



Turkey as a Bridgehead and Spearhead Integrating EU and Turkish Foreign Policy

Michael Emerson and Nathalie Tocci

Abstract

This paper starts with the assumption that the EU will decide to open accession negotiations with Turkey at the end of 2004 and in this context it explores the potential for the integration of EU and Turkish foreign, security and defence policies in the pre-accession period. The evolving nature of both the EU and Turkey as foreign policy actors is considered, with attention drawn to the effective graduations in the nature of the EU's external borders as it extends its membership and association arrangements deeper into the south-eastern periphery. Turkish capabilities are reviewed, ranging from the subjective arguments about its experience as a democratising, secular state of largely Muslim culture, through to objective assets such as military capabilities and cultural affinities with various neighbouring peoples. With the Turkish neighbourhood thus becoming the EU's wider neighbourhood, the paper reviews how far the EU and Turkey may be convergent in their interests and complementary in their capabilities in such regions as the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East and Central Asia. The paper concludes with the assessment that Turkey stands to be an unequivocal asset for the EU's external policies.

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Integrating EU and Turkish Foreign Policy

EU-Turkey Working Paper No. 1/August 2004

Michael Emerson and Nathalie Tocci*

1. Introduction

Even if Turkey begins its accession negotiations sometime in 2005, full membership would probably only occur around a decade later. Turkey needs to implement fundamental political and economic reforms that would assure its full compliance with the 1993 Copenhagen criteria as well as complete 31 chapters of negotiations over the *acquis communautaire* with the European Commission. For its part, the EU needs to finalise and implement the results of the Convention and most critically it must absorb at least 12 new member states (the ten new members as of May 2004 plus Romania and Bulgaria). Of key importance indeed is the absorption capacity of the EU to take on new members, a capacity that has for the time being been stretched to the limit by the enlargement of May 2004.

Yet none of this excludes the idea that the EU and Turkey might begin to integrate their foreign policies in the pre-accession period. In principle integration in the foreign policy realm could take place and would be mutually beneficial regardless of Turkey's EU-accession process. But owing to Turkey's aspirations to join the Union and the EU's decision in 1999 to recognise Turkey as a candidate, a proposal for limited integration would be rejected by Turkey. In all likelihood, Turkey would view such a proposal as constituting an alternative strategy motivated by a rejection of Turkey as a European country. It would consider this rejection as backtracking by the EU from its commitment to recognise Turkey's candidacy and an exclusion of Turkey for reasons that go beyond its compliance with the Copenhagen criteria.

Hence, the working hypothesis of this paper is that there would be a decision to integrate Turkish and EU foreign policy alongside the accession negotiations rather than as a substitute for full membership. Indeed, in the event of a positive decision on the opening of accession negotiations in December 2004, there could be good reasons for integration in the foreign policy sphere with deliberate vigour immediately from 2005. Such integration could yield important benefits to both Turkey and to the EU.

In fact this process has already begun with Turkey's association with the EU's nascent security and defence policy. In October 2002 an agreement was reached concerning the participation of non-EU NATO allies in the European security and defence policy (ESDP).¹ These arrangements were elaborated further in the context of the EU-NATO Strategic Partnership initiated in December 2002. In practice, Turkey has participated in all EU-led military operations, apart from the operation in the Republic of Congo.

But this is only a small beginning compared to the conceivable agenda. The reasons to consider this idea are quite obvious at the primary level. First, Turkey's neighbourhood in the eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans, the Middle East and Eurasian regions is the primary focus of Turkish foreign policy and has become the main source of Europe's security concerns: weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and illegal trafficking of drugs and people. These were identified as priority

* The authors would like to thank Sinan Ulgen as well as the staff of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for valuable information and ideas.

¹ See European Council (2002), *ESDP: Implementation of the Nice provisions by the non-EU NATO Allies*, 24-25 October 2002, Brussels.

areas in the European security strategy adopted by the EU in December 2003.² Second, the enlarging EU is in the course of developing a European Neighbourhood policy,³ which would be extended naturally to the east with Turkey's accession, becoming to a considerable degree a Euro-Turkish Neighbourhood policy. Third, Turkey offers a number of specific potential assets for helping the EU address these concerns, ranging from the concrete realities of location and logistics, through to matters of culture and ideology and the search for a harmony rather than clash of civilisations.

The present paper starts by considering some working hypotheses on what kind of politics Turkey and the EU may tend to become over the next decade. On the basis of such hypotheses, this paper delves more precisely into the foreign policy implications and opportunities of a Turkey fully integrated into the European Union. The approach is first to conceptually identify the possible assets (and liabilities) that Turkey's accession to the EU could bring in the foreign policy domain, and then to test these ideas in relation to the most relevant geographical theatres of operation for a putative joint foreign policy. In doing so, the implications for the EU itself as a foreign policy actor in its near-abroad are also assessed.

Some aspects of the Turkish candidacy are manifestly controversial in Europe, or have to balance between positives and negatives. In the realm of foreign, security and defence policies, however, we do not find that this is the case, and by the end of the paper we arrive at unambiguously positive conclusions. To crystallise the conclusions with some imagery, we may see Turkey as both a bridgehead and spearhead for European interests, here interpreted in a civil rather than military sense.⁴

2. The evolving nature of Turkey and the EU: The spectrum of hypotheses

What kind of European Union will Turkey join? On 1 May 2004 ten new member states entered the Union. The road map for accession of the two remaining Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs), namely Romania and Bulgaria, is foreseen in 2007. In addition, Croatia applied for membership in 2003 and Macedonia followed in March 2004. Other Western Balkan countries are currently in the Stabilisation and Association Process, which was explicitly recognised by the June 2003 Thessaloniki European Council to lead on to the full accession process. To this long and problematic list one should add also Moldova, which is increasingly oriented less towards Russia, aiming instead at joining the Stabilisation and Association Process, and so to join the long EU-accession train. Ukraine and the South Caucasus states are likely to press harder for the 'prospect' of EU membership in the long term, especially if Turkey begins accession negotiations in 2005. Finally, the idea that Norway and Iceland will submit applications for membership in the course of the next several years should not be excluded, in which case they would almost certainly receive a fast-track treatment, given that they are already fully compliant with the Copenhagen criteria. Where in this long queue of applications will Turkey find its place? The conventional argument is that it already has its place immediately after Bulgaria and Romania. Apart from the possible cases of Norway and Iceland, however, other applicants such as Croatia may fancy their chances to jump the queue ahead of Turkey, which is not unthinkable for a small and relatively unproblematic candidature.

What are the implications of this cascading enlargement process for the nature of the Union? Specific predictions are impossible to make. Nevertheless, two contrasting hypotheses can be put forward.⁵ Will the EU look more like a classical, federal Westphalian state or a neo-medieval empire? Rather

² See Javier Solana (2003), *A Secure Europe in a Better World, European Security Strategy*, European Commission, Brussels, 11-12 December (retrievable from <http://ue.eu.int/pressdata/EN/reports/78367.pdf>).

³ See European Commission (2004), *European Neighbourhood Policy – Strategy Paper*, Brussels, May.

⁴ A bridgehead is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as “a fortification covering the end of a bridge nearest the enemy” and a spearhead as “a body of persons chosen to lead a thrust or attack”.

⁵ See Jan Zielonka (2001), “How new enlarged borders will reshape the European Union”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 507-36.

than representing mutually exclusive options, these models represent stylised extremes in a wide spectrum of possibilities. The current EU already includes elements of both models. The paragraphs below speculate on the possible direction the Union's structure will take along this spectrum.

The first, Westphalian hypothesis would see the emergence of a supranational level of government as a clear federal centre of authority. It would acquire new competences as well as a serious deepening of some presently thin competences. It would be able to exercise them over a well-defined territory. It would be equipped with common military and police forces to assure the internal and external security of the European federation. There would be a coincidence of legal, administrative, economic and military regimes. As such there would be a categorical distinction between the inside and the outside. Essential sovereignty would be regained, having passed from the national state to the European super-state level.

The second, neo-medieval empire hypothesis would see a Union developing as a set of overlapping circles, without a clear centre of power or hierarchy. Its borders would be soft and in a state of flux. Its institutional structure would be even more complex than the one we know today. This in turn would force the Union to act in a differentiated rather than a uniform manner. As put by one political scientist, the medieval system of rule reflected a "patchwork of overlapping and incomplete rights of governments" in which "different juridical instances were geographically interwoven and stratified, and plural allegiances, asymmetrical suzerainties and anomalous enclaves abounded".⁶ A Union of possibly over 30 member states may come to look like an increasingly post-modern equivalent of such a system.⁷ Its sovereignty would be divided, its citizenship would be diversified and its institutions would be multiple and interlocked in a complex web of interdependences.

A new medieval empire could take a variety of forms, which would render the Union more or less inclusive as well as more or less effective. For example, how would the concentric or overlapping circles of the Union be constituted? Would an exclusive group of 'first-class' members proceed with a tightly-knit political core, excluding the participation of outer circles of 'second-class' member states? Or would the Union be formed by different cores for different policy areas, which are determined by the voluntary opt-ins and opt-outs of the different countries? The effectiveness of the new structure would also vary widely depending on the chosen mode of decision-making within EU structures. For example, a Union constituted by overlapping circles deciding on the basis of majority rule could well be more effective than a classic federation, which would retain the possibility of minority blocking power.

Three reasons suggest that the kind of Union that Turkey would be most likely to join would resemble a neo-medieval system more than a grand, federal Westphalian state. First, owing to the fundamental nature of the 'big bang' enlargement of 2004 and the further expected enlargement to the Balkans, the Union is likely to be characterised by increasing degrees and forms of divergence. Despite the impressive transformation observed in the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe, considerable divergence persists between the old and new members.⁸ The single market will enlarge but still with long transition periods for the full liberalisation of the four freedoms. Pressures emanating from the movement of persons may render the objective of establishing hard EU borders impossible. The Schengen system, as we know it today, is problematic in generating hard borders between the inside and the outside. These borders are being erected in regions where for decades border peoples freely interacted on a regular basis. Retaining such a system of inclusion/exclusion is not only undesirable but may also be unfeasible. Finally, in the security field, because of the strong pro-American sentiment among the CEECs and the value accorded by them to NATO, the latter may well remain a principal security actor in the wider Europe.

⁶ See John Ruggie (1986), "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity", *World Politics*, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 21-52.

⁷ See James Caporaso (1996), "The EU and forms of state: Westphalian, regulatory and post-modern", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 29-51.

⁸ See Jan Zielonka (2001), *op. cit.*

Second, although EU institutions remain reluctant to admit it, the Union already includes overlapping circles constituted by inside and outside actors. The UK, Sweden and Denmark remain outside the eurozone. It is doubtful that all the new member states will succeed in acceding to monetary union after 2006. Different concepts of European economic areas beyond the EU's formal membership exist already, and are becoming more numerous and diversified. For example, Norway and Switzerland are part of the European Economic Area and Turkey is part of the EU customs union. In the area of justice and home affairs, non-EU countries such as Norway are included in the Schengen system, participating in these EU councils albeit without voting power. Nevertheless, member states such as the UK have chosen not to. Likewise the newly acceding CEECs are not yet fully part of the Schengen area. In the area of security and defence, former Western European Union (WEU) non-EU member states such as Turkey and Norway may participate in ESDP decision-making as agreed in December 2002. In the realm of foreign policy, ad hoc groups, normally consisting of France, Germany and the UK, often conduct joint diplomatic initiatives without the other member states. The joint initiative in Iran in 2003 was indeed conducted in the name of Europe and was considered an important success in European foreign policy. Finally, the UK's decision in May 2004 to ratify the Constitution by referendum already provokes contingency thinking about what if the result there, or in other member states, is negative. One line of thinking is indeed to form a core group of member states who are included in every policy area – with no opt-outs – and to have other institutional arrangements for the member states that do opt-out.

