countries *neglected* by Turkey until then. Turkey would appoint ambassador to such countries as Kenya and Tanzania from 2010 onwards. This was an intriguing, attention-grabbing and remarkable foreign policy. And not long before, it engaged attention in many western countries as Turkey started to develop its relations with Africa with its African initiative policy, to which it did not pay enough attention and did not give due consideration in the past.

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<sup>57</sup> For the details of Kofi Annan Plan, see: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-annan-plan-and-the-greek-cypriot-no-false-reasons-and-claims.en.mfa>

<sup>58</sup> Mehmet Özkan. Turkey's rising role in Africa. *Turkish Policy Quarterly*. 9:4. 2008, p. 94.

In 2007, the issue of Turkish Presidency elections<sup>59</sup> broke out with the expiration of period of office of the then Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer. TBMM was to elect the 11<sup>th</sup> Turkish President at the time. After harsh days of domestic policy, Gül was elected the 11<sup>th</sup> Turkish President of Turkey. Consequently, Gül had to leave the office of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There was the general election on 22 July, 2007 and JDP came to power alone again with a voting rate of 47% and the second JDP government took office between the years 2007 and 2011. With Gül being elected the 11<sup>th</sup> Turkish President by TBMM, Ali Babacan (Babacan ) became the Minister of Foreign Affairs until 2009. Ahmet Davutoğlu (Davutoğlu) became the Foreign Affairs Minister between the years 2009 and 2014, who was considered to have shaped the Turkish foreign policy while he was in office.<sup>60</sup> As of 2007, Turkey turned its face to the Middle East again, but it advanced its relations both with the USA and the EU. Particularly in the direction of the Copenhagen criteria, JDP wanted to further develop the Turkey-EU relations as a continuation of the negotiation framework with the EU in 2005. JDP came to power with a liberal policy, and what counts is individual rights, property rights and the focus on the representative government inside the state in liberal foreign policy.<sup>61</sup> With this object in mind, they developed and sped up discourses in the direction of human rights, fundamental rights and liberties, minority rights, a steady political and democratic governance, an orderly market economy and an advanced democracy.

Apart from the developments of Turkish-Israeli relations and the developments between Turkey and Middle Eastern countries within the context of military and economic aspects, Turkey, as a vanguardist actor, took on a task of a moderator in the relations of Israel and Syria. However, this task of Turkey as a moderator country took only two years. During the Davos Summit in 2009, the Prime Minister Erdoğan had a quarrel with Shimon Peres during the press conference and left the Davos Summit with anger in the middle of the conference, saying that he would not come to Davos ever again. This was the beginning of the regression of Turkish-Israeli relations, especially with

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<sup>59</sup> This is a domestic policy of Turkey of the time. For the most detailed information, please check: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2007\\_Turkish\\_presidential\\_election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2007_Turkish_presidential_election)

<sup>60</sup> Mehtap Kara and Ahmet Sözen. Change and Continuity in Turkish Foreign Policy: Evaluating Pre-AKP and AKP Periods' National Role Conceptions. *International Relations*, 13:52., 2016, p. 55.

<sup>61</sup> Smith, Steve; Hadfield, Amelia and Dunne, Tim. 2016. *Foreign Policy: Theory, Actors, Cases*. (N. Uslu, Trans.) *International Relations Library*. Oxford University Press. Second Edition. Certificate Number: 28503.

Israel's launching a military attack against Lebanon, which drew reaction and harsh criticism not only from Turkey but also from almost all international community. Upon this development, Erdoğan and Davutoğlu stated that they would in no sense accept this attack, and they took up a position towards not being on the side of the peace talks between Israel and Syria. The mediator role of Turkey in the peace talks between Israel and Syria thus ended and did not continue. The tension between the two countries further increased particularly upon ten Turkish citizens having been killed by Israeli soldiers during the crisis Mavi (Blue) Marmara on 31 May, 2010.<sup>62</sup> Mavi Marmara issue can be said to have eliminated all the positive atmosphere between Turkey and Israel.<sup>63</sup> Even as this study is being prepared in May 2021, Israel launched a big attack against Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and Palestinians, and killed many Palestinian people including some children. As a reaction to Israel's attacks against Palestine, Erdoğan held so many telephone calls without delay with the leaders of some countries, some of whom are: Muhammed Buhari (President of Nigeria), Mustafa Kazimi (Prime Minister of Iraq), Ashraf Ghani (President of Afghanistan), Sadır Caparov (President of Kyrgyzstan), Shavkat Mirziyoyev (President of Uzbekistan), Abdelmadjid Tebboune (President of Algeria), Vladimir Putin (President of Russia), Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani (The Emir of the State of Qatar), Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah (King of Malaysia), Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (Emir of Kuwait), Abdullah II (King of Jordan), Mahmud Abbas (President of Palestine), Imran Khan (Prime Minister of Pakistan), Abdulhamid Dibebe (Prime Minister of Libya National Unity Government) and Hassan Rouhani (President of Iran).<sup>64</sup> This instant phone calls by Erdoğan with some world leaders demonstrates Turkey's insisting foreign policy of Palestine against Israel. To clarify the ongoing tension with Israel, Erdoğan said in his speech on May 14, 2021: "Just as we supported Azerbaijan for the war in Karabagh in November 2020 ardently and enthusiastically, we are taking action for the oppression by Israel in Jerusalem and other Palestinian cities."<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> For the detailed information of the crisis, see: <https://www.bbc.com/news/10203726>

<sup>63</sup> Bulut Gürpınar.. *Dış Politika Ve Kamuoyu: Mavi Marmara Krizi. Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi.* 10:52. 2017, p. 245.

