

TURKEY’S RELATIONS WITH THE DIVIDED WEST: CHANGING PARAMETERS

Turkey has been adopting a more European perspective on a number of issues for some time; it should come as no surprise that its foreign policy will become more closely aligned with that of Paris and Berlin over the course of accession negotiations. The Atlantic divide has proven not to be a transient phenomenon and this makes it very difficult for Turkey to maintain close relations with the US and pursue EU membership on complementary tracks. The EU emerges as a civilian superpower with a wide range of soft power tools to exert its influence on global affairs; it also offers a relatively benign image of the West. The US, on the other hand, continues to lose prestige and credibility on the world scene despite its overwhelming military might. This paper argues that Turkey stands to gain more from aligning with the European position in world affairs and it is timely for Turkey to redefine its “strategic partnership” with the US.

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Turkey's membership prospects for the EU have taken an unprecedented turn since the beginning of the Iraqi war. Turkey's membership prospects have never relied solely on its own internal dynamics. Historically it has largely been about the EU's own identity and its place in world politics. The EU's conflicting attitudes toward Turkey have been a sign of its lack of clarity about its own future status in international affairs. The war in Iraq and growing unease with American unilateralism have forced the EU to abandon its former distant look on developments beyond its borders and called for a major redefinition of Europe's global interests and responsibilities. The war in Iraq has also increased the frustration among the European elite about the EU's lack of global political influence. Moreover, the public sentiment all over Europe seems increasingly to favor closer integration.¹ Although Europe has failed to respond to the Iraqi crisis in a united and coherent manner, this failure has also demonstrated potential political power of the EU, if its positions are spoken in a single voice. Since the beginning of the war, a number of important steps has been taken to facilitate closer integration in foreign policy and defense areas.

This new international environment offers new opportunities for Turkey as well as creating new difficulties. Turkey's membership has now become an important aspect of the EU's changing international profile. Turkey's contribution to a multicultural Europe that plays an active role in its bordering regions is now widely discussed. The downside of this positive atmosphere is that Turkey's relations with the EU and the US can no longer proceed on complementary tracks. The beginning of accession negotiations with the EU is now within sight and this inevitably constitutes the primary focus of Turkey's domestic and foreign policy. In addition to the EU prospect, continued discontent with American foreign policy choices among Turkish citizens and the pressure this creates upon the AKP (Justice and Development Party) government has rendered support for America in Turkey at an all time low. Despite the conciliatory gestures from both sides during President Bush's recent trip to Europe, the US and the EU seem to be falling further apart in terms of their perspectives on political legitimacy, global governance and the appropriate use of military power - it is only normal to expect further Europeanization in Turkish foreign policy as evidenced in its recent policy shift regarding Israel.²

The current rift between the two sides of the Atlantic is not temporary or transient, it has been long in the making and it is likely to deepen over the years. The division within the EU itself is temporary and the US alliance with the "new Europe" is fragile and short-term. And finally, the transatlantic rift seems to put Turkey in a difficult predicament as it pulls its foreign policy into two conflicting directions: it promises Turkey the center stage in the EU's transformation into a global actor, but seems to require Turkey to stand opposite to its long-term strategic ally on a number of issues vital to American foreign policy. Nevertheless, a careful assessment of the options available to Turkey seem to indicate that Turkey emerges as a major beneficiary of the transatlantic divide, as it pushes the EU to take on more international responsibilities and this increases the prospects of Turkey's membership into the EU.

¹ "A Year After Iraq War," *Pew Research Report*, 16 March 2004; available at www.people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=206.

² Turkey has been adopting an increasingly harsher tone in its dealings with Israel. This has included cancellation of high-level visits on both sides, recalling of Turkish Ambassador to Israel for consultations, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan's pronouncement of Israeli acts in refugee camps in Gaza as "state terror." See for example Hürriyet, 1 June 2004, p.1.