Third, the EU's present efforts to develop a European Neighbourhood policy represents a means (albeit still embryonic) to dilute the gap between full membership and EU external relations. The Commission's recent strategy paper extends the geographical coverage of this initiative potentially to all the European CIS states (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and the South Caucasus) and to the whole of the Mediterranean basin, i.e. to all Barcelona-process states, although it does not include two of Turkey's neighbours, namely Iraq and Iran.⁹

The precise form and effectiveness of the new system remains uncertain. The Union has been experiencing great difficulties in negotiating a well-structured Constitutional Treaty and the outcome is still uncertain. Hence, although enlargement raises the importance of devising a workable and effective decision-making system, it remains unclear whether, how and in what time-frame this will take place. What seems clearer is that the Union will not resemble a model of clear-cut concentric circles constituted by first- and second-class members. Member states and particularly the newcomers into the Union (including Turkey at a future date) will vigorously oppose the development of such a system, understandably viewing it as a form of discrimination and persisting exclusion despite their efforts to join the Union.

Regardless of the precise nature of the future system, if the Westphalian model is not seriously pursued, rather than representing a liability divergence may act as an important asset to the new EU system. Diversity within the Union would not only entail greater cultural, social and political wealth within the EU, the differences between EU member states and non-member states would become less clear-cut. This in turn could aid the Union to constructively develop its relations with the 'outside', making use of the commonalities and special ties that exist between some member states and some neighbouring countries. As the geographical sections below will argue, this would be especially true in the case of Turkey and its neighbours. So long as common interests prevail, Turkey's specificities could considerably enrich the possibilities for an effective and substantial EU foreign policy. Naturally this does not detract from the complexity of developing a workable institutional set-up to conduct external relations with non-member countries. This indeed remains the major challenge posed by enlargement in general.

What kind of Turkey will enter the Union over the next decade? As put by most observers of Turkey, 'there are many Ankaras'. The multi-faceted nature of the Turkish establishment relates to different visions of the Turkish nation-state. Owing to the transformative (or Europeanising) nature of the

⁹ See European Commission (2004), *op. cit.*

accession process, the often contrasting objectives of the different Ankaras became particularly evident following the December 1999 Helsinki European Council. Turkey's candidacy meant that it was no longer sufficient to pay lip-service to the goal of EU membership. If Ankara was serious in its aspirations to join the Union, it had to demonstrate that it was equally committed to its domestic reforms in the political, economic and institutional realms.

As the EU demands for reform became more intense, the concerns and resistance against change in Ankara also emerged more visibly. Effective opposition to EU membership, or rather to the reform necessary to attain it, existed within many groups of the Turkish political system. It included circles in the nationalist right and the nationalist left, along with the civilian and the military establishments. Some right-wing nationalists preferred to establish closer links with Turkic Eurasia than to see Turkey's full integration with Western Europe. Conservatives objected to the principles and applications of multiculturalism and multi-level governance within the EU. Others opposed the rising interference of Brussels in Turkish domestic politics and were more inclined to pursue Turkey's Western orientation through closer ties with the US.

Important pro-European and pro-reformists elements also existed within the Turkish establishment, as shown by the fundamental constitutional reforms undertaken since October 2001. But the momentum in favour of change rose to unprecedented levels after the AK party's landslide victory in the 3 November 2002 elections. This was because of both the nature of the AKP and the very fact that the party gained sufficient votes to form a stable single-party government – the first since the Turgut Özal governments of the 1980s. The AKP refuses to define itself as a religious party but rather calls for greater religious freedoms. In order to carry a consistent political message it advocates individual rights and freedoms in other spheres as well. Its support for EU membership is not only viewed as an end to be attained through painful reforms. In the government's rhetoric, the EU anchor is also portrayed a means to attain the objectives of reform, which are as, if not more, important than membership itself.¹⁰ Indeed, government officials have repeatedly dubbed the Copenhagen criteria as the 'Ankara criteria'.¹¹

The 'what kind of Turkey?' question may be distilled into two main alternatives. Will Turkey more resemble the early republic founded on principles of centralisation, secularism and homogeneity, which on several occasions were pursued through repressive and assimilationist means? Or will the Turkish nation-state truly fulfil its original objectives and develop into a civic nation, albeit one in which religious, regional, linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity is fostered and respected? It appears reasonable to assume that while the future Turkish nation-state will differ significantly from the one known in the past, important features of the *ancien regime* will remain. Indeed over the last two years, Turkey's transformation cannot be considered fanciful speculation. It represents a concrete reality. The constitutional reforms and ensuing harmonisation packages since October 2001 constitute indisputable evidence of change in Turkey. An increasingly credible EU anchor has certainly aided if not catalysed the endogenous modernisation of the Turkish nation-state. Nevertheless, this has not and is unlikely to entail a revolutionary change, which would give rise to an entirely different state and nation.

EU membership would effectively imply abandoning the traditional interpretation of Kemalism and embracing a 21st century re-conceptualisation of the Kemalist vision 80 years after the foundation of the state.¹² This change is in the making. Yet the precise extent of the transformation remains unclear. Much will depend upon internal political, social and economic dynamics in Turkey as well as the consistency, credibility and coherence of EU conditionality throughout the process of accession.

¹⁰ Indeed for the AKP – emerging from the succession of banned Islamic parties – greater political freedoms are viewed as critical to their very survival as a political party.

¹¹ See, for example, the keynote speech by Minister of the Economy Ali Babacan at an informal EU-Turkey brainstorming meeting organised by the European University Institute and Sabanci University, Florence, 6-7 May 2004.

¹² See Nathalie Tocci (2001), *21st Century Kemalism: Redefining Turkey-EU Relations in the Post-Helsinki Era*, CEPS Working Document No. 170, CEPS, Brussels.

3. The impact of Turkey on EU foreign policy

Assuming that the EU which Turkey joins is more likely to resemble a new medieval empire than a grand homogenous federation, and that the Turkey joining the Union at that time will be a transformation of (rather than a radical departure from) the 20th century republican project, what are the implications for EU foreign policy? Turkey's accession presents a set of challenges and opportunities. The extent to which the challenges posed can be transformed into opportunities hinges both on the development of Turkey's accession process and on the precise mode of Turkey's integration into EU structures. In turn, the joint foreign policy initiatives undertaken in the pre-accession period will affect the impact of Turkey's membership on EU foreign policy.

The most important challenge posed by Turkey's accession, and indeed from enlargement in general, concerns the ability of the Union to control its external borders and to act beyond them. The more the Union develops into a classic federal structure and the less Turkey (and the other member states) transforms in a homogenising manner, the greater the challenge of Turkey's accession. Yet if the EU does not develop as a homogenous federation, how will its complex institutional system of multi-level governance interact with the outside?

The history of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) teaches us that when faced with a foreign policy problem requiring short-term action, a traditional state actor is often infinitely more effective at mobilising its resources, given the greater simplicity in its policy-making process. If instead the Union is to develop into a system with multiple centres of authority, then not only will it be faced with the challenge of coordinating member-state positions, but also (a number of) these member states will need to coordinate with their respective sub-national levels of government. As put by David Allen, "if Bonn is to be challenged by the Länder, or Madrid by Catalonia, or Rome by northern Italy, or indeed London by Scotland, then the task of foreign policy coordination will become that much more complex".¹³ Within an enlarged Union that also includes Turkey, the nature of this problem would be magnified further. The Union would therefore need to devise a workable system whereby its huge political, economic, social, cultural and institutional diversity would no longer be a hindrance to effective decision-making vis-à-vis the outside.

In terms of opportunities, Turkey's membership offers a structural potential to enhance the credibility of EU policies towards the Middle East, the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Mediterranean regions. Turkey's accession could contribute to a rebalancing of the Union's focus towards its southern and south-eastern neighbourhood. The EU's borders would reach Syria, Iraq and Iran as well as the South Caucasus. This could increase member-state incentives to engage with the south-eastern periphery. Furthermore, Turkey's accession would entail that the EU's Mediterranean population would represent 40% of the enlarged EU. Qualified majority voting would per se increase the likelihood of greater EU attention to the south. The extent to which this would occur would depend critically on the evolution of Turkey's own policies and positions towards these regions.

Second, Turkey's accession would affect the credibility of the EU as a foreign policy actor. Turkey's membership, like the current eastern enlargement, would constitute a key EU foreign policy action. The extent to which such an action is successful depends on the degree to which the accession process will have contributed to a transformation of Turkey as a candidate. Rather than whether and when, it is the precise way in which Turkey enters the Union that will most critically determine its impact on the EU as a credible foreign policy actor.

If consistent, sustained and principled EU policies contribute to and support a fundamental transformation of the Turkish state and society, the Union's credibility as a civilian actor would rise. Such a success would have important demonstration effects on other candidate or would-be candidate countries. Moreover, Turkey's accession process and in particular Turkey's parallel process of political and economic transformation would offer EU actors further insights in the development of

¹³ See David Allen (1996), "Conclusions: The European rescue of national foreign policy?" in Christopher Hill (ed.), *The Actor's in Europe's Foreign Policy*, New York: Routledge, pp. 288-304.

conditionality policies. The Turkish-EU experience would allow the enlarged Union to refine its techniques of conditionality, thus contributing to the quest of strengthening the EU as a civilian actor beyond its borders.

A danger would arise if, on the other hand, the Union were to accept Turkey as a full member on laxer conditions than those specified by the accession process. Indeed, in the past, conservative elements within the Turkish establishment (often spurred by the US) have argued that Turkey should be admitted to the Union on different conditions given its geo-strategic importance. As a contrasting mirror image of the positive demonstration effect discussed above, Turkey's accession in violation of EU conditions would set a dangerous precedent. This appears particularly relevant with regard to the EU's involvement in the Middle East. Were Turkey's own accession to be accomplished in violation of predetermined conditions, a bad example could be set for other potential candidates or close associates in the European Neighbourhood.

Turkey's accession would leave unanswered the question of what carrots the Union could offer to its neighbours beyond enlargement. In the aftermath of the eastern expansion, it has become increasingly clear that despite the success of enlargement, the Union cannot indefinitely rely on this instrument as a means to positively induce transformation outside its borders. Beyond Turkey and the Western Balkan countries, the Union is faced with the key challenge of finding an effective way of relating to the remaining post-Soviet states (Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia itself) as well as with the entire southern Mediterranean basin and the Middle East.

Hence, the first tentative steps towards the development of the European Neighbourhood policy, which is directed at the EU's new neighbours that are not foreseen to become future members. The thinking within EU institutions is to offer additional benefits in order to add credibility to EU economic and political conditionality. The carrots offered would need to be sufficiently valuable to generate the potential for real change in the relevant regions. The conditional benefits on offer are expected to include participation in the EU single market without institutional representation and decision-making power. In the delivery of these alternative benefits, the Union is developing processes of negotiation, agreement and ratification through which the EU could exercise influence. It remains an open question whether the future packages will be sufficiently valuable and credible to induce reform within non-member states, given that such reforms are often viewed as difficult if not threatening to particular domestic elites.

Turkey's arguments for it to be viewed as a foreign and security policy asset to the EU have been set out in the speeches of Prime Minister Recep Erdoğan in January 2004.¹⁴ The argument has several strands. In Box A we attempt to systematise them, adding some elements to those raised by Mr Erdoğan.