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.tccb.gov.tr/en/receptayyip Erdogan/speeches/>

<sup>65</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2zPG\\_Q1QwM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2zPG_Q1QwM)

After that point, Syrian Civil War broke out in 2011 as a continuation of the Arab Spring.<sup>66</sup> This made a radical change in the foreign policy of JDP government for the Middle East. The Turkish foreign policy for the Middle East in the direction of stabilization and reconciliation policy as a moderator country contrasted sharply with the previous one. As an example of this, Turkey criticized Bashar Assad and used heavy discourse against him.<sup>67</sup> As part of this harsh attitude, JDP government did not side with the Assad regime during the Syrian war but with the other libertarian forces fighting against Bashar Assad. The ideas or the policy of JDP were mostly shaped by Davutoğlu's strategy during this period, which was based on interdependence and developing relations with the neighbours, but we see the decline, and the collapse at the end, of this strategy based on "zero problems with neighbours", after the Davos Summit and the Syrian Civil War.

Briefly speaking of the foreign policy of Turkey in the Middle East overall, Turkey can be said to have been in the middle of those two extreme ends for a long time since it has mainly taken on the foreign policy of having talks with all actors of the region, thus keeping its distance from each actor. In fact, Turkey has taken a position to motivate or encourage all the countries of the region so that they could increase their interdependencies among each other. For that matter, Turkey even gave its contributions and support to the state actors to effectuate a plan to establish an EU-like peace community in its ten years of management. However, once the Arab Spring broke out, this plan had to change to some extent. Turkey had a chance to play first chair in the region in the hope that the new regional environment after the turmoil that Arab Spring caused might give it a chance to play a leadership role in the region, which applies to Qatar as well. With this move, Turkey aimed to be the leader and sort of a founder or an institutor of a new regional environment in the region. Another foreign policy stance of Turkey for the Middle East was its giving support to Hamas, coming from an Islamist-rooted background, which Qatar did the same. Turkey has formed a bloc with Qatar in the Middle East, the other two being Shia crescent and Sunni monarchies. Turkey and Qatar have sided with each other and shared the same foreign policy mentality in Libya,

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<sup>66</sup> For an overall Outlook on the Arab Spring, check: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Arab-Spring>

<sup>67</sup> Yılmaz, Levent. 2014. Büyük Güçler, Suriye Krizi ve Türkiye. *Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*. 12:2, p. 148

in Syrian Civil War, and in Egypt with recent positive diplomatic improvements. Not least after the government change in Egypt in 2011, the tie between these two countries even got stronger.<sup>68</sup> Apart from Turkey's trying to set the relations right with Iran, this interconnectedness between Turkey and Iran first created tension on the side of Saudi Arabia, with which Turkey is on the way of making up these days.<sup>69</sup>

2010 was a milestone for the Turkish foreign policy in terms of the Turkey-EU relations. Ministry of European Union Affairs was formed and Egemen Bağış was appointed as the Minister of European Union Affairs. Bağış was one of the prominent actors, apart from Erdoğan and Gül, to maintain the relationships between Turkey and the EU. We see Erdoğan, Gül and Bağış as the three important and leading actors in running the relationships of Turkey with the EU. After the breakout of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, Turkey pursued a radically and fundamentally different foreign policy in the Middle East during Davutoğlu period, which was then called “*a shift of axis in Turkish foreign policy*”.<sup>70</sup> JDP government gave support and approached to Iran in its uranium enrichment and increasing nuclear capacity plan. Erdoğan and Davutoğlu's policies towards Palestine, Iran and the other Arab countries were called as “Neo-Ottomanism”. Turkish popularity increased emotionally in the Arab Middle Eastern countries with its populist foreign policy and a good reflex and it gained Turkey a good area. However, this foreign policy tends to have failed when the Assad regime has remained there since the outbreak of Syrian Civil War.

Turkey's Africa initiative policies in 2005 brought its results after 2010. Turkey became a very active country and increased its influence in most African countries like Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia and Uganda including the Western African countries alongside the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Turkey pursued another foreign policy breakthrough some Latin American countries. Erdoğan visited some countries in Latin America like Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela. This was an important foreign policy movement to

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<sup>68</sup> Ali Bakir. The Evolution of Turkey—Qatar Relations Amid a Growing Gulf Divide. A. Krieg (ed.), *Divided Gulf, Contemporary Gulf Studies*. 2020, p.203.