The nature of transatlantic relations has a profound impact on Turkey's foreign policy orientation. Since the founding of the Republic in 1923, Turkey's westernization project involved improving relations simultaneously with the US and Europe. Eventually membership in the EU has become the focal point of Turkey's endeavors to confirm its identity as a secular, modern, western style democracy; but this has never necessitated sidelining relations with the US. On the contrary, Washington has been a firm supporter of Turkey's integration into Europe. The transatlantic rift has rendered American efforts for Turkish membership counterproductive. Europeans have always been suspicious of the US intervention which they considered as meddling in EU affairs; this was one of the reasons Americans took an exceptionally low-key approach towards the Brussels Summit during which Turkey was given a date to start accession negotiations. The consequences of the growing rift in the Atlantic and the associated policy risks for Turkey are too important to ignore. It is to be expected that Turkey will seek to define new parameters for its relations with the US, while moving toward membership in the EU. It must also be noted that the current administration in the US seems increasingly disturbed by the deepening European unification despite its rhetoric to the contrary.³ Turkey's membership in a more independent Europe no longer finds unanimous support in Washington.⁴ Turkey is likely to be faced by competing demands from both sides of the Atlantic in years to come; therefore it is very important to make a careful assessment of transatlantic relations and their future direction.

Transatlantic Relations: Projections into the Future

There is a deep disagreement among intellectual circles as to how wide the gap is between the two sides of the Atlantic and for how long that split will last. Optimists consider the crisis that Iraq war caused in transatlantic relations the result largely of "the philosophies, personalities, decisions and mistakes of the leaders who happened to be in office in 2001-2003."⁵ The underlying assumption is that if the ruling governments change, especially in the US, there is no reason why transatlantic relations should not go back to what they were before the Iraq war. After all, this group of thinkers argues that the shared political values of democracy, rule of law, and freedom remain intact. Obviously, values matter in themselves and in their influence on the conduct of foreign policy. Europeans and Americans both share and dispute some basic values. A concept, such as values, can give credence to contradictory views of the transatlantic relations; therefore any account of the Atlantic divide which relies solely on values would be incomplete.

Those who argue that the divisions over Iraq will mark a terminal split between Europe and America, however, hold that deep changes had begun to undermine transatlantic relations since the end of the Cold War. The absence of the Soviet threat has to a great extent dissolved the rationale behind transatlantic alliance. The main foreign policy orientation for Europeans and

³ The European attempts (led by France and Germany) to take integration beyond the economic realm to foreign policy and defense are perceived by Washington as evidence of their desire to balance US power. For example a senior Bush administration official stated: "We do not want Europe that defines itself as a counterpoint to the US." See James Harding and Daniel Dombey, "Sporadic Applause for Bush's European Overture," *Financial Times*, 21 February 2005. See also, Jeffrey Cimbalo, "Saving NATO from Europe," *Foreign Affairs* (November-December 2004), pp.111-115.

⁴ See Ian Bremmer, "Why Turkey would split the EU and the US," *International Herald Tribune*, 22 October 2004.

⁵ Philip Gordon and Jeremy Shapiro, *Allies at War: America, Europe and the Crisis over Iraq* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004) p.11.

Americans no longer centers on the alliance to the same extent as in the Cold War. Europeans do not have the same need for American protection and Americans no longer conceive Europe as a bulwark against Soviet expansion. Different concerns - both global and local - and different means for addressing them are now on the agenda. The emergence of a common threat in the form of terrorism is not likely to provide the kind of transatlantic glue the Soviets have provided during the Cold War. The US and Europe disagree about the sources of terrorism as well as how best to fight it. "This new threat exacerbates rather than repair the widening transatlantic divide."⁶ With the re-election of the President Bush and the replacement of Colin Powell, the only person in his inner circle with whom Europeans had been able to find some common ground, there is no indication that the strategic culture and the policies that have led to the rift with Europe will be abandoned in the near future.