Box A. Turkey's possible assets for EU foreign and security policy

Objective factors

- o Turkey's accession would lead to an *extended reach of the European Neighbourhood policy*. Turkey's neighbours would become direct neighbours of the EU.
- o Turkey has the role of a geographical *hub for regional cooperation*.
- o Turkey is a *secure energy-transport hub* for Caspian, Middle Eastern and Russian oil and gas.
- o Turkey is well situated to become a *forward base for the EU's security and defence policy*, for military logistics and the credibility of the EU's presence in the region.
- o Turkey has *valuable human resources* to complement those of the EU for cooperation programmes, ranging from business know-how to language skills.

¹⁴ These include Prime Minister Erdoğan's speeches on 26 January 2004 to the Council for Foreign Relations in New York and on 30 January 2004 to the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Normative arguments

- o Rather than representing values specific to particular cultures or religions, the Turkish case shows that *democracy, secularism and human rights are universal values*.
- o Turkey's EU accession would demonstrate that *Europe is an inclusive concept*, with multi-cultural values and openness to different religions.
- o Turkey's *transformation of its security and foreign policy culture* reveals less reliance on military power and greater emphasis on diplomacy and civilian instruments.
- o Turkey's accession would confirm the *contribution of European integration to conflict resolution*, with the reconciliation between the Turkish state and its Kurdish population, its rapprochement with Greece and its constructive role over Cyprus.

Synergy

- o Combining this list of points could give a *synergetic boost to the EU's capabilities and credibility as a foreign policy actor* across the EU's southern and eastern neighbourhoods.

These several arguments are set out explicitly, as criteria and references for the review of the main 'theatres of operation' for EU foreign policy that now follows.

Eleven major theatres of operation may be identified as representing the core of the common foreign and security concerns of both the EU and Turkey. These consist of the set of Turkey's neighbours, which may be taken as sub-regional groups or major states. These regions also concern the two major powers that also have their own interests in these regions – Russia and the US.

The idea is to review these theatres of operation and to consider whether and how EU and Turkish interests and policies may be respectively convergent and complementary or otherwise. In the cases reviewed below, first the interests and foreign policy objectives of Turkey and EU actors are assessed to determine their degree of convergence or similarity. If interests and objectives are convergent, an attempt is made to assess whether and how the existing and future Turkish and EU foreign policies could become complementary and mutually reinforcing. In other words, do Turkey and the EU have complementary comparative advantages that would raise the prospects of jointly and more effectively tackling their shared objectives? If convergence and complementarity exist, how could such synergies be materialised in practice, thus enhancing the capabilities and credibility of the EU as a foreign policy actor? In some cases, Turkey has special interests or legacies from past history that will call for special efforts to bring them into harmony with the EU's initial inclinations, positions and policies. In such cases, could Turkey and the Union tackle these special cases, transforming challenges into additional assets? A preliminary overview is offered in Box B.

Box B. Potential convergence, complementarity or otherwise of EU and Turkish foreign policies in major theatres of operation

The Balkans	Convergent and complementary
The Black Sea	Convergent and complementary
South Caucasus	Potentially complementary but not yet convergent; special factors – Armenia and Azerbaijan
Central Asia	Convergent and complementary
Russia	Convergent but risks of unintended effects
Mediterranean	Convergent and complementary
The Middle East	Increasingly convergent and complementary
Iraq	Potentially convergent and complementary but has special sensitivities – Kurds and Turkomans
Iran	Convergent and potentially complementary; special sensitivities – Kurds and religion
Saudi Arabia and the Gulf	Convergent and potentially complementary; special sensitivity – religion
The United States	Turkey is increasingly convergent with EU positions

4. Geographical dimensions

4.1 The Balkans

With Bulgarian and Romanian accession expected in 2007, and Croatia also expected to join the accession negotiation process, EU interests and policies in the Western Balkans are clearly directed towards consolidating the transformation of the remainder of the former Yugoslavia, Albania and Moldova. Turkey for its part also has a vital interest in this transit region – which separates it from Western Europe – being politically stable and endowed with efficient transport infrastructures. The interests of the EU and Turkey thus seem essentially convergent, with the legacy of Turkey's historical role in the region under the Ottoman Empire seeming to leave no outstanding problems to speak of.

EU policy will be confronted by an increasingly pressing dilemma: how to include the whole of the region efficiently in its economic and security space, but without premature accession as full members. The dilemma is posed because the borders between member and non-member states in the region will be virtually impossible to control physically at the frontiers. In recent years, since the Kosovo war, the new borders of the Western Balkans have become a new source of illegal and criminal activities with the trafficking of goods and people. The tensions created by the new borders will be exacerbated with Bulgarian and Croatian accession, as under the present EU policy their borders with Bosnia and Macedonia, for example, will have to become Schengen-compliant in relation to visa requirements and other qualitative aspects of border management.

This means that several policy domains will warrant the attention of the EU-25 (or EU-27 or -28 with Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia) in the years before the full accession of either Turkey or the remaining non-EU Western Balkan states. All of these policy issues are of direct importance to Turkey.

First, there could be an expansion of the EU-Turkey customs union to include the whole of the rest of the Balkans. Turkey's experience in joining the EU customs union without membership should here be a valuable experience.¹⁵ At present the attempt to administer borders between Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania is doing little more than creating new networks of illegal cross-border activity. The land borders between these small states and entities are unenforceable.

Second, the emphasis will have to shift increasingly towards internal policing and deepening cooperation across the whole justice and home affairs (JHA) domains. Given the importance of flows of people as well as of goods from Turkey into the Balkans and on into Western Europe the task of JHA cooperation in southeast Europe between Turkey and the enlarged EU will be fundamental.

Third, completion of the customs union should be flanked by investment in the major economic infrastructures. Parts of the pan-European transport corridors (especially number ten) that are of vital importance to Turkey are not yet adequate. The road connections from Istanbul to Belgrade are still lacking in highway quality in Bulgaria from Plovdiv to the Turkish frontier, and in Serbia from Nis to the Bulgarian frontier. In addition, the new bridge across the Danube at Vidin-Calafat, which was long delayed, should begin construction by the end of 2004, which should provide an alternative arterial highway for joining Turkey to Europe.

Turkey is also well positioned to serve as a central transit route for rising European energy needs. The Greek-Turkish Interconnector gas pipeline project demonstrates Turkey's contribution to energy security. The project is expected to further connect gas pipelines to Italy and from there to the rest of Western Europe. Turkey has also engaged in the Nabucco natural gas pipeline project, which would extend from Turkey and Greece to Bulgaria and all the way to Austria. The Commission has recently agreed to support feasibility studies for both projects. A final planned route for the transport of natural gas is the Western Balkans project, which would instead connect Turkey to Austria by passing through Greece, Macedonia, Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia and Slovenia.

¹⁵ This issue is addressed in detail in the paper by Sinan Ulgen and Yannis Zacharides (2004), *The Future of Turkey-EU Trade Relations*, EU-Turkey Working Papers, CEPS, Brussels (forthcoming).

Meanwhile, Turkey has been participating in combat and peacekeeping operations in the Balkans since the collapse of Yugoslavia. Turkey provided 1,450 military personnel from August 1994 to December 1995 for the United Nations peacekeeping force of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This contribution was followed with a brigade unit in the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR), and subsequently in the current SFOR operation, with a force reduction down to battalion size unit only recently. In addition, Turkish naval vessels and aircraft have taken part in SFOR operations.

During the Kosovo war in 1999, Turkey participated in NATO air operations with ten F-16 aircraft, flying over 2,000 hours of missions. Upon the establishment of the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR), Turkey contributed a mechanised infantry battalion, operating within the German-Italian brigade sector. Turkey took part in the naval operations in the Adriatic Sea with one frigate and one minesweeper, and contributed to the first EU military operation in the Republic of Macedonia in 2003. In the context of civilian police operations in the Balkans, Turkey still continues to participate in the EU police missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Macedonia.

Turkey is a highly active contributor to regional military initiatives, seeking to create and build up regional security structures. The South-East European Brigade (SEEBRIG) was formed by seven states of the region (Turkey, Macedonia, Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy and Albania as active participants, with the US and Slovenia as observers). This initiative aims at supporting regional security and good neighbourly relations in the context of the South-Eastern Defence Ministerial (SEDM) process, which is primarily NATO-oriented. In August 1999, the SEEBRIG headquarters were activated for the first time under a Turkish commander. The location of the Brigade headquarters is subject to rotation among Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Greece, and is now in Romania.

4.2 The Black Sea dimension

With Bulgarian and Romanian accession to the EU on the horizon, the additional prospect of Turkish accession would mean that the entire western and southern coastlines of the Black Sea would become EU territory. This would warrant a renewed interest in the need and potential for Black Sea regional cooperation. In early 1990s, Turkey was largely responsible for initiating what has become the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organisation, whose headquarters are in Istanbul. The BSEC institutional structure is comprehensive, with a parliamentary assembly, a development bank, a business council and a policy research institute as well as an executive secretariat to the Council of Ministers.

There has been one, regional military cooperation initiative with the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (Blackseafor), established by Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine, with the founding agreement signed in Istanbul in April 2001. Blackseafor is an 'on-call' force, which can be tasked with missions related to search and rescue, humanitarian aid, de-mining measures, environmental protection, confidence-building visits and training operations. Blackseafor can also be made available for possible employment in UN- or OSCE-mandated peace support operations.

Yet so far the BSEC has not been able to fulfil expectations. Several areas of cooperation for which the Black Sea region is the natural setting have been more effectively addressed in ad hoc arrangements outside BSEC, such as for the environment, transport and fisheries.¹⁶ The EU has so far declined invitations to become institutionally involved and BSEC has insufficient resources to build up its role. There are also questions about whether Russia is politically willing to commit itself to significant multilateral actions at this regional level. In this situation the prospect of EU enlargement embracing half the Black Sea coastline may be the catalyst for change. The obligations of Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey to comply with EU policies in the region could provide a much stronger foundation for regional cooperation on several fronts, such as the environment, transport, energy links, fisheries and combating organised crime and illegal migration.

¹⁶ For a detailed account, see Michael Emerson and Marius Vahl (2002), *Europe's Black Sea Dimension*, CEPS, Brussels.

Turkey and the EU together could follow the model of Finland's initiative in creating a 'Northern dimension' to EU policy. Finland's own interest in good regional relations with Russia are evident enough for economic, political and security reasons. The key idea in this initiative, however, was to blend Finnish and EU interests and political ownership of the process. While Russia was initially cool towards the Northern dimension concept, it eventually cooperated and came to see its potential value.

A new initiative for an EU Black Sea dimension could explore two avenues. A first one would be to examine the possibility of giving a new lease of life to BSEC, with the injection of human and financial resources from the EU for specific sectors of cooperation, taking into account how adoption of the EU *acquis* by Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey would in any case be 'spilling over' into the Black Sea region (e.g. for environment, transport, fisheries and border control). Moldova and Ukraine could also be disposed towards moving in the direction of EU-*acquis* conformity, given their interest in the EU's Neighbourhood policy and their long-term EU aspirations.

A second avenue would be to explore the possibility of making BSEC a forum for 'political dialogue' (meaning an open agenda for discussing political and security issues) between Black Sea states and the EU. While the case for this may not appear obvious at first sight, there is a special argument to consider. So far it has proved difficult to find a forum for political dialogue between the European CIS states and the EU, except in the very crowded meeting rooms of the OSCE or Council of Europe. If the EU associated with or acceded to BSEC, the forum could be convenient for discussing issues going beyond those narrowly linked to the geography of the Black Sea basin. The forum would have the quality of not being dominated by either Russia or the EU, nor rendered unwieldy because of too many seats around the table.