<sup>69</sup> Andrew Wilks. 2021. Turkey, Saudi Arabia eye improved ties after Gulf crisis ends. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/25/turkey-and-saudi-arabia-on-the-verge-of-a-return-to-cordiality>

<sup>70</sup> Emirhan Kaya. Dış Politika Değişimi: AKP Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası. *Karadeniz Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 12:7, s. 2015, pp. 77, 80.

increase the versatility, diversity and multivocality in Turkish foreign policy. With this foreign policy movement, Turkey got Brazil onside. These two countries aimed to calm Iran down by not pushing it out of the system and signed an agreement with Iran in 2013, by which uranium export from Iran to Turkey would be possible. This disturbed most of the EU countries along with the USA and they did not accept this agreement. The reason for that was how Turkey and Brazil could do so before we could not make a diplomatic move on the controversial matter of debate of Iran's nuclear activities. Brazil and Turkey alternatively formulated the solution of P5+1 countries, consisting of five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Russia, China, the USA, France and England plus Germany. Brazil and Turkey held the nuclear negotiations with Iran in Istanbul, which was one of the important breakthroughs in foreign policy of JDP government.

The first ten years of JDP governance regarding the foreign policy can be said to have been a comfortable period in which some opportunities were made use of. However, with the outbreak of Arab Spring in the Middle East and the fight of JDP against FETÖ inside the country has subjected the foreign policy of JDP to some challenges as of 2013, which is still the case today. Some of those challenges are the battles over energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean with some major powers as well as its neighbour, Greece, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with Libya<sup>71</sup>, and some confrontations with the USA in the Middle East, as part of the Syrian War. In fact, before the Arab Spring war began, Turkey was in good relations with the USA, but after the Arab Spring broke out, it had some problems with the USA, stating that it wanted to be the regional leader of the Middle East. With the change of regime in Egypt, the outcomes of Arab Spring and the civil war in Syria with its impacts led Turkey to have some problems in its foreign policy and diplomacy.<sup>72</sup> While there are some who claim that Turkey was isolated from the West with its foreign policy after 2013, there are others alleging that Turkey is in search of independence by exhibiting a domestic and national stance.

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<sup>71</sup> For a more detailed read, see: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/analysis-strategic-legal-aspects-of-turkey-libya-deal/1673079>

<sup>72</sup> Kemal İnat. Transformation of Turkish Foreign Capacity: The AK Party Era. *Turkish Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 2014. p. 4

As of 2016, Turkey has undergone a change in foreign policy diplomacy because of the coup attempt on July 15, 2016<sup>73</sup>. There was a tension with the USA as a result of the disagreements on interstate extradition regarding Fethullah Gülen. In addition to this, the tension between the two countries further increased on account of the discordances about F-35 fighter aircrafts, at the end of which the USA withdrew Turkey from this program in April 2021. Turkish military operations in Syria and Turkey's accusing the USA of the military help to YPG have been increasing the tension recently. However, Turkey and the USA have had a long-lasting relations and close ties since the end of the WWII, so it is not easy for the two parties to put an end to the relations between them. On the USA embassy web page, the following information from the perspective of the USA is given about Turkey and Turkey's Membership in International Organization<sup>74</sup> under date of 2021:

“Turkey hosted the G20 in 2015 and remains an active and engaged G20 member. Turkey is a member of NATO, the UN, OECD, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Council, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Turkey also is an observer to the Organization of American States, a Dialogue Partner of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and a sectoral dialogue partner of the Association of Southeastern Asian Nations (ASEAN). Turkey is a candidate for EU membership and continues working towards accession. The United States is convinced that a Turkey that meets EU membership criteria would be good for the EU, and that Turkey's efforts to meet those criteria is good for Turkey.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> For a detailed search, see:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016\\_Turkish\\_coup\\_d%27%C3%A9tat\\_attempt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_Turkish_coup_d%27%C3%A9tat_attempt)

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-turkey/#:~:text=Turkey%20is%20a%20key%20NATO,to%20the%20Euro%2DAtlantic%20community.&text=Turkey%20is%20an%20important%20U.S.%20security%20partner.>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-turkey/>

Having a bad relation between them until the 2000s because of some geographical and historical issues, Turkey and Russia experienced a remarkable improvement and transformation in their relations between each other under the reign of JDP governments, particularly in the field of energy transportation, energy trade through pipelines by way of the Black Sea and Turkey's Akkuyu Nuclear Power Station being built by Russian nuclear companies. Owing to this, Russia was called as the largest trading partner of Turkey<sup>76</sup>, and, in addition to that, the establishment of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council was established between the parties. The two countries also agreed on two sides' abolishing visas during the travels, which was regarded as one of the political and social aspects of the relationship. However, there are some points on which the two countries do not agree<sup>77</sup>. One of them is the Ukraine-Russia tension, in which Turkey sides with Ukraine. Turkey-Ukraine relations have gained a considerable dimension with the agreements on producing some military equipment such as war planes and plane engines. Another issue on which the two countries cannot come to a common point is the issue of Syria. Russia has supported the Assad regime since the outbreak of Syrian Civil War, and Turkey has taken a stand against the Assad regime, although they were in close relationships before the Syrian war. The Syrian war has had its serious consequences between Turkey and Russia regarding the fact that Russia sees Syria as a show of force against the USA and other state actors that can be called as great powers or major powers. The third issue was Turkey's downing a Russian fighter jet on the grounds that it violated Turkish airspace, but this crisis was soon resolved. And at the end, Turkey purchased S-400 air defense systems from Russia, and there are ongoing negotiations on co-producing S-500 ones together.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Özel, Soli and Uçar, Gökçe. 2019. The Economics of Turkey-Russia Relations. *Foreign Policy & Security* 2019/10. EDAM.