President Bush's visit to Europe last February has not yielded any concrete results; on the contrary it has pronounced the disagreements over China and Iran and Sudan's conflict in Darfur. Despite the first ever visit of an American President to the EU Headquarters, there is no indication that the Bush administration will ever consider Schroeder's call for the EU acting as "the cornerstone" of the transatlantic relationship.⁷ The current praise for "a unified and strengthened Europe" does not go beyond mere rhetoric, as in close circles members of the current US administration reveal how skeptical of or indifferent they are to the European Union.⁸ The United States can no longer rely on its bilateral relationships with the individual EU members to push through its agenda. Traditional Atlanticists, Germany and Spain, have proved to be unreliable partners to the US; both has formulated foreign policies in opposition to the US either prior or following the Iraqi War. A change of leadership in Italy next year might cost the US the support of a strong ally within the EU.

The terrorist attacks of September 11 have completely changed the way Americans define their relationship with Europe. The war on terror has now become the defining characteristic of the US foreign policy. The US is willing to accept the EU as a partner in so far as Europeans lend support to its predetermined course of action. The new assertiveness of the US power is by no means accidental. The end of the Cold War left the United States with an unsurpassed military strength. Europe, on the other hand, having contracted its security arrangements to the US during the Cold War is now far behind American military capability. This "power gap" as rightly put by Robert Kagan⁹ is the underlying cause of America's unilateralist stance in world affairs. The preponderance of its military strength deludes the US into believing that it does not need allies. Its scorn for permanent alliances¹⁰ and international institutions is a direct indicator of the prevailing view in Washington that force will be used whenever and wherever the national interest dictates it. As Robert Jervis put it so aptly in a recent article, "the forceful and unilateral exercise of U.S. power is not simply the by-product of September 11, the Bush administration, or some shadowy neo-conservative cabal- it is the logical outcome of the current unrivaled U.S.

⁶ Charles A. Kupchan, "The End of the West", *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 290, No. 4 (November 2002), p.44.

⁷ George Parker, "Bush Fails to Close Gap with EU," *Financial Times*, 22 February 2005.

⁸ See for example Harding and Dombey (2005).

⁹ Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003).

¹⁰ "We will want to make sure that the United States never gets caught again in a diplomatic choke point in the Security Council and NATO," quoting a State Department official in Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrikson, "The Sources of American Legitimacy," *Foreign Affairs* (November-December 2004), p.21.

position in the international system.”¹¹ The absence of an autonomous defense capability, on the other hand, has produced in Europe certain repulsion to the use of military power. It is not realistic to expect Europeans to match American military strength with current levels of spending. Even so the emergence of Europe as a counterweight to the US military power is not likely to solve transatlantic problems. It can only augment the areas and the intensity of confrontation between the two sides.

The question of the EU’s emergence of an international actor in its own right is not a matter of emulating the US military power projection. Europeans must take charge of their own defense and define their security interests independent of the US. The members of the EU cannot ignore that force may have to be used from time to time to defend interests and for that they must pool their resources and assets as well as engage in more effective spending. Credible military power is surely an important asset, but it is not from what Europe derives its unique place in world affairs. Europe has a wide range of tools for exerting influence and defending its interests. Today’s new threats are not all military and they cannot be dealt purely by military means. Each requires a mix of instruments that the well-equipped EU possesses.

Today Europe is a global actor in many respects. The EU is in possession of a spectrum of “soft power” instruments combining diplomacy with aid and trade leverage. Europe is a bigger economic power than the US and it is able to speak in one voice when it comes to economic matters.¹² Moreover, the EU’s multilateralist and legalistic approach to power and conflict affords Europe a high stance of legitimacy and credibility in world affairs. Europe has all the assets to present itself as a new type of international actor that has a novel approach to power, that defines interests and duties in accordance with the values it defends internally. The EU can repair the tarnished image of the “West” in the eyes of much of the third world.

The EU’s emergence of an international actor depends to a great extent on its ability to speak in a single voice in foreign policy and security matters. The EU obviously failed to respond to the war in Iraq in a coherent and united way; but to conclude this as a symptom of insurmountable divisions within the EU, and to predict Europe’s future foreign policy orientation in light of its response to the Iraqi war is premature. The split over Iraq emerged as a result not only of individual member states’ desire to maintain exclusive bilateral relations with the US, but also of deliberate tactics on the part of the US government to fuel divisions within the EU.¹³ Policy makers in Washington have believed for many years that the only way to prevent the EU from becoming an effective international actor is to keep it divided. That is the reason why the US has always been a big supporter of the EU expansion, why it has always preferred to deal with the EU countries individually and why it has always been suspicious of the EU’s efforts to establish a

¹¹ Robert Jervis, “The Compulsive Empire,” *Foreign Policy* (July-August 2003), p.82.