An alternative third avenue may be for the EU to form an EU-Black Sea core group, based on the Black Sea states that were either EU member states or candidates. To these could be added those BSEC member states that become actively engaged in the European Neighbourhood policy.

4.3 South Caucasus

To date the EU has refrained from playing a substantial role in the South Caucasus. The region was excluded from the initial plans for the Wider Europe/Neighbourhood policy proposed by the European Commission in 2003. This exclusion, however, was immediately controversial within the EU and was reversed in the more developed *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper* adopted in May 2004. Nonetheless, we are unlikely to witness a decisive EU involvement in the region in the near future.

Of the three major neighbours of the south Caucasus – Turkey, Russia and Iran – only Turkey has frontiers with all three South Caucasus states (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). Turkey particularly enjoys strong economic, political and military links with Azerbaijan as well as with Georgia. Since 1990, Turkey signed a number of agreements with Azerbaijan and more recently with Georgia including those covering cultural and scientific exchange, economics and commerce, transport and communications, training and military cooperation. Turkey also plays an important role in the development of Caspian energy, notably with the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline currently under construction and the planned gas pipeline to run alongside it to Erzurum. Finally, Turkey hosts important diaspora communities from the regions, including approximately 450,000 Abkhazian and two million Georgian Turkish citizens.

EU and Turkish policies towards the Caucasus could be complementary, although to date their interests have not been entirely convergent. Turkey's independent role in the region has been limited by the particularity of its relations with both Azerbaijan, with whom it has very close ethno-cultural ties, and Armenia, with whom relations have not yet been normalised owing to historical legacies. This partiality in loyalties has been reinforced by the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, which led Turkey to close its frontier with Armenia in 1992 and to come to the brink of war in 1993. In 1991 Turkey had been among the first states to recognise the independence of Armenia (as well as Georgia and Azerbaijan). It provided these three countries with humanitarian aid and facilitated the transit of

Western assistance to the region. Relations soured, however, in the light of the lack of recognition of Turkey's eastern borders and territorial integrity accorded by the Armenian constitution, the activities of the Armenian government and the Armenian Diaspora to seek international recognition of the 1915 genocide, and the eruption and evolution of the war in Karabakh. Turkey closed its eastern border for trade with Armenia and diplomatic relations were not established.

Turkey's potential economic and political roles in the Caucasus and the EU's half-hearted recognition of the region's importance but partial inability and unwillingness to take a more active and direct lead could neatly dovetail each other. The 'rose revolution' in Georgia at the end of 2003 triggered renewed EU interest in the region. The new government in Georgia has already proposed changing the equation in the trade regime between Turkey, Georgia and Armenia. In recent years the closed frontier (for trade) between Armenia and Turkey has led to a highly inefficient and corrupted trade route through Georgia. Railway tariffs have been extortionate, as have been taxes and bribes for road traffic. Anecdotal evidence collected by the World Bank reports that 80% of the cost of transporting goods from Yerevan to Moscow is incurred in crossing Georgia, and no doubt similar costs are incurred in traffic passing through Georgia to Turkey.¹⁷ The new Georgian government has pledged to deal with these anomalies. This will increase the case for normalising Turkish-Armenian relations, since the closed border for trade has arguably damaged Turkish as well as Armenian interests. It has hindered regional economic development in the north-eastern Turkish border region and has failed to stop Armenian trade through Georgia and Iran. As such, it can no longer be considered as a powerful form of leverage on Armenia.

This links not just to the unresolved conflict in Nagorno Karabakh, but also to the broader issue of Armenian-Turkish relations. The EU in general considers conflict resolution and good neighbourly relations as one of its security objectives. It calls for all accession candidates to resolve outstanding difficulties with their neighbours before acceding to the EU. Nevertheless, in situations in which good neighbourly relations affect some countries that are in the accession process and other countries that are outside it, the EU is faced with a dilemma and the potential for imbalance. In the case of Turkish-Armenian relations, Turkey is in the accession process while Armenia remains outside it. Yet good neighbourly relations require concessions and goodwill on both sides. The elements of a comprehensive deal would entail Armenia's recognition of Turkey's borders and territorial integrity, and Turkey's normalisation of economic and diplomatic relations with Armenia, along with a joint endeavour to address the burden of history. But given that as yet the EU does not have sufficiently dense contractual relations with Armenia to exert meaningful influence there, EU conditionality could only be applicable to Turkey. This situation could change if the EU were at a future point to begin to negotiate a Neighbourhood agreement with Armenia, with valuable benefits to Armenia conditioned *inter alia* upon progress in relations with Turkey.

There could be a staged process of Turkish-Armenian reconciliation. Indeed, bilateral contacts between the two ministries of foreign affairs have been re-established recently and a step-by-step process has been accepted in principle by both. Currently officials are working on a roadmap for an approach that would consist of a set of simultaneous and sequential confidence-building measures. Some of these measures have already been implemented, such as the opening of direct air links between the two countries.

More precisely, one could imagine a three-step roadmap. In the first phase, which could begin immediately (but more realistically in 2005 following the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey), Turkey could open its eastern border for trade with Armenia and allow its airspace for the transit of goods, including aid, to Armenia. In return, Armenia could amend its constitution, dropping the references to pre-1915 Armenia, given that this implies ambiguity over its acceptance of Turkey's territorial integrity. Armenia would then need to recognise Turkey's eastern frontiers. The two countries could also establish a truth and reconciliation committee over the tragic events of 1915.

¹⁷ See Evgeny Polyakov (2000), *Changing trade patterns after conflict resolution in the South Caucasus*, World Bank Working Paper No. 2593, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

A group of eminent Turkish and Armenian (and if necessary third-party) historians would be commissioned to investigate the events of the past and report their findings after a given time period. In recent years there has been the beginning of a dialogue on these questions among small groups of eminent independent personalities on both sides. Through its bilateral relations, the EU could induce both Turkey and Armenia to pursue these steps. In the case of Turkey this would occur in the context of the accession process. In the case of Armenia, the EU would make the deepening of its bilateral relations conditional on efforts in this direction.

The second stage could also introduce progress in the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. A step-by-step approach to the conflict has been extensively discussed in the context of negotiations mediated by the OSCE-sponsored Minsk Group. A first step would include Armenian withdrawal from the occupied territories surrounding Karabakh and their return to Azerbaijan, together with internationally guaranteed transport corridors between Karabakh and Armenia, as well as between Erzerum and Azerbaijan. At the same time, Turkey could establish normal diplomatic relations with Armenia. In view of the fact that in the past Armenia rejected such an interim step, the EU could also exert pressure in this direction, provided it will have seriously deepened its bilateral ties with the South Caucasus countries.

In a final phase the status of Karabakh itself would be settled. In all likelihood the solution would resemble the proposals that have already been tabled in past negotiations and in particular at the Key West Summit in 2001. The two principal ideas on the table have been either to retain Karabakh nominally within Azerbaijan, but to allow it its effective quasi-independence or to provide for a land swap between Armenia and Azerbaijan, whereby Karabakh and the corridors (of a width to be determined) would become part of Armenia, while there would be internally guaranteed corridors between Azerbaijan and its exclave Nakhichevan.

Turkey has attempted to contribute to progress in the Karabakh conflict by proposing and pursuing a trilateral forum with the participation of Azeri and Armenian foreign ministry officials. In the past, however, owing to its bilateral relations with the two countries, Turkey could not be an impartial mediating influence. In the context of a staged process of Turkish-Armenian reconciliation, however, this could change.

Indeed, Turkish foreign policy has recently demonstrated that it can undergo significant change. In 2004 it did so in the context of Cyprus, where through a Turkish initiative, negotiations resumed in February 2004 and were concluded with the submission of the UN plan finalised by the secretary general and separate referendums (accepted by the Turkish Cypriot community but rejected by the Greek Cypriot side). While the immediate explanation may have been Turkey's interest to advance its own EU-accession course, more fundamentally it represented the transformation of Turkey's conception of its own security interests. The former conception was based on the retention of a balance of forces and the protection of a co-ethnic community through military presence. These objectives were often pursued through unwavering bargaining positions and brinkmanship. Recently, Turkish foreign policy has shifted on these issues. It has accepted that communal security could be achieved through constitutionally entrenched rights and federal practice, agreed through multilateral decision-making and compromise.

Such a shift may well filter through into Turkey's approach towards Nagorno-Karabakh, where, as opposed to Cyprus, it only plays an indirect role. In the case of Karabakh, there may be a limit to the extent of influence that Turkey could have on the principal parties. Yet within these limits, Turkey could work together with the OSCE Minsk Group and the EU special representative to overcome the current deadlock. In particular, Turkey could encourage Azerbaijan to make a similar transformation of its conception of its national interests with regard to Karabakh. If Turkey were to proceed with a staged process of normalising its relations with Armenia, it could also contribute towards inducing Armenia to make the necessary moves and concessions.

Could Turkey also play a role in helping the South Caucasus countries engage in domestic political reforms towards greater democratisation and respect for human rights and the rule of law? Could

domestic change in this direction also lead to a transformation of the perceived security threats in the region and in turn generate the potential for the regional cooperation schemes that have long been advocated by domestic and international actors alike?

Beginning with Azerbaijan, could Turkey's own experience in democratisation and modernisation over half a century become an asset in its bilateral relations with Azerbaijan? Turkey is unlikely to exert strong pressure on Azerbaijan to engage in human rights and democratic reforms. Nevertheless, the issue of political reforms is already being raised in bilateral Turkish-Azeri official meetings. Linked to the process of Turkey's accession negotiations, a joint Turkish-EU role could become more realistic and effective for two interrelated reasons. First, Turkey's accession process stimulated a significant deepening of Turkey's democratisation. Not only has it spurred important legislative changes in Turkey, but it may be slowly contributing to the more long-term and far-reaching process of transformation in the country's norms and values, which is necessary for the effective implementation of legislative reforms. Second, Turkish foreign policy together with that of the EU could engage in the support of democratisation and modernisation in countries such as Azerbaijan, without being perceived to be engaging in patronising pan-Turkic nationalism.

Meanwhile, Armenia's increasing interest in European integration and globalisation could lead to a long overdue overhaul of Armenia's very rough democracy. One of the lessons of peace efforts seems indeed to be that a comparable degree of democratisation of the conflict parties is a necessary condition for durable conflict resolution, as opposed to mere conflict settlement that may be imposed by external parties or unaccountable domestic elites.

These possible tendencies also could be seen in the context of the change of regime in Georgia that has already occurred. Turkey, like the EU, will not want to intervene strongly in the secessionist conflicts in Georgia. First, Turkey increasingly values its relations with Russia and does not wish to act in an antagonising manner. Second, the presence of large Georgian as well as Abkhazian communities in Turkey limits Turkey's space for manoeuvre. Nonetheless, the very presence of these communities could facilitate an important Turkish and EU role in the post-settlement reconstruction phase. The Abkhazian diaspora in Turkey is now bigger than the present population of Abkhazia itself. Supported by EU resources, one could imagine that the Turkish Abkhazian community could contribute to a wider programme of post-conflict reconstruction and development of Abkhazia. The overthrow of the Aslan Abashidze regime in Ajaria in May 2004 may help. This is a direct border region for Turkey. If political progress could be achieved in Abkhazia as well there would be new development opportunities for the eastern Black Sea region, including re-opened rail links and the proposed new oil pipeline from Novorossisk to Supsa, linking to the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline. Projects such as these could also help Russia to see the positive interest in cooperative projects in the South Caucasus region.