<sup>77</sup> İnan Rüma and, Mitat Çelikpala.. Russian and Turkish Foreign Policy Activism in the Syrian Theater. *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 16:62. 2019, pp. 67, 68.

<sup>78</sup> About the details, see: <https://www.dw.com/en/turkey-to-produce-new-s-500-missile-system-with-russia/a-48792240>



One of Turkey's foreign policy successes regarding energy resources and extracting them was the formation of the EEZ with Libya<sup>79</sup>, where there have been conflicts between two governing parts, which arose from the Greek claim of zone in Mediterranean. The National Unity Government, supported by Turkey, paid a visit to Turkey with a large number of delegates in 2021. Greece and their companion countries tried to prevent this attempt of Turkey, but it was approved in the UN. Turkey has been in good relations with Egypt on another EEZ with it recently after a problematic period of relations with Egypt after Sisi came to power through a military coup in 2013, which had drawn the reaction of Turkey. However, the two parts seem to be breaking the ice owing to a possible EEZ between them. For this purpose, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Çavuşoğlu) said in March 2021 that the diplomatic contacts with Egypt had started<sup>80</sup>, and with that, the Vice-Foreign Minister of Turkey paid a critical visit to Egypt with a large committee at the beginning of May, 2021.

Until 2019, Turkey showed its capacity in foreign policy and was willing to mediate between the countries on certain global issues. Upon the outbreak of conflicts between India and Pakistan, Turkey stated that it was eager readily to proceed the negotiations between them. It was not, however, the first time Turkey did so. Some other mediating attempts are as follows:

“Turkey offered cooperation to Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon and to Iraq by stating that it could give any help to them for the internal conflicts to be ended. In an attempt to set up peace and stability permanently in the Balkans, Turkey held summits with Croatia, Serbia Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey formed a threefold cooperation mechanism along with Pakistan and Afghanistan to ensure the safety and security of Afghanistan as well as establish peace in the country. Turkey played a facilitative role in the indirect dialogue between Israel and Syria. Turkey made conciliatory efforts to find a peaceful solution to the problem concerning Iran's nuclear program. Turkey played a role in establishing a dialogue between Somali and Somaliland as well as gave support to the South Philippines peace process.”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> For further details of Turkey maritime deal with Libya, see:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libya\\_\(GNA\)%E2%80%93Turkey\\_maritime\\_deal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libya_(GNA)%E2%80%93Turkey_maritime_deal)

<sup>80</sup> <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/reasons-between-turkey-egypt.en.mfa>

<sup>81</sup> <https://factsofturkey.org/latest/2818-the-success-of-turkey-on-uavs-ucavs-is-on-forbes-pages>

As of the end of 2019, the world and world politics has experienced a new and unusual process and political atmosphere in terms of foreign policy and diplomacy between state actors. The outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic tends to drag all the world and the international relations arena to a deadlock, the result of which remains to be seen. To make an overall objective assessment of Turkish foreign policy with justifications after 2002, JDP received praises from some for its foreign policy until 2010, in which they pursued a foreign policy based on cooperation and collaboration with other state actors. Their struggle to retain close ties with the USA, the EU during the years between 2002 and 2005, and with the Middle Eastern countries between 2005 and 2010, including some others, was really appreciated by many. Turkey even took a role in mediating between some countries for the issues in its region. However, Turkey, having been praised for its positive relations with the West, was started to be criticized when the relations with Israel went into reverse and it began to turn its face to the East, particularly with Muslim countries. Most people considered this as Turkey's turning its back to the West, which this study does not consider it is so. After all, Turkey has had close ties with the West since Turkish Republic was founded in 1923, so it should not be so easy to break those well-established ties at a stroke. This study bases this argument on the fact that Turkey and the West are interdependent on each other in terms of the fact that they have had economic, military and socio-cultural ties for almost a hundred years. However, Turkey, as have been mentioned above, has changed a lot since 2002. These changes were towards the potential inside and foreign policy outside. Also, considering the problematic years until 2002, policies of JDP governments have been embraced by almost half of Turkish people for twenty years. As mentioned in this study, what JDP has been trying to do as part of its foreign policy is to be able to reach the capacity and potential to be able to stand alone with respect to being a strong country from now on, which can also be labelled as a strong middle power like Canada, Australia and South Korea today, a great or major power like Russia and China and a superpower like the USA in the future.

Pursuing a foreign policy based on relations free of problems is only there when the interests of states are not threatened, and, when confronted with such a situation, there is a delicate balance between employing an economic and military power.<sup>82</sup> Such prominent countries as Japan, Germany, the USA and China are known to go negative against both each other and other states when their economic interests matter, and it can be observed that they may pose aggressive attitudes in their foreign policies when it comes to their national interests.<sup>83</sup> Keeping this in mind, Turkey can be said to have been following a foreign policy, and a diplomacy when appropriate, when it comes to its national and economic interests since 2010. Indeed, not least after the issue of FETÖ and other related organizations, which is claimed to have been supported by certain states for long, there has been a remarkable change in the foreign policy behaviour of JDP. We can particularly see this discourse in the sayings of Erdoğan after 2010. As mentioned in the previous sections, of definition of Giovanni Botero indicating middle power countries as actors having adequate strength and authority to stand on their legs in the absence of any support or need coming from other states best fits into the practices and foreign policies of JDP. In one of his speeches, Erdoğan said in 2020<sup>84</sup>:

“All the actors of the international community have had to take Turkey into consideration in regional and global equations as a result of our determined, active and unwavering stance. We are now a country which has an essential place both on the ground and at the table.”