¹² Recent move by the EU to lift its arms embargo on China despite US opposition is a case in point. See also Jeffrey Gedmin, “The Great European kowtow and what it means,” *Financial Times*, 7 December 2004.

¹³ See for example Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld drawing a distinction between “old” and “new” Europe based on their support for the US policy in Iraq. Donald Rumsfeld, Press Briefing at the Foreign Press Center, Washington, 22 January 2003, available at www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2003/t01232003-t0122sdfpc.html. See also Wolfgang Munchau, “US must see Europe as an Entity,” *Financial Times*, 20 February 2005.

common security and defense policy which is called European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP).¹⁴

Naturally Eastern European countries are still predisposed toward the US because of their recent history; but if past EU expansions are any guide, soon practical concerns will overwhelm traditional attitudes. Financial support from Brussels will no doubt bring new members closer to the EU policies. The US overestimates that new members will remain pro-America; in fact; the pro-war alliance is already crumbling amidst the increasing chaos and uncertainty in Iraq. The election of the Socialist government in Spain on the promise of pulling troops out of Iraq and “bringing Spain to its rightful place in Europe.”¹⁵ and growing opposition to prolonged conflict in Iraq in Eastern European countries that offered assistance to the US are clear signs that the US alliance with the “new Europe” is fragile. It can be argued that terrorist attacks in Spain have led Spaniards to distance themselves from the US. If other states in Europe also come to the conclusion that the safer course in world affairs is to dissociate themselves from American policies, then the US is likely to become increasingly isolated on the world stage. As much as politicians continue to pay lip service to uniting against terrorism and not giving into terrorist demands, they will have to translate the public fear into concrete policy actions that will undoubtedly include some distancing from the US. The unspoken truth is that it may take one terror attack against one of the American allies in Europe to turn public opinion completely against the US. So long as the US continues to lose prestige and credibility in world affairs, its military might may not be enough to keep friends around.

It can be argued that the war in Iraq has forced Europe into more of the position of a global actor. The challenge ahead for the EU is whether to continue integration in foreign and defense policy with a core group of states or to overcome divisions and differences in political and strategic cultures of 25 states and act as a single actor in world affairs. Growing unease with American unilateralism is likely to serve as a unifying factor and push Europe towards a leading role on the world stage. Already steps have been taken that indicate Europeans’ willingness to assume this role. The unanimous adoption of the European Security Strategy in December 2003 and the agreement on the European Convention that contains significant measures in forming of common foreign and security policy are landmark developments in European history. There is no doubt that frustration with American policies in Iraq and in the wider war on terror has accelerated European initiatives to devise mechanisms and institutions that will help the EU to act quickly and decisively in times of crisis.

The military and economic overstretch of the superpower in Iraq and the failure to reach self-proclaimed objectives seems to have dealt a serious blow to the post-Cold War American unipolarity. The economic restraints on the United States, fueled to a great extent by the war in Iraq, are reflected in its current account deficit and growing foreign debt. Unless Americans take drastic measures to reduce their reliance on foreign capital, it is very unlikely that the US can

¹⁴ See for example John C. Hulsman, “Cherry-Picking as the American Answer to a Weak, but Gaullist Europe,” *Washington Post*, 10 December 2003.