Taken together this would mean a transformation of the prospects for the entire South Caucasus. These efforts would combine and interact with the increasing European prospects for the region, along with Turkey's pre-accession status leading the way for an enhanced European Neighbourhood policy by the EU towards the region. The seemingly utopian vision of a stability pact for the Caucasus advocated by President Süleyman Demirel in 1999, which was too early for implementation, could become a reality a decade later. An interesting development in this context is the recent decision by the speakers of the three parliaments of the South Caucasus states to promote the ideas of the stability pact and to establish a parliamentary assembly of the region.

4.4 Central Asia

Turkey has cultural, linguistic and religious affinities with the main nationalities of all the Central Asian states except Tajikistan. Historically these links gave rise to the ideology of Pan-Turkism. In its heyday in the late 19th century and then under the leadership of the Young Turks, Pan-Turkism strived

for some form of union among the peoples with alleged Turkic origins.¹⁸ Pan-Turkism was largely conditioned by the development of nationalism in south-east Europe, the Turco-Russian wars of 1877-78 and the growth and pressures of pan-Slavism (primarily in its Russification form). In the first half of the 20th century these Pan-Turkic aspirations were curtailed by circumstances: Turkey's war of independence, the emergence and consolidation of the republican project, the Russian-Turkish rapprochement under Kemal Atatürk and Vladimir Lenin and the creation of the Soviet Union. In Turkey, pan-Turkic ideas resurfaced and entered into the mainstream political discourse again through the rise of the National Action Party led by Alparslan Türkeş in 1965. Pan-Turkism was adopted as one of the party's official tenets. Yet Pan-Turkism never became a popular ideology in Turkey.

In 1992, immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey embarked on an ambitious foreign policy initiative in Central Asia, embedded in a revival of Pan-Turkism, albeit without an irredentist character.¹⁹ The break-up of the Soviet Union renewed direct contacts between the Turkey and the Turkic groups in the Caucasus and Central Asia. These included Azerbaijan in the South Caucasus and Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan in Central Asia (the fifth Central Asian Republic, Tajikistan, is the only one in which the minority language, Uzbek, rather than the majority language Tajik, is close to Turkish). The concept was that of strengthening the independence of the newly established republics, along with inducing their political and economic reforms and their integration in the global economy.

Turkey had clear a clear rationale to engage in relations with the Central Asian republics. First, the Turkish establishment, following the EU's rejection of its application in 1987, felt the need to explore alternative alliances. The independence of the Central Asian Turkic republics was an obvious option. Second, Turkish foreign policy-makers feared that with the end of the cold war, Turkey's strategic position at the south-eastern flank of NATO would be weakened. Although Turkey's geo-strategic significance was vindicated anew with the 1991 Gulf war, a deepening of ties with Turkic Eurasia was also a means of enhancing Turkey's appeal to the West. Third, Turkey's growing need to import energy induced it to seek alternative supplies to Middle Eastern oil. This need was particularly felt in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war and the ensuing disruption of oil flows from Iraq.

Almost at the outset it became clear that Turkey's links to Central Asia would take a bilateral rather than a multi-lateral form. President Özal and Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel invited, and were invited by the Central Asian leaders. All referred rhetorically to pan-Turkism and the common bond between their peoples. When it came to concrete measures, however, little was achieved multilaterally in practice. Turkey failed to set up a joint forum consisting of itself and four Turkic republics of Central Asia. Despite cordial relations among the leaderships, the presidents of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan in particular were deeply suspicious of Turkish attempts to establish a common market among the Turkic republics, having been cautioned by the Russians. Ties with Russia, including the large Russian presence in Central Asia, were cited as reasons against the establishment of a common Turkic economic space. Moreover, relations among the Central Asian republics and between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in particular were often far from cooperative.

Despite these set-backs Turkey became deeply involved in Central Asia in the early and mid-1990s. It immediately provided emergency assistance (food and medicine) to the republics. It also engaged in medium- and long-term projects and concluded a number of bilateral agreements with the Central Asian republics, covering economics and trade, business cooperation, public administration, media and education, communications and transport. In the economic realm, Turkish companies were strongly encouraged by the state to invest in Central Asia. In 1992, around 60 Turkish banks and

¹⁸ For an in-depth analysis of Pan-Turkism see Jacob Landau (1995), *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, London: Hurst & Co.

¹⁹ See Idris Bal (2000), *Turkey's Relations with the West and the Turkic Republics: The rise and fall of the 'Turkish model'*, London: Ashgate; an updated view can be found in Gul Turan, Ilter Turan and Idris Bal (2004), "Turkey's Relations with the Turkic Republics" in Idris Bal (ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War Era*, Liverpool: Brown Walker.

businesses invested in Central Asia and approximately 150 established trade links with the republics. In particular Turkey provided *Eximbank* credits to the republics. In the field of administration, Turkey assisted the republics in building state institutions, offering training in the civil service, the army and the health service, as well as training in agriculture and statistics. Turkey offered assistance in establishing communications and media in the republics. Turkey also provided Turkish-language television broadcasts to the four republics.

In the cultural and education domain, Turkey found itself on the shakiest ground. Turkey established several education institutions in the republics including two major universities in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Yet assistance in these fields was often perceived in Central Asia as being patronising or as attempting to impose Turkish cultural domination. The republics were extremely sensitive on this point both because of their desire to assert their own cultural identity and to avoid alienating Russia, which in many respects remained far closer to them than distant Turkey. Indeed Turkey's attempts to export Turkish as a lingua franca in the region was in many respects obsolete given the widespread use of the Russian language throughout Central Asia. Another important limit to the Turkish role was Turkey's own economic instability and weakness. Turkey alone simply did not have the means required to assist state-building or political and socio-economic development in Central Asia.

Further, in the early 1990s, the EU established contractual relations with all the Central Asian republics (Partnership and Cooperation Agreements), although these have on the whole been thin relationships. Technical assistance has been supplied under the TACIS programme, but this has not been an easy process, partly because of the scarcity in the EU of relevant experts with either Russian or Turkish language skills. Financial assistance to the Central Asian republics has also been extremely limited, particularly when compared with other closer regions such as the Mediterranean and the Balkans, not to mention the acceding Central and Eastern European countries.

Turkey's accession process and ultimate membership could offer the potential to strengthen both the EU and Turkish roles in Central Asia. More specifically, provided that Turkey's engagement is not driven by pan-Turkic aspirations (as it no longer appears to be), EU and Turkish interests could be convergent and their potential actions could be complementary. This could lead to a warmer reception of Turkish efforts in Central Asia, given that fears of Turkish cultural domination would be put at rest. Turkey could also benefit from EU cooperation in engaging in business and trade projects with Central Asia, owing to the limited economic means at its disposal. In this respect it is interesting to note that in the early 1990s, Turkey was keen to involve Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Germany in jointly promoting business and investment in Central Asia. Turkish investment, while substantial, was insufficient for Central Asian needs. Hence, the Turkish government's (to a limited extent successful) efforts in persuading German businesses to share in these investments.

The EU for its part could benefit from the bilateral ties between Turkey and the Central Asian republics. In particular the deficiencies of the technical assistance under the TACIS programme owing to the lack of necessary language skills among EU personnel could be rectified to some extent through Turkish participation. Moreover, this would necessitate a deep bonding of the Turkish cadre of experts with their EU counterparts, which will be a complex task for many years to come. Preparations should therefore begin without delay, a point to which we return in section 5. It should be noted, however, that already Turkey increasingly joins CFSP statements concerning the democracy and human rights record of the Central Asian republics.

4.5 Russia

The implications for Russia of Turkish accession to the EU will be very significant, but depending on how EU-Turkish-Russian relations are managed either negative or positive outcomes are conceivable.

To take the negatives first, Russia could see a set of threats to its interests and security, as traditionally conceived, on no less than five accounts. First, it would mean harder competition for influence in the South Caucasus. Second, this competition would extend even further into Central Asia, with Euro-Turkish as well as Chinese interests deepening there. Third, there would be harder competition over

leadership in Black Sea regional cooperation. Fourth, there would be increased challenge to Russia's domination of oil and gas supply routes to Western Europe, with linkages through Turkey to the Caspian region as well as Iran and the Gulf. Fifth (and last but not least), the tightening of visa regimes by Turkey in the interests of EU and Schengen compliance would restrict the access of Russians and citizens of all the other CIS states to the Turkish market for business and tourism.²⁰ All this, if mismanaged, could be considered by Russia as a formidable set of threats. This encirclement by the successors to the former West European and Ottoman Empires is what Russia has been fighting wars over for 400 years.

On the other hand this could be material enough, if carefully prepared and presented, to bring Russia into a deeper mode of cooperation with the enlarging EU. The transformation of Turkey as a society and a foreign policy actor in line with EU norms is the essence of the accession process. A similar process is partially underway in Russia as the new private economy sees the need to move towards modern norms of corporate governance, and in terms of the outlook of the growing post-Soviet generation. Yet President Vladimir Putin's administration is still heavily influenced by 'sphere of interest' ideas, especially with regard to the CIS states of both Europe and Central Asia, given Russia's weak capacity to project power globally. These are regions that will be affected most by the EU's enlargement to the Black Sea coastline. At some point realistic calculations should prevail, and the sight of the EU organising its foreign and security policies more credibly together with Turkey may tip the balance of thinking about foreign policy in Moscow.

Oil and gas geo-economics will be one of the ways through which the EU-Turkish-Russian relationship plays out. Already Turkey has signed a natural gas deal with Russia and cooperation on natural gas between the two countries is set to increase with the completion of the Blue Stream pipeline under the Black Sea.

The question of Turkey introducing visas for Russians will be a sensitive issue. Two timetables have to be matched in the most constructive way: the timing of Turkey's moves into compliance with EU visa policies and the negotiations about to begin between the EU and Russia over a facilitated visa regime at least for certain categories of people. As argued below in more detail, the EU should not require Turkey to introduce a much more restrictive visa hastily, before it has worked out what elements of flexibility it may introduce in the foreseeable future.

4.6 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Greater Middle East

With the accession of Cyprus and Malta, along with Turkey entering the pre-accession process, three parties to the Barcelona process will be moving politically from the 'southern' to the 'northern' side of the table. This will add to the case for re-evaluation of the stagnant Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). This reshaping of the Mediterranean political map could be helpful in bringing greater coherence to the south and north respectively.

Turkey has been a correct yet hardly enthusiastic participant in the Barcelona process. While in principle supporting the concept of greater EU involvement in the Mediterranean region, Turkey has been increasingly sceptical of the precise form and content of the EMP. Turkey has been frustrated at the inability of the EMP to move forward particularly as a result of the persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This frustration was naturally exacerbated following the eruption of the second intifada. Turkey's lukewarm support has also been related to the fact that it was put together with the 'southern' group, which was at odds with its political priority to advance its EU accession prospects. Particularly during the period in which the majority of EU actors voiced their preference for a 'European strategy' for Turkey instead of Turkey's accession (1995-99), Turkey understandably showed little interest in the EMP as an attractive substitute to its full accession.

²⁰ Recent information has it that over the last two years since Poland and Slovakia complied with EU regulations in requiring visas for visiting Ukrainians, the number of frontier crossings by Ukrainian citizens declined by 90% for Poland and 70% for Slovakia.

Several reasons, however, suggest that this could change and Turkey's role could become an important asset to a reinvigorated EU policy towards the southern Mediterranean. Largely convergent interests could be translated into complementary joint policies.