The sentence of “*We are now a country which has an essential place both on the ground and at the table.*” exactly explains Turkey’s political stance after 2010. In fact, Turkey has been trying to not be *intervened in* its internal affairs, particularly gas and oil drilling and prospecting process in its seas, which Turkey had not attempted before 2002. Again, Erdoğan said in his same speech, which may be a justification for the criticisms of JDP foreign policies that Turkey had a shift of axis,<sup>85</sup>:

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<sup>82</sup> Kemal İnat. Türk Dış Politikasının Kapasitesinin Dönüşümü. *Türkiye Ortadoğu Çalışmaları Dergisi*. 2014, p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> Sadık Ünay and Şerif Dilek. Yeni Korumacılık ve Ticaret Savaşları. *SETA*. 2018, p. 8.

<sup>84</sup> Presidency of Turkish Republic. 2020. For the whole speech, see: <https://www.tccb.gov.tr/en/news/542/122237/-we-are-now-a-country-which-has-an-essential-place-both-on-the-ground-and-at-the-table->

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

“The endeavors our country has recently been carrying out both at home and abroad are not independent of this global transformation process. Just like a century ago, just like half a century ago, Turkey is yet again tried to be excluded from the world order sought to be restructured. Almost all the crisis areas that currently keep the world busy are located around our country. The picture that emerges when you interconnect those crisis points from Syria to the Mediterranean to the Caucasus indicates a blatant attempt to put Turkey under siege. We foresaw this plot well in advance. On one hand, we protected our national unity and our country’s integrity as well as our state’s strength. On the other hand, we implemented one by one steps to break the siege. What is more, with our insistence that ‘the world is bigger than five,’ we gave a message to those who, so-to-speak, obstructed the global system that this would not be so easy. Those who, turning a deaf ear to our words and belittling our efforts, disregarded our country and tried to carry on with their old habits, eventually saw that the truth was nothing like they imagined.”

In his sentence of “*Just like a century ago, just like half a century ago, Turkey is yet again tried to be excluded from the world order sought to be restructured.*”, the Turkish foreign policy after 2010 was summarized in the eyes of JDP. They aim not to be intervened in any of Turkey’s affairs regarding its *national interests and investments* as was done before 2002. Abstaining from any subjective viewpoint, this study looks at the Turkish foreign policy from this aspect in an objective way and with its justifications.

Here is some news about Turkey’s recent foreign policy change:

“Geopolitical competition over Central Asia is intensifying, with the two most prominent longstanding rivals, Russia and China, now confronted by the rising power of a third, Turkey. The complexities of ‘the great game’ have been attracting ever-greater attention in recent years. However, the expansion of Turkish influence in the region-especially in the aftermath of its ally Azerbaijan’s victory in Karabakh-has raised both the seriousness and intricacy of this regional competition for all participants.”<sup>86</sup>

“We discussed bilateral ties and Israeli actions in Jerusalem and Gaza with my Saudi counterpart in Mecca. Turkey and Saudi Arabia will maintain dialogue to address their disagreements. We held a very open and frank meeting and addressed some problematic areas in our relationship.”<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Paul Goble. Moscow and Beijing Seek to Counter Growing Turkish Influence in Central Asia. *The Jamestown Foundation*. 2021. Retrieved from: <https://jamestown.org/program/moscow-and-beijing-seek-to-counter-growing-turkish-influence-in-central-asia/>

<sup>87</sup> Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. 2021. Turkey says dialogue on disputes with Saudi Arabia to continue. *Reuters*. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/saudi-foreign-minister-receives-turkish-counterpart-mecca-spa-2021-05-11/>

“Turkey is having a new global reach. Poland is against Turkey’s New role in NATO. Poland has openly come out against Turkey’s leading role within NATO’s Rapid Deployment Force - particularly in the eastern Mediterranean region. Despite being embroiled in a web of conflicts from central Asia via Syria and all the way through the Mediterranean to Libya, Turkish President Recep Erdoğan and his Army Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Hulusi Akar have worked to form new alliances, particularly with Pakistan, a nuclear state, and the Ukraine, sensitive military and industrial exchanges including highly sensitive missile engine technology.”<sup>88</sup>

“Turkey has been busy boosting economic relations with Senegal. Senegal becomes new focus of United Arab Emirates-Turkey rivalry in Africa.”<sup>89</sup>

“The fact that Turkey acts with increasing self-confidence and independence in its relations with the world is one that every Turkish citizen will welcome with applause. However, when we look at the overall picture, it would be to go beyond the boundaries of reality to say that everything is working in an ideal framework in Turkey’s foreign policy. As in 2019, 2020 has been very challenging for us. In terms of Turkish foreign policy, there will be many issues that will be inherited by 2021 from 2020. The current situation of our foreign policy is one of the most challenging and problematic periods not only in recent years but also probably the entire Republican period in general.”<sup>90</sup>