¹⁵ See for example Philip H. Gordon, “Spanish Lessons for the US,” *El Pais*, 23 March 2004.

sustain its economic and political hegemony for very much longer.¹⁶ Europe, on the other hand, either as a whole or as a core group of states under the leadership of France and Germany, is pushed to take on a more active international role.¹⁷ The two countries with combined population of 140 million people that account for half of the Eurozone economy have enough assets and bargaining power to lead Europe into a position of power in world affairs. As in other aspects of European integration (Schengen system and the adoption of a single currency) a core group of states is likely to lead unification in foreign and defense policy and their success would gradually attract other members to join in. The turn of events beginning with the end of the Cold War have forced the EU to take on a more active role on the world stage. Even the Atlanticists, namely Italy and Spain, who favor close ties with the US, support deeper integration; it is a matter of time for the new members to become convinced of the unique mission history has assigned to them or to remain in the outer circle of the EU in some form of an economic partnership. The referendums on the Constitution will provide a more accurate indication on how or whether Europe will transform itself into an independent and a civilian power in world affairs.

The question of Turkey's membership to the EU and its relations with the US cannot be disengaged from the wider question of the future direction of transatlantic relations. Unlike Eastern European countries, traditionally pro-American, who have now become the members of the Union; Turkey will have to work harder to prove its allegiance to Europe. This will involve not only demonstrating its will to abandon its sovereignty in areas wider than formerly expected of previous candidates, but also standing closer to the EU in matters that contradict American foreign policy objectives. To the extent that the rift between the US and Europe widens, Turkey will have to reevaluate its relationship with the US. Never before has Turkey been in a position to choose which "west" it wants to identify with.

The Past and the Future Direction of Turkey's Relations with the US and the EU

Contrary to its centuries-long ties to Europe, Turkey's bilateral relationship with the US is only about five decades long, yet it is imbued with less ambivalence and tension than its European counterpart. In fact, aside from the Turkish intervention in Cyprus in 1975 that strained relations for about three years, Turkish-American relationship has not weathered any serious storms. Since the end of the Second World War, the US has been the most fervent supporter of Turkey's modernization project and it has actively sought Turkey's affiliation with and membership of western institutions.

During the Cold War, security considerations formed the basis of Turkish American relationship. Despite some ebbs and flows, the existence of the Soviet threat ensured that the relationship remained intact. With the end of the Second World War, Soviet expansionist aims had become evident. Turkey was a subject to the Soviet plans that seemed to include a long-lasting desire for the control of the Straits and claims on Turkey's eastern provinces. The symbolic visit of the US Warship Missouri in April 1946 signaled the beginning of the US' strategic interest in Turkey's security. American commitments to Turkey had been confirmed by its inclusion in the Truman

¹⁶ See for example former US Secretary of Treasury Lawrence Summers: "There is something odd about the world's greatest power being the world's greatest debtor" quoted in David H. Levey and Stuart Brown, "the Overstretch Myth," *Foreign Affairs* (March-April 2005).

¹⁷ Wolfgang Munchau, "Bush II could be good for Europe," *Financial Times*, 7 November 2004.

Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. Turkey reciprocated by joining the Korean War on the side of the US.

During the Cold War, Turkey's geostrategic position was of utmost importance that persuaded Americans to overlook some of Turkey's political failings. European attitudes to Turkey, on the other hand, were less exclusively focused on strategic factors.¹⁸ It was more like that Europeans took Turkey's strategic significance for granted. They have nevertheless, albeit grudgingly, recognized the importance of Turkey's inclusion into European institutional structures such as the Council of Europe in 1949 and NATO in 1952. After all, in the Cold War Europe, the very idea of Europe had come to be defined in opposition to the communist "East". In this way, being a NATO country and a striving free market economy has served Turkey well and facilitated its affiliation with a host of European institutions. Turkey became an associate member of the then EEC in 1963 and applied for full membership of the EC in 1987. Yet, Turkey's relations with Europe have always been underpinned by questions of identity, economic concerns and its democratic deficit. In that respect, Turkey's becoming an associate member has not put an end to speculations about Turkey's identity. Turkey's human rights record, particularly in the context of the struggle against PKK separatism, its democratic deficits and economic backwardness, its Islamic culture have all contributed to doubts about Turkey's place in Europe. The existence of the Soviet threat had, to some extent, put these questions in the backdrop, but had not completely eliminated them.