First, since 1999, Turkey's accession prospects have been clarified. Particularly with the opening of the pre-accession stage, if it could be arranged for Turkey to move to the northern side of the Barcelona table, Turkey could become a more enthusiastic supporter of the EU's Mediterranean policies. This would also be a natural step given that the European Neighbourhood policy (ENP) is now going to overlay the existing Barcelona process, with a fresh bilateralisation of relations between the EU and each Euro-Med partner in the drawing up of so-called 'action plans' of the ENP. As a result of its accession process, Turkey was excluded from the ENP. Nevertheless, in view of its assets and location, the EU could greatly benefit from Turkey's participation in the initiative on the EU side of the table.

Second, in view of the extension of the EU structural funds to the new CEE member states, persisting EU financial assistance to the Western Balkans and increasing assistance to Turkey in the pre-accession period, there could be some squeeze on the total aid directed to the non-EU Mediterranean countries. The leverage on economic and political reform in the Arab states derived from EU policies of conditionality would rest less on aid. On the other hand, the EU would need to more concretely develop its ideas in the realm of trade and the single market as already suggested in the ENP. Turkey, being in a customs union with the EU, is in principle obliged to enter into a free trade relationship with any Euro-Med partner state that enters into free trade with the EU. So far this principle has not been activated, mainly because the Euro-Med states have been afraid of the extra competition from Turkey. Nevertheless, it has recently been agreed with Morocco that it should negotiate a free trade agreement with Turkey in accordance with the customs union logic.

Third, Turkey is already playing a role in the attempt by the G8 summit in June 2004 to launch a new cooperative initiative for what was initially going to be called the 'Greater Middle East', until this name and implicit region evinced serious reservations, with the result that the 'Broader Middle East and North Africa' became the language of the summit's final declaration. This US-led initiative has had a difficult and halting birth because of the reputational damage to US foreign policy in the region suffered under the present administration. Something is emerging nonetheless in the shape of the G8 Plan of Support for Reform, with seven predominantly Muslim states having accepted the invitation to the G8 summit (Afghanistan, Algeria, Jordan, Bahrain, Iraq, Turkey and Yemen). The summit established a Forum for the Future, which will be a new multilateral forum for all the states of the region that agree to participate. Within this framework there will be a Democracy Assistance Dialogue, to be co-chaired by Italy, Turkey and Yemen. The dialogue should include government and civil society actors. Its objectives are to share experiences in democracy programmes in the region, in order to enhance them and initiate new ones, as well as to establish joint initiatives including twinning and capacity-building projects.

Although Turkey has serious qualifications for a role in these democracy-promoting initiatives, it has unique potential in another vital dimension to the politics and economics of the Middle East, namely water. Turkey controls both the Tigris and Euphrates rivers flowing into Syria and Iraq, and in addition has large supplies of river water flowing into the north-east corner of the Mediterranean. Multiple projects have been under negotiation or study, ranging from a water pipeline to Cyprus, water supplies to Israel by tanker (see further below) and possibilities for negotiation over water from the Tigris and Euphrates. Supplies into Syria downstream from the Atatürk dam on the Tigris are already regulated by a bilateral agreement with Syria. If the planned dam on the Euphrates is constructed, it will open the prospect of a trilateral negotiation between Turkey, Syria and Iraq. As and when accession negotiations with the EU begin, the issue of cooperative regulation of regional river basins under the EU Water Directive will arise in these cases. It has long been recognised that water diplomacy could have an important contribution to make to the Middle East peace process, with the Palestinian territories currently being drained of much of their water resources by Israel. The delivery

of Turkish water to the region is not yet on the horizon and could only marginally ease this acute problem, but could nonetheless become a practical proposition at some point in the future.

4.7 The Arab-Israeli conflict

In the Middle East, the EU, despite representing the largest aid donor, critically sustaining the embryonic Palestinian state and enjoying strong contractual ties with most states in the region and Israel in particular, has historically played a secondary role in any Middle East peace process. The role of the Union has always been secondary to and supportive of the leadership role of the US. Many reasons have been cited to explain this.

Some have argued that the Union's relative sympathy for the Arab countries and the Palestinians in particular caused Israel's resentment and subsequently the latter's exclusion of a primary EU role. The respect of the principal parties in a conflict is certainly key to a successful mediating role. Yet it is doubtful that the perceived EU 'bias' was at the root of the problem. First, beyond the rhetoric, in the manner in which the Union has conducted relations with the parties, it is difficult to argue that the Union displayed a bias against Israel and in support of the Arab countries. Second, and perhaps most importantly, perceived bias does not necessarily entail a lack of credibility, as evidenced by the position of the US, from Henry Kissinger's role in the Middle East in the 1970s onwards. Despite an appreciation of the bias, Arab states accepted American mediation, which contributed to the delivery of the Israeli-Egyptian peace deal.²¹

What appears to capture the EU inadequacy in the Middle East is not so much a question of bias, but a general inability to use its (primarily economic) instruments effectively in the political realm. Despite its aid and trade links to the principal parties, the EU is unwilling and to a lesser extent unable to link and condition its instruments to the behaviour of the parties in the context of the conflict. It is probably this failure that has most damaged EU ambitions to participate effectively and substantially in any peace process in the region. The reasons are manifold and relate to the specific historical, ideological, economic and political interests in the region, as well as the general idiosyncrasies that prevent the Union from acting as a single, cohesive and coherent foreign policy actor.

Turkey's accession process and final membership would not alter EU positions towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. In fact, Turkish and EU views on the conflict have become increasingly convergent. A general consensus of views exists (with minor differences that also exist within the EU itself) regarding the contours of a desirable solution as well as the necessary means to achieve it. More specifically, like the EU, Turkey has refrained from officially linking its bilateral relations to the progress or otherwise of the peace process. That is not to say that Turkish-Israeli relations have not been affected by the second intifada. Not least because of the Turkish public's strong awareness of the plight of the Palestinians, the government has recurrently criticised Israeli policies.

Nevertheless, it is also fair to say that Israeli-Turkish relations have cooled down in recent years. In the past, Israel has been an important investor in the Turkish South-East Anatolian Project (GAP). Since 1996, the two countries have cooperated in the military sphere. Military cooperation took the form of joint military exercises and military modernisation projects. From Turkey's perspective (and more specifically from the perspective of the Turkish General Staff, who provided the impetus for the alliance), the upgrading of the relationship in the mid-1990s had several motivations. The alliance was intended to exert pressure on Syria, which at the time hosted PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. The Turkish military also hoped to share intelligence with Israel regarding the PKK. Other motivations, such as the expectation of access to the Israeli defence industry, Israel's training of the Turkish air force or the support of the American Jewish lobby in Washington, were also important considerations. But it should be recalled that the policy initiative was fundamentally linked to Turkey's fight against

²¹ See Saadia Touval and William Zartman (1989), "Mediation in International Conflict" in Kenneth Kressel, Dean G. Pruitt and Associates, *Mediation Research, the Process and Effectiveness of Third-Party Intervention*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, pp. 115-37.

the PKK. As such, given the reduction of violence in Turkey's south-east region and the rapprochement with Syria, the rationale for the Turkish-Israeli military alliance has diminished.²²

Although the rationale for a military alliance has eroded, cooperative relations in most other domains have persisted. The continuing and deteriorating Arab-Israeli conflict alone is unlikely to significantly alter these dynamics. For example, in September 2003, Turkey signed an agreement with Israel providing for Turkish water exports to Israel. One could only imagine a more substantive deterioration of Turkish-Israeli relations if Israel were to act against Turkish interests. In this respect, the possible increase of explicit or covert Israeli support for an independent or quasi-independent Iraqi Kurdistan is a critical new dimension to look out for.²³

Yet compared with the EU, there is a greater rationale to Turkey's positions on the (lack of) linkage between its bilateral relations and the peace process. Unlike the EU acting collectively, Turkey does not have sufficient leverage on the parties to alter their stance towards the conflict. Turkish foreign policy has preferred to maintain bilateral ties with the parties and express support, criticism or concern for their actions in the context of bilateral political dialogue. Indeed Turkey is the only country in the region with an ambassador to Israel. This has meant that Turkey has been the only Middle Eastern country that is considered as an ally by Israel. Turkey is also the only country of the region, and one of the very few European countries, that participates in the observer mission in Hebron (the Temporary International Presence in Hebron or TIPH).

At the same time and principally in the last few years, Turkey has also improved its relations with the Arab world in general and with Syria in particular. In the past, Turkish-Syrian relations have been marred by four interrelated issues: first, Syria's support for the PKK, particularly its hosting of Abdullah Öcalan until 1998; second, Turkey's water policies in the Tigris and the Euphrates, generating Syrian fears of disrupted downstream water flows; third, Syrian historical claims over the Turkish province of Hatay; and finally, Turkey's increasingly close relations with Israel, particularly in the military sphere. Relations between the two countries reached the brink of war in 1998 over the Öcalan affair.

Yet in the last few years, bilateral relations with Syria have improved significantly. Concerning Turkey's water policy, Turkey has provided Syria with a water flow of 500m³ per second. This interim agreement reached in 1989 is meant to hold until the three riparian states of the Tigris and the Euphrates (Turkey, Syria and Iraq) reach an agreement on the sharing or division of the water resources. Turkey has proposed the sharing of the water resources through a regional basin approach, a position that has now been accepted by Syria.²⁴ The turning point in Turkish-Syrian relations, however, came with the 1998 Adana Agreement over the cooperation between the two states in the fight against the PKK and the departure of Abdullah Öcalan from Syria. Currently, the Kurdish issue is in fact pushing Turkey and Syria closer together, given both countries' fear of the possible establishment of an independent Northern Iraq. Relations improved further following the participation of Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer in the funerals of the late Syrian President Hafez al-Asad. Since then, there have been over 50 bilateral visits between the two countries, including the visit by President Bashar al-Asad to Turkey. Notable in this respect was the fact that during Mr Bashar al-Asad's visit, no mention was made of Syrian claims over Hatay.

In view of Turkey's perceived neutrality, the policy assets that the EU and Turkey could bring to bear upon the Arab-Israeli conflict (or future peace process) could be largely complementary. Turkey's role could contribute to the EU's actor-capability in the region. Owing to both its vicinity and its political

²² The PKK still operates in the mountainous regions that border Iran and Iraq, but is no longer based in Syria or Lebanon.

²³ See Seymour Hersh (2004), "As June 30th approaches, Israel looks to the Kurds" *The New Yorker*, Issue No. 2004-06-28.

²⁴ In the near future, however, water could still represent a bone of contention between Turkey and Syria, with the main issue becoming water quality rather than quantity, given the increasing levels of pollution of the Tigris and Euphrates.

position, Turkey would improve the Union's image in the eyes of local actors and thus raise their willingness to accept an EU political role. It would also bring the Union to their doorstep, thus raising the latter's scope for involvement. More specifically, Turkey could contribute to the EU's role as an actor in the Middle East in two principal ways.

First, Turkey already stands as an actor in the Middle East, with sound relations with all the conflicting parties. Although it does not have the necessary instruments to induce the end of violence and the resumption of negotiations, it can act as a facilitator provided the parties themselves summon the necessary political will. For example, during Mr Bashar al-Asad's visit to Turkey, the Syrian president conveyed Syria's views concerning a possible re-launch of the second Syrian-Lebanese track of the peace process to his Turkish counterpart. Mr al-Asad called upon Turkey to express these views to Israel. This event showed that although Turkey itself cannot induce a re-launch of the peace process, if and when this was to happen, it can play a useful mediating role. Provided the EU became more willing to use its policy instruments in the context of the Middle East conflict, Turkey's role as an accepted mediator between the parties could further strengthen the EU's assets as a political actor.