### 3.3.2 Evaluation of Turkey’s Housing Syrian Refugees As An Indicator Of “Being Powerful in its Region”<sup>91</sup>

Having been shaped during the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Davutoğlu in 2009 with the motto of zero problems with neighbours, Turkish foreign policy has undergone

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<sup>88</sup> Nidal Kabalan. 2021. Poland Against Turkey’s New Role in NATO. *Insideover*. Retrieved from: <https://www.insideover.com/war/poland-against-turkeys-new-role-in-nato.html>

<sup>89</sup> Mohamed Sabry. 2020. Turkey has been busy boosting economic relations with Senegal. *Insideover*. Retrieved from: <https://www.insideover.com/politics/senegal-becomes-new-focus-of-uae-turkey-rivalry-in-africa.html>

<sup>90</sup> Emrah Atar. 2021. An overview of Turkish foreign policy as 2020 ends. *Daily Sabah*. Retrieved from: <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/an-overview-of-turkish-foreign-policy-as-2020-ends>

<sup>91</sup> Why are Syrian people called “refugees”? The key differences between **refugees**, **migrants** and **asylum-seekers** are as follows:

Though interlinked with each other by many people, these three concepts are not the same at all.

*Migrants* are people who are not satisfied or happy with the conditions or their lifestyles in their home countries and go to other countries to be able to find much better conditions in terms of economic considerations like payments or jobs.

*Asylum seekers* or refugees are those people who are not treated well by their governments or rulers in their home countries, or suffer from negative consequences of some undesired events like political rights. When those people feel that they might be persecuted in their home country and this drives them to go outside their countries, to Turkey for example, they become political asylum seekers. Once the government of the country to which those asylum seekers go recognizes their asylums, then they become *refugees*.

considerable changes in respect to humanitarian aids of Turkey.<sup>92</sup> The issue of Syria has most probably been one of the hottest political issues since the war broke out. Hence, this study assumes that Turkey's housing Syrian refugees is a strong foreign policy of JDP government because the emigration of Syrians from their countries claimed its place in history as one of the most important mass migrations<sup>93</sup>. Such a trumpeted issue of the housing millions of refugees was almost the most top-spoken agenda in Turkey and in the world, though there were some other countries that were preferred to take refuge in. Providing the necessary needs for the refugees is totally relayed with the financial power and the foreign policy behaviours of a country that houses the refugees. As this requires being powerful and self-confident, Turkey can be said to be passing a test in the international political arena in terms of both its power capacity and foreign policy behaviour.

One part of the Syrian war for Turkey in terms its foreign policy was that it used this issue as a trump against the EU saying that it would open the border gates, which it did at the end. This is an indicator to show the capacity of Turkey as a middle and regional power in its region and its foreign policy power in terms of the fact that Turkey gives the impression that it is not such kind of a country as to do whatever the EU asks it to do as it used to be before 2002. In fact, Turkey veraciously showed its harsh reactions to the EU on the financial aid<sup>94</sup> that the EU had promised to give to Turkey for the Syrian refugees. Another side of the war is Turkey and Russia tensions regarding the supports of the two countries to different parties. At the end of this foreign policy battle, Turkey can still put pressure on the EU as its foreign policy behaviour.

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<sup>92</sup> Alpaslan Özerdem. İnsaniyetçilik ve Türk Dış Politikası. *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 13:52. 2016 p. 186.

<sup>93</sup> Doğu Şimşek. Turkey as a "Safe Third Country"? The Impacts of the EU-Turkey Statement on Syrian Refugees in Turkey. *Perceptions*, Winter 2017, 22:4, 2017, p. 161.

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/eu-to-propose-new-aid-package-for-refugees-in-turkey/2201240>

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CONCLUSION**

In this study, Turkey's being an emerging middle power in the world politics and an emerging regional power in its region has been discussed. In addition to the developments and improvements in this period, an overall outlook was given regarding the Turkish foreign policy and global governance during this period. Accordingly, a comparison between the periods before 2002 and the JDP period after 2002 was made. Concerning the definitions or perceptions of middle power countries in the literature, middle power countries are mostly defined in two categories as traditional and nontraditional, and the way they behave in the international political world or their influences are the main determinants in defining the middle power countries. In addition to this general understanding of middle power countries, this study included the potential of Turkey and the improvements in certain fields in Turkey in the period of JDP government in the concept of Turkey's being a strong middle power and regional power.