With the demise of the Soviet Union and the reorientation of western geostrategic interests, the utility of Turkey as a strategic partner has become an issue in Europe-more so than in the US. Turkey's support for the US in the first Gulf War quickly reminded Washington of its utility in the context of American strategic interests in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia. But for the European states that had, at the time, little if any ambition to engage actively in these areas, the new geostrategic realities following the first Gulf War only served as a reminder that Turkey is bordering a high risk zone of tension that could drag the EU into unwanted conflicts. The end of the Cold War also brought to the fore the question of European identity, the issue of precisely where Europe's final boundaries should be located. The successful integration of the former communist 'East' into the EU has become a priority on European agenda. The EU's relations with Turkey have become even more ambivalent. The Customs Union came into effect at the beginning of 1996; later the rejection of the candidate status in 1997 Luxembourg Summit marked the lowest point in the history of Turkey's relations with the EU. The decision was reversed in 1999 Copenhagen Summit, yet the damage had already been done in terms of growing suspicion of and disappointment in Turkey with EU's perceived motives towards Turkey.

Ironically from mid-1990s onwards, Turkey's position on the Middle East and especially on Iraq gradually departed from the US policies and came closer to the European position. Continuing air strikes against Iraq, the growing domestic opposition to the use of the bases and security threats emanating from the semi-sovereign Kurdish zone in northern Iraq have made it very difficult for Turkey to support American objectives in the Gulf area. Turkey and Europe had serious misgivings about the US dual containment policy that aimed isolation and exclusion of Iran and

¹⁸ Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey's Kurdish Dilemma," *Survival*, Vol. 35 (1993) p.60-61.

Iraq with whom they preferred to remain engaged politically and economically. The US itself became increasingly isolated in its view of Iraq as a biggest threat to regional peace and security. The EU and Turkey have given priority to the solution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as an important catalyst of problems throughout the Middle East.

These issues would continue to fester over the next decade contributing to Turkey's refusal of the deployment of the US troops in northern Iraq via its territory. The reasons for the Turkish Parliament's decision are aptly documented elsewhere;¹⁹ suffice it to say that the Bush Administration's increasingly aggressive policy toward Iraq and increasing concessions to the Kurds in Northern Iraq greatly contributed to this result. There is no doubt that this decision and the subsequent arrest by the US forces of eleven Turkish Special Forces in Sulaymaniyah, northern Iraq, have caused a major setback in Turkish- American relations. Later, both sides have taken steps to mitigate the crisis; but Turkish officials do not seem to regret failing to act with the US in Iraq even at the cost of jeopardizing relations with a long standing ally and multi-billion dollars worth of economic benefits. Turkish government is well aware that its prestige and public image has been served well by its resolve to withstand pressure from a superpower. American-Turkish strategic partnership has always met with suspicion and mistrust by its Middle Eastern neighbors and has become a serious obstacle for the improvement of relations.

The current government in Turkey that came to power in November 2002 seemed well aware that if any factor could influence the EU's decision in December 2004, it could only be Turkey's own efforts at democratization. The AKP (Justice and Development Party) majority government has shown tremendous resolve in the solution of previously taboo issues in Turkey - such as the Cyprus problem and the role of military in political affairs. The reform packages adapted in the last two years comprise the most sweeping and far reaching reforms achieved in the recent history of Turkey. The AKP government has also taken significant steps in the implementation of these reforms. The prospect of membership in the EU has been a major catalyst in Turkey's democratization. Although it has for years relied on an open-ended American support for making things happen for her, Turkey has finally come to grips with the fact that its membership in the EU relies solely on its own progress.

The end of the bumpy road to the start of negotiations for membership in the EU is finally within sight. Turkey has received a definite, albeit qualified; date to start negotiations at the EU's Brussels Summit in December 2004. The decision by the European Council marks the beginning of even more turbulent times in Turkey's relations with the EU, as the language of the decision points to a number of difficulties and obstacles in the road towards membership. In this next phase Turkey's relations with the US are also very critical. Given the nature of transatlantic relations, Turkey will be exposed to diverging demands from both sides. It is in the interest of Turkey not to be engaged in policies that would confirm fears within European circles that it would be a "Trojan horse" for US policy objectives within the EU. It is crucial for Turkey not to provide any grounds to make the argument often heard in Germany and France that it is too pro-American.