The Greek-Turkish rapprochement in the EU context could also become a valuable EU diplomatic instrument to be deployed in the Middle Eastern context. The first steps in this direction were taken with the joint diplomatic mission to the Middle East by the then Foreign Ministers George Papandreu and Ismail Cem in early 2002. With the advancement of Turkey's accession process and the deepening rapprochement with Greece, Turkey's facilitating role in the Middle East conflict could be boosted by the participation of other EU actors such as Greece and possibly Cyprus at a later date (i.e. following a settlement of the conflict).

Second, in view of its membership of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Turkey could also act as a bridge between the EU, as a member of the Quartet, and the OIC. For example in May 2004, Turkey, together with Malaysia, Senegal, Palestine and Morocco representing the OIC met with the EU Irish presidency to discuss the institutionalisation of relations between the OIC and the Quartet. This sub-group of the OIC then met the Russian foreign minister and the UN secretary general. It is also shortly set to meet the US secretary of state to discuss the issue.

4.8 Iraq

In principle EU and Turkish interests in Iraq are convergent. Like the EU, and perhaps even more so owing to its location, Turkey's general interests are in fostering a peaceful and democratic Iraq. This could include a decentralised or federalised Iraq, provided that the emerging governing system was both workable and representative. The end of violence and the creation of a democratic system are considered the best guarantee of Iraq's stability and its ensuing territorial integrity. Stability and territorial integrity in turn are viewed as key to the stability of Turkey's own bordering regions. Indeed since the 1980s, Turkey has paid a heavy price for war and instability in Iraq, in terms of large-scale refugee flows, the disruption of trade and oil flows and perhaps most critically the ability of PKK insurgents to use Northern Iraq as a base to attack Turkish armed forces.

Nevertheless, in view of its vicinity, Turkey's sensitivities regarding developments in Iraq go beyond the general concerns of most EU actors. First, in the light of persisting instability in Iraq, the main camps and headquarters of the armed factions of the PKK/KADEK/KONGRA-GEL are still based in Northern Iraq. Minor yet regular skirmishes between these militants and Turkish forces continue, reminding Turkey's citizens and the state alike of the small yet dreaded possibility of a resumption of large-scale violence in the region. Second, continuing instability in Iraq and the aggravation of violence that could escalate into an inter-ethnic or inter-confessional civil war (or both), could well result in a *de facto* or *de jure* secession of Northern Iraq. For a while Turkey has enjoyed cordial if not good relations with the two Iraqi Kurdish leaders: Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talebani. The secession of Northern Iraq would, however, undoubtedly generate serious concerns in Turkey, in view of the state's fears about the possible repercussions among its own Kurdish population.

There is the further Turkish concern for the place of the Turkoman (as well as the Arab) minority within the Kurdish region of Iraq. The non-Kurdish population in Northern Iraq are politically under-represented at present and are likely to remain so in the event of its secession.

Yet irrespective of these fears, the possibility of a Turkish invasion in Northern Iraq appears far-fetched to say the least. Indeed, Turkey neither sent additional troops during the war nor did it send more troops thereafter.²⁵ On 7 October 2003, upon US demands, the Turkish parliament voted to allow the government to send troops to Iraq. But Iraqi Kurdish leaders strongly resisted the proposal and were in the end backed by the US occupation forces. Despite the authorisation by parliament, the Turkish government refrained from sending its troops. The government's current position is that it would be willing to contribute politically and financially to Iraq's stabilisation. It is also determined to ensure effective border management along the Iraqi frontier, regardless of the fact that there are no prospects of a Turkish military contribution to future peacekeeping let alone war efforts in Iraq.

There are three principal reasons why a Turkish military role in Iraq would be highly improbable. First and most importantly there have been no signs to date that developments in Iraq have refuelled separatist or irredentist forces among Turkey's Kurdish population. In other words, developments in Iraq have not given rise to a credible threat of irredentism. Second, it seems highly unlikely that Turkey, proceeding along an EU-accession track, would derail its efforts towards internal democratisation and EU accession by resorting to military means in Iraq. Third, Turkey's own Kurdish population, given a realistic prospect of EU accession, would most likely prefer to be part of the EU than part of an independent Kurdistan with Northern Iraq. Naturally if the options for the Turkish Kurds had been to be part of a Kurdish state or of a repressive and backward Turkish state, Iraqi Kurdish independence could have refuelled secessionist trends in Turkey. Yet under a scenario of a reforming and increasingly democratic and prosperous Turkey on the doorsteps of EU membership, this is highly unlikely. Opinion polls in Turkey have shown that the highest support for EU accession in Turkey indeed comes from its citizens of Kurdish origin. Some 87% of Turkey's Kurdish citizens support EU accession compared with an average of 78% of citizens who only speak Turkish.

The most desirable scenario from both Turkish and EU standpoints would be that of a soundly functioning, federal Iraq, in which the oil revenues of the Kurdish region were distributed according to a federal agreement. Furthermore, if the US military occupation and political control were replaced by a UN-mandated political presence, possibly backed up with a NATO/UN military presence, Turkey has extremely important political and logistical assets that could become a major feature of the endeavour. In this scenario the EU also could establish a common position over Iraq and an EU-Turkish operational and political partnership could be developed. Insofar as Turkey's present role in Iraq is heavily determined and managed by the Turkish General Staff rather than by the government, however, Turkey-EU cooperation in Iraq would require coordination between EU actors and the Turkish military. If such a contact were established, then in a context in which the reputation of the US has deteriorated so seriously over the recent period of military occupation of Iraq, it is all the more plausible that in due course the EU with Turkey could come to play a role in supporting or dealing with whatever kind of Iraq emerges from the present conflict.

4.9 Iran

Historically, relations between Turkey and Iran have never been overtly confrontational. Yet since the 1979 Iranian revolution, Turco-Iranian ties have been strained over the two aspects that have been viewed as most critical to Turkish national security: namely political Islam and Kurdish separatism. The Turkish state has been concerned about Iranian aims at exporting the Islamic revolution to Turkey – an anathema to the secular Turkish establishment. In the 1980s this took the form of Iranian support for small fundamentalist groups in Turkey as well as assassination attempts of Turks in Iran and Iranian liberals in Turkey. These real and perceived threats have diminished in the last decade.

²⁵ Nevertheless, a Turkish brigade remains permanently based in Northern Iraq, officially to monitor the activities of the PKK.

Assassination attempts ended in the 1990s and the support for Islamic groups in Turkey has been steadily falling. Indeed, Iran itself has de facto abandoned its ambitions to export the revolution beyond its borders.

Another interlinked source of concern has been Iran's support for the separatist PKK. In the past Iran has allowed its territory to serve as a training base for the PKK. It was also in this context that the PKK began acquiring Islamic undertones in its rhetoric, in principle in sharp contrast to the ideology of a supposedly Marxist movement. Iran's support for the PKK was linked to its aims of strengthening political Islam in secular Turkey. By supporting the PKK and thus weakening the Turkish state, Iran would be freer to support political Islam in Turkey. In view of Iran's own Kurdish population, however, its support for the PKK was always constrained. Furthermore, following the election of President Mohammad Khatami's government in 1997, support for the PKK diminished considerably and Turkish anxieties have been largely, albeit not entirely, abated.

In the light of these diminishing threats, EU and Turkish interests and positions regarding Iran have been increasingly convergent. Like the EU, Turkey has an interest in a steadily reforming Iran, in Iran's cooperation in the fight against international terrorism and in the monitoring of Iran's nuclear programme. Its preferred means to pursue these interests have converged with those of the EU rather than of the US. Turkey has rejected political and economic sanctions against Iran and the identification of Iran as part of an 'axis of evil'. Instead, Turkey has opted for a policy of engagement, using bilateral ties to discuss Iran's relations with the West in general and with Europe in particular. As such Turkey has supported the EU's attempts to engage in a critical dialogue with Iran on issues of mutual concern. In particular it has supported the EU's political conditions linked to its proposals for a possible Trade and Cooperation Agreement with Iran, as well as the joint mission of the British, French and German foreign ministers exerting heavier pressure on Iran over nuclear proliferation.

Yet beyond convergent interests, Turkish and EU policies could also be complementary. In recent years, Turkey and Iran have engaged in a dialogue on security issues and political ties between the two countries have been upgraded. There have also been growing economic relations between the two countries. Between 2002 and 2004 bilateral trade rose from \$1.2 billion to \$2.3 billion per year. Turkey currently represents the third largest investor in Iran. In addition, Turkish and Iranian civil society organisations and movements increasingly cooperate and undertake joint activities. These growing political, economic and social ties between Turkey and Iran could act as an asset to EU endeavours to engage in a dialogue with Iran. Furthermore, joint EU-Turkish initiatives towards Iran would be well-received by the latter, who's motto in recent years has been that of promoting a 'dialogue of civilisations'.

The Tabriz-Erzurum gas pipeline connection from Iran into Turkey is also of considerable interest to the EU, as this connects with the Turkish gas network, soon to be expanded and then linked with that of Greece and thence into the rest of the EU either via Bulgaria and the Balkans or via Italy. Iran's own pipeline network connects with Turkmenistan, whose exports Russia has sought to monopolise. As such, Iranian gas exports to Europe are of much interest to the latter, which is keen to develop alternative energy sources to Russia. There are also possibilities for major European investments in Iranian offshore gas deposits in the Gulf, which would be shipped to market by LNG tankers.

Finally, there is the notable point that Turkey maintains a visa-free regime with Iran, which means a lot for the Iranian population and for the West as a whole in terms of facilitating Iran's contact with Europe. Currently, around 450,000 Iranians cross into Turkey per year for tourism, business and educational purposes. Many of those crossing into Turkey come from the Turkish-Iranian border regions. Yet in the pre-accession period, the EU has requested that Turkey moves into line with EU visa policies. Indeed Turkey has already harmonised its visa policy with that of the EU by approximately 75%. It is expected that by the end of 2004 the visa-free regime for Iran (as well as for Morocco, Tunisia and Kyrgyzstan) will be terminated. This will have a negative effect in relation to Turkish as well as EU foreign policy objectives to minimise the perceived 'exclusion' effect of the Iranians.

4.10 The Gulf and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Both Turkey and the EU have an interest in gradual reform towards political participation, human rights and then democratisation in the Gulf region. They also have an interest in securing the cooperation of the Gulf countries in energy security and in the fight against terrorism. Nevertheless, both Turkey and the EU have enjoyed relatively thin relations with these countries. The EU has attempted in recent years to relate to the Gulf countries through multilateral forums, exploring the prospects for deepening and institutionalising relations between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Turkey instead principally relates to the Gulf through bilateral relations, as well as interacting with them in the context of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Particularly through bilateral commercial ties, Turkey's relations with most Gulf states have been steadily expanding in recent years. Investors from the Gulf have also shown increasing interests in projects in Turkey.

Taken at face value, a secular and democratising Turkey could offer important lessons to the initiation of a reform process in the Gulf countries. Indeed in the context of the emerging Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative, Turkey has agreed to co-chair the Democracy Assistance Dialogue. Yet precisely in view of Turkey's secular nature, there are serious limits to its ability (and willingness) to foster political change in the Gulf.

Particularly in the case of Saudi Arabia, Turkey's secular nature is viewed as an anathema to the ruling elites in Riyadh. Saudi Arabia and Turkey are on opposite ends of the spectrum as far as the role of religion in politics and society is concerned. The republican project initiated by President Atatürk, far from being viewed as a 'model' in Riyadh, is considered to be adverse to the vision and policies of many (albeit not all) members of the ruling elite in the Kingdom. In addition, the legacy of Ottoman rule has not been forgotten. Hence, a highly visible and pro-active Turkish role in promoting political reform in Saudi Arabia is certain to backfire and destabilise Turkey's growing bilateral ties.