As a result of this, a theoretical analysis has been made for the definitions of middle power countries in Chapter 2. The general understanding was that middle powers, though they are not great powers, are sovereign countries that have their own potential of influence at their disposals in the arena of international politics. Some unifications of countries such as BRICS and MINT have been discussed in the direction of whether or not they can be called as middle power countries. As a result of the theoretical analysis, it was observed that the very definition of being a middle power is not one on which there is already a consensus. Rather, there still exist some differences of opinion among IR theorists both on the definition of middle powers and the way of their acts in the global politics. It has been observed that middle powers can be classified in two ways in spite of these disagreements: the first are those based on their strength of hard powers (or military strength), capabilities and their geographical and geopolitical positions. And the second are the ones that are based on having a leadership capacity or having the capability to shape events in the politics of world. Making use of the definition of Giovanni Botero indicating middle power countries as actors having adequate strength and authority to stand on their legs in the absence of any support or need coming from other states, this

study has focused on the fact that Turkey can be a strong emerging middle and regional power with its adequate strength at its disposal having been augmented during the JDP governments. Additionally, as Daniel Flesmes stated in his accounts about the middle power countries, preconditions of being a regional power, possession of necessary material and ideational power resources play an important role in the first group of middle power countries. With this in mind, Turkey has undeniable potential which it can use for its struggle to become a strong middle or regional power.

Chapter 2 has come to the fore in this study in the sense that the topic of this study has been discussed both from aspect of the potential which Turkey has and the improvements in Turkey during the JDP governments. Geopolitical and geographical position of Turkey has been given as one of the potentials of Turkey. In the direction of those mentioned in the relevant section, Turkey has been accepted, most probably, one of the most strategically important countries across the globe in terms of its geopolitical location on the grounds that it forms a land bridge between the continents Asia and Europe. Hence, it has been emphasized that Turkey is of extremely strategic and geopolitical and geographical significance, which it should and must use for its goal of being an emerging middle power. This study has also underlined that such a geography which neighbours Syria and Iraq in the south, Iran, Nakhcivan (Azerbaijan) and Armenia in the east, Georgia in the northeast and Bulgaria and Greece in the west can be made use of for its functions in many roles in many ways, such as energy flow between Asia and Europe, crossing from the Black Sea to the Aegean and the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Other emphases of this study regarding the importance of Turkey's geopolitical and geographical significance have been given in a way to comprehend the realities that Turkey is also a seafront country, surrounded on three sides by the sea, which makes its a strategic marine country. On top of that, with its population of 82 million, Turkey is a mine country as well. It is one of the boron- and thorium-rich countries in the world. Even though Turkey is mainly an oil importing country, it extracts oil, even a little, in one of its regions called the South East. One of the prominent features of Turkey, especially in the last fifteen years, has been its defense industry. It has also been discussed that up until fifteen years ago, Turkey was importing sixty percent of its military products, yet now it produces seventy percent of its defense industry itself, which it should raise it to a higher level in the shortest time possible so as to be able to self-sufficient.



As for the importance of the geopolitical and geographical position to be used as a goal by Turkey for becoming a strong emerging middle power, this study draws an analogy thus, “People often use an expression in their day-to-day lives very often: to make use of the opportunity”. This expression fits like a glove for Turkey. Being one of the few strategically important countries in the world, Turkey has to make use of its invaluable geopolitical position in the most efficient way possible, whether by being an energy hub and a military power by producing and making its own militarily important weapons on its own, because today any country having these two entities are regarded as a powerful middle power country or a regional power country. This is quite a logical and pertinent remark as one of them renders a country unbeatable and the other wealthy. As one of Turkey’s potential and assets it has which this study believes is its population, especially the young. This study has focused on the fact that in order for a country to be called a powerful middle power country, one of the first necessities is the unification of its population, regardless of which political ideologies they have. With this national unification, being able to make its own weapons and making use of its invaluable geopolitical position in terms of energy transportation or being an energy hub should be set as a goal for Turkey to become a strong middle and regional power.

With reference to its military or hard power capacity, this study underlined the fact that Turkey has been producing 70% of its military needs at home and is dependent on foreign resources regarding the rest of thirty per cent. This domestic power capacity can be enough for Turkey’s goal to be a strong middle power, but it should increase this amount by investing more in producing its military equipment as the world is having a time these days in which a country that has a strong military capacity is called a strong country. With respect to the soft power capacity, Turkey is seen not to have enough capacity in this field. Although it is taking some important steps, such as Yunus Emre Institutions in different countries and giving humanitarian aid to some poor countries, it should do more because image, especially with the new developments of digital arena, is everything for a country in the period in which we are now. Another factor for Turkey in order to be able to continue its ambition of being a strong middle power is that much has been done during the JDP governments, but there are some economic steps that remain to be taken as soon as possible. Turkey should focus more on its economic development and increase its GDP to a desired level.

This study has presented Turkey's energy potential as a dynamic to be necessary for it to be a strong middle power. As part of this, the natural gas presumed to be in the Eastern Mediterranean region and the Black Sea has been discussed from the perspective of the conflicts between the countries of the region and what should Turkey do in its relations in this gas extracting process. It has been underlined that, as one of the basic needs of man, natural gas is, almost globally, at the top of the national agenda of the countries and their governments. Some have natural gas in their lands and export it, while others do not have natural gas and are in search of it in their own territories. Turkey is one of those countries in the region, being mostly dependent on outside for its natural gas needs. Nevertheless, Turkey is at odds with the other countries, whether it is right or wrong. Based on this, Turkey can develop its relations with the other countries on mutual trade and interest basis, which is also what others should do. If this can be achieved, the natural gas in the region may be transferred to Europe through Turkey, which will be a golden opportunity for Turkey in its future plans to be an energy hub. On the other hand, it should keep on exploring natural gas reserves in its own territory on a legal basis. The Eastern Mediterranean has been a problematic issue for Turkey in terms of its foreign diplomacy and energy resources there. Therefore, in the relevant section of this study, Turkey can survive the harsh battle in the Eastern Mediterranean by following a policy in a constructive way so as to reach its goal to be a strong middle and regional power.