¹⁹ See for example Philip Robins, "Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad: Turkey between Copenhagen and Iraq," *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (May 2003), pp.547-566.

No matter how bad transatlantic relations get, it will never come to a level of possible military confrontation as it once was with the US and the Soviet Union. The first part of this paper argued that it is nearly impossible for Europe to match America's military power; yet the EU as a civilian super power has a wide ranging of tools to exert its influence on world affairs. One of these tools will be having a Muslim, yet secular and a democratic country as its member. Turkey's military capabilities have never been a major attraction to the EU; in the post-9/11 world their significance has further declined. Turkey must reevaluate its assets more suitable to this new era, strengthen its relations with neighbors and make full use of the attraction its membership negotiations with the EU will bring. The current government seems well aware of Turkey's unique position in both the EU's and the Washington's foreign policies, as the arrangement of the visits of Russian leader Vladimir Putin to Turkey right before the Brussels Summit and that of Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan to Syria and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül to the Middle East right after the Summit aptly demonstrate.

Turkey's giving more weight to its relations with the EU and her neighbors do not mean that Turkish-American relationship will be severely strained, yet its defining parameters will surely be altered. Turkish-American cooperation can no longer be taken for granted by both sides. In other words, the relationship will evolve on an issue by issue basis. In future, when Turkish foreign policy turns out to be in line with the US, and vice versa, it is more likely to be of coincidence rather than of coordination. In post-September 11 era, a new dimension has been added to Washington's strategic interest in Turkey that is its identity. The US has a vested interest in the security and stability of Turkey and its value to the US is unlikely to decline as long as the war on terror continues. That is the reason why the US has consistently promoted Turkey's entry into the EU, although it seems contrary to its interests to have Turkey so closely aligned with the EU given the troubled state of transatlantic relations. Any course that encourages anti-western sentiments in Turkey is not in America's best interest. The US relies on Turkey as a model, secular and democratic closely aligned to the West, to serve as an example to other countries in its region. Washington is well aware that Turkish foreign policy will become further Europeanized during the course of the negotiations, yet it still sees Turkey as a pivotal ally in its battle against terrorism.²⁰ This is by no means to suggest that the US will allow Turkey to contradict its major foreign policy objectives, nor will it allow the rising anti-Americanism in Turkey to go unchecked. As the EU member states are able to strike a delicate balance in their relations with the US notwithstanding their differences, as they refrain from attacking the Bush administration while asserting their own positions, Turkey must draw lessons from that. The current style and tone of Turkey's dealings with Washington that has become increasingly antagonistic will not earn her extra points in its membership negotiations with the EU; it will only prove lack of diplomatic foresight. There is nothing to be gained from unnecessarily provoking a superpower, even one arguably shrinking in power.

It is in the interest of Turkey, both in terms of furthering integration with the EU and improving relations with neighbors south and north, not to associate itself with unilateralist policies of the

²⁰ Steven A. Cook, "US-Turkey Relations and the War on Terrorism," Analysis Paper No.9, 6 November 2001. Available at www.brookings.org/dybdocroot/views/ARTICLES/fellows/2001_cook.htm
See also John C. Hulsman and Bret D. Schaefer, "Why a Pro-Western Turkey is a US Policy Priority." Available at www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/em845.cfm

US that draw much antagonism from the rest of the world. Membership negotiations conducted against the backdrop of strained transatlantic relations will push Turkey harder to prove its allegiance to Europe. This will, by definition, involve redefining the parameters of the US-Turkish relationship. As important as it is for Turkey not to alienate its long-time ally, which will undoubtedly require a great deal of diplomatic maneuvering; it may be forced in a position to make explicit policy preferences. This is not in itself detrimental to the US-Turkish relations, but it certainly steers the course of the relationship towards uncharted waters. As European publics come to terms with the EU's emerging role in international affairs and Turkey's place in it, Turkey may also realize that its future interests are better served and the Kemalist legacy of westernization is better fulfilled by being a part of a more benign "West."