Also related to Turkish state views about secularism and the West is Turkey's role in the OIC. Turkey's membership in the OIC has been and is increasingly an asset to Europe, when it comes to deepening and institutionalising its relations with the Muslim world. Because of the nature of the Turkish state, however, Turkey often finds itself ill at ease in the OIC. Turkey often feels and is perceived by other members as not belonging to the OIC, and in particular to any of its geographical groupings, i.e. Asia, Africa or the Arab world.²⁶

When it comes to Turkey's relations with the smaller Gulf states, Turkey's experience in political and economic reform, within limits, could act as a useful precedent. To date, countries such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have shown little interest in proceeding along the path of political liberalisation. The UAE appears content to develop as the key tourism and high-tech hub of the Gulf region. Other states, most notably Qatar and Bahrain, and in different respects Yemen, are showing promising steps towards greater political participation and liberalisation. Again, the extent to which the Turkish example could translate into operational initiatives is highly limited. These smaller Gulf countries are determined to proceed along the delicate path of political reform at their own pace through home-grown initiatives.

A final and promising avenue of Turkey's role in the Gulf is the Neighbouring Countries Initiative. This initiative was born in 2003, stemming from the common interest of all of Iraq's neighbours to prevent the war. It includes all of Iraq's neighbours, with the exception of Kuwait (which supported the US invasion and occupation), as well as Egypt. The countries of the initiative have met five times both before and after the American attack. So far the initiative remains ad hoc and the only item on the agenda has been Iraq. It is conceivable, however, that the initiative will persist and institutionalise. If so, it could become of considerable interest to the EU, which is still in the process of developing a concerted strategy towards the war-torn country.

²⁶ Turkey is included in the Asia group together with Iran, Pakistan, the Central Asian republics, Malaysia, etc.

4.11 The United States

Turkey and the US have been allies for over 50 years, both in the context of NATO and through their bilateral relations. The EU, Turkey and the US have shared similar strategic interests. This has remained so both during the cold war and thereafter. In other words, together with all European countries and the US, the Turkish Republic has always firmly placed itself within the ‘West’.

That is not to say that Turkey’s (or indeed the EU’s) relations with the US have been static. Particularly during the run-up to and start of the Iraqi war, relations between both Turkey (and several EU member states) and the US have been strained. On 1 March 2003 a resolution was brought to the Turkish parliament by the ruling AKP government to allow the temporary deployment of 62,000 US troops on Turkish soil. The deployment and transit through Turkey would have allowed a second-front attack against Iraq. By a few votes, the motion failed to pass through parliament and the American troops were re-routed to Kuwait. At the time, the rejection of the motion appeared to have plunged US-Turkey relations to their lowest ebb since the 1974 arms embargo following the partition of Cyprus.

The rejection of the motion can be explained by several factors. On the substantive side, most within the Turkish establishment resisted an American attack without international legitimisation. Furthermore, as was the case throughout the Middle East and Europe, Turkish public opinion strongly opposed the war. In addition, Turkey had specific fears and concerns related to its location as a bordering country. As all other countries in the Neighbouring Countries Initiative and indeed as the rest of the Muslim world, Turkey feared the political and economic destabilisation of the region stemming from an illegal American attack. Turkey in particular remembered the high social and economic costs that had come with the 1991 Gulf war. More specifically, Turkey felt that the US administration had taken almost no notice of all of the warnings and advice that it (as well as other countries from the region) had provided.

The result of the vote was also coincidental. Albeit after much time and hesitation, the government did propose the motion for approval by parliament, the majority of which was controlled by its own parliamentarians. In addition, the military establishment had not vocally expressed its opposition to the war. In turn, the motion was rejected by only three votes. Having failed to garner a majority by such a small number of votes, the rejection must be considered coincidental rather than strategic. The coincidental result naturally does not detract from the fact that there had been substantive reasons motivating the scepticism of most parliamentarians.

In the aftermath of the rejection of the motion, tensions rose as the US administration strongly warned Turkey not to intervene in Northern Iraq independently of American command. In July 2003 matters worsened further when US troops arrested a Turkish military unit in Suleymaniye in Northern Iraq.

Ensuing events, however, came to stabilise the relationship. In the context of the Iraqi crisis, the Turkish government strengthened its relations with the Arab world and Iran, without straining its relations with Israel or hinting at a reversal in its Western orientation. Turkey respected its pledge not to unilaterally send additional troops to Northern Iraq, which could trigger clashes with Iraqi Kurdish forces. On the contrary, it had offered to send Turkish troops to Iraq as part of the Anglo-American forces in October 2003. Nevertheless, when the US, persuaded by the strong Iraqi Kurdish resistance, decided that it was best not to involve Turkish troops, the government refrained from deploying them.

The incident of the motion, while not leading to a permanent Turkish-American rift, may have led to a subtle re-evaluation of relations between the Turkish military and the Pentagon.²⁷ The push for the war in Iraq was predominantly driven by the US Department of Defense, which had traditionally emphasised Turkey’s strategic significance and enjoyed extremely close relations with the Turkish military. Indeed, the failure of the parliamentary motion in March 2003 may have given way to an

²⁷ See Henri J. Barkey (2003), *Turkey’s Strategic Future: A US Perspective*, CEPS-IISS European Security Forum Working Paper No. 13, CEPS, Brussels, and IISS, London, June.

increased civilianisation of Turkish-American relations. A stronger lead by the US State Department may result in a greater focus on Turkish democratisation in relations between the two countries.

Greater American focus on Turkey's political and economic reform may prove far more fruitful to Turkey's accession process than US pressure on EU member states. In the past the US attempted to exert pressure on EU member states to be more forthcoming towards Turkey. US pressure has indeed contributed to important EU decisions on Turkey, such as the 1996 customs union agreement and the 1999 Helsinki European Council's decision to extend EU candidacy to Turkey. But since then, and in particular at the December 2002 European Council in Copenhagen, heavy-handed US pressure in favour of Turkey might have backfired.

There appear to be two key reasons for this. First, exerting pressure in the realm of foreign policy, for example by encouraging greater EU cooperation with Turkey, is categorically different from exerting pressure to accept Turkey as a member state. The decision to accept a new member state, particularly an important and complex one such as Turkey, is increasingly becoming an issue of domestic debate in EU politics, especially in member states such as France, Germany and the Netherlands. As such it is far less amenable to outside pressure than foreign policy questions, conditioned also by EU-US relations. Second, for countries such as France and Germany (among the most reticent vis-à-vis Turkey), the strong US support for Turkey's accession is viewed increasingly as a form of inappropriate pressure, which in light of the widening transatlantic rift, has paradoxically hardened views on Turkey's accession. Hence, greater American encouragement for Turkey to reform its domestic practice as well as its foreign policy conduct is far more likely to support Turkey's EU accession. It would also prevent Turkey from being an additional (albeit occasional) item of European-American divergence.

The Turkish government is positioning itself to play a constructive role in the Middle East, in a manner that is convergent with both US and European declared interests. Prime Minister Erdoğan has engaged in a highly positive political debate in the US, as evidenced for example by his speeches in January 2004 in New York and at Harvard. The Turkish leadership is thus able to deploy arguments about favouring the progressive democratisation of the Middle Eastern region, ostensibly supported by American as well as European leaderships.

In conclusion, following Turkey's stance towards the war in Iraq, Turkish policy seems to be settling down into a maturing, rather than a disintegrating relationship with the US. It has also brought Turkey's foreign policy closer to the underlying ideology of European foreign policy, even if the EU has itself been so deeply split over Iraq. The scene is therefore set for a credible deepening of Turkish-EU collaboration over future developments in the Middle East.

5. Instruments of Turkish foreign and security policy

In the 1990s Turkey took two seminal steps to give new direction to its foreign policy towards its eastern neighbours, and added a third traditional dimension. First, in opting to rapidly and strongly develop its relations with the Central Asian republics in the early 1990s, Turkey organised complex programmes of economic, cultural and governmental assistance on a much larger scale than hitherto seen. With the turn of the century, Turkey has also been developing its bilateral relations with Middle Eastern countries. Second, it accompanied this development cooperation activity with a radical policy of openness for the virtually visa-free movement of people between the neighbouring states and Turkey.²⁸ Third, Turkey has retained a very substantial military capacity relative to those of any of its neighbours. All these three elements now raise opportunities or at least policy issues in the context of integration with the EU.

The potential opportunities and assets are manifold in the development cooperation and security domains. Turkey has human resource assets that are complementary to those of the EU, with the

²⁸ In the present open-visa regime, the purchase of visas at the port of entry amounts to little more than paying an entry tax.

cultural links and understandings of Eurasia and the Middle East that could in principle be deployed alongside the financial and technical resources of the EU. Turkey has both military and police forces that could make major contributions to the headline goals of the EU for its security and defence policy, and especially by way of resources that could be effectively deployed in south-east Europe and the wider Middle East.

Nevertheless, there is going to be a difficult issue concerning the movement of persons. Although openness to neighbours is an important means for fostering modernisation and the harmony of peoples and civilisations, for European countries this has become difficult to reconcile with domestic security priorities in the era of global terrorism, in which the source and epicentre is in the Middle East.

5.1 Instruments of cooperation²⁹

When Turkey decided to mount its ambitious Central Asian policy initiative in 1992 it needed to create a new or strengthened administrative infrastructure dedicated to the purpose. The main steps here were seen through the creation of the Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) for official assistance in 1992. Since 2000, TIKA has realised 380 projects in the Balkan, Black Sea, Caucasus and Central Asian states. In addition, the DEIK (Foreign Economic Relations Board), which represents 490 leading Turkish companies, has established bilateral business councils with all of Turkey's neighbouring states. Thus the range and logic of these initiatives immediately spanned wider than Central Asia alone, as also seen in the creation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in 1992, headquartered in Istanbul.

Although the Central Asian initiative, as discussed earlier, proved over-ambitious and was later scaled back, it nonetheless saw some substantial action. By early 2003, 7,557 students from the Turkic republics had been enrolled in a variety of Turkish educational establishments, mostly universities, out of an initial target figure of 10,000 decided only the previous year. This alone is an impressive indicator of Turkey as civilian foreign policy actor. Turkey opened elite high schools in each of the Turkic republics, where the working languages are English as well as Turkish. In 1992, a Turkish-Kazakh University was founded. Other cultural initiatives of importance include aid for the adoption of the Latin script in the Turkic republics and television broadcasting channels in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Religious education was also an important line of development. In 1992, 42 imams were sent by the Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs to the Turkic world and 602 students came to Turkey for religious education from 1991 to 1993 from Muslim communities in the former Yugoslavia, the North Caucasus and Tartarstan in Russia, Crimea in Ukraine as well as Central Asia. Theology faculties and colleges were opened and mosques built on a substantial scale. The objective of these initiatives was to move fast into the ideological and spiritual vacuum left by the collapse of the Soviet Union with support for moderate Islam, as opposed to the radical drive coming especially from Iran. The influence of these initiatives in transmitting cultural values, according to Idris Bal, "may be even greater than that of official Turkish policy".³⁰

Trade and investment multiplied fast from a low base, resulting in Turkey becoming the second investor (after Russia) in Central Asia, with hundreds of Turkish firms establishing a much finer and more extensive micro-economic penetration than had come from the West.

More recently, Turkey has hosted new training institutions or activities that relate to general Western priorities. For example in 2000 the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC) was founded in Ankara, with 50% of its funding from Turkey and 50% from the UN Development Programme (UNDP). This organisation has trained 450 officials from 37 countries so far (particularly from the Balkan, Black Sea and