In chapter 3, an overall account of Turkish foreign policy attitudes and behaviours between the years 1923, which is the foundation of Turkish Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his friends, and 2002, when the first JDP government came to power alone. This study came to the conclusion that the governments that came to power after Atatürk died could not pursue a steady foreign policy on account of some internal political turmoil having lasted until the beginning of 1980s and the disagreements between the then Turkish political parties on forming a coalition government. This, naturally, hampered the governments of the period to pursue a steady foreign policy on behalf of Turkey, to say nothing of some unsteady and inconsistent economic policies, to determine a policy in the direction of transforming Turkey into a strong middle or regional power. This does not mean that this study harshly criticizes the governments and the foreign policy behaviours in this period and Turkey did not follow any foreign policy diplomacies until 2002. Rather, it has assumed that every government of Turkey has tried their best with their resources and opportunities at their hands for the goal of Turkey to be a middle

power. So, it aimed to make an overall comparison between the two periods in Turkish political history in compliance with the topic.

Regarding the Turkish foreign policy of JDP governments, this study has made an overall assessment of Turkish foreign policy as of 2002 in Chapter 3. It has been stated that JDP governments sustained a steady foreign policy and diplomacy between 2002 and 2011. However, with the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, there was a dramatic and fundamental changes in Turkish foreign policy. Causing problems both for the target countries and the refugees themselves, having to immigrate to other countries is understood to be a shame of humanity. With this in mind, the issue of Syrian refugees in Turkey has been regarded as a diplomatic and foreign policy success of Turkey, although the immigration of Syrian refugees has led to some problems in Turkey in terms of sharing life with the Turkish people together in Turkey. This study has handled this success from the perspective of a humanitarian success as part of Turkish foreign policy because, resulting mainly from wars, immigrating to other countries as refugees has been one of the main issues across the world recently. Turkey-EU relations were in a process of improvements between 2002 and 2010, with positive attitudes from both sides. As a result of these negotiations, some chapters for the full membership to the EU were opened. During this period, Turkey developed a new discourse of democracy in the domestic and the foreign policies, which was a mingled connecting policy. This was one of the biggest foreign policy successes of the first Erdoğan government. In regard to the relations with the USA, there were, again, positive improvements between the two parties in the same period even though there was a tension between the parties when, the USA wanted to use the Persian Gulf in the south and Turkish territory in the north for its operation in Iraq as part of the USA the 9/11 attacks, which was rejected by TBMM.

About some other foreign policy developments of Turkey, this study has put an emphasis on Turkey's African initiative, which was an important step for the Turkish foreign policy. It was one of the most important diplomatic initiatives and demarches in the history of Turkish Republic since Africa was one of the regions that Turkey had neglected in terms of foreign policy, so the first JDP government pursued an Africa-initiative policy within the frame of military, political, socio-cultural and commercial foreign policy goals. the first JDP government pursued an Africa-initiative policy within the frame of military, political, socio-cultural and commercial foreign policy goals. This

study has also touched upon Turkey's role in the Middle East in this period during the first JDP government. It has referred to Turkey's moderating role between Israel and Syria. However, with Erdoğan's reaction in Davos summit and the Mavi Marmara issue, Turkish-Israeli relations has changed by reversal, which still goes on especially Israel's attacks against Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and Palestinians in May 2021. This study has assumed that the year 2016 was a turning point in Turkish foreign policy because of the coup attempt on July 15, which led Turkey to search for an independent stance in the world politics.

This study has given some assessments about the Turkish-Russian relations during the JDP governments after 2002. It compared the relations between the two parties before 2002, when there was a tension between the two parties because of some geographical or geopolitical grounds. The improving relations between Turkey and Russia has been on the increase in terms of energy matters throughout the JDP period, even though there have been some ideational conflicts in the lands of Syria. Turkey is strictly opposed to the Assad regime, whereas Russia continuously give sits support to the present regime with the aim of using this war as a tool of show of force.

As an overall assessment, Turkey has a potential of becoming a strong emerging middle power in world politics and a regional power in its region with its potential that it has at its disposal as well as with the foreign policy it pursued. This study has not meant that the years with JDP were impeccable. Rather, Turkey has had a new face in the arena of world politics that it did not have after the foundation of the Turkish Republic. This new face can be turned into an opportunity by eliminating the other missing points of Turkey in its foreign policy and practices on the way of Turkey's becoming a strong middle power.

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## KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

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- İsim : ALİM CENGİZ TOKAÇ
- Doğum Yeri .
- Doğum Tarihi :
- Uyruğu :
- Medeni Durumu :
- Askerlik Durumu :
- Ehliyet

## İŞ TECRÜBELERİ

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## ÖĞRENİM DURUMU

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## YABANCI DİL VE DÜZEYİ

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## **BİLGİSAYAR BECERİLERİ**

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## **KURS VE SERTİFİKALAR**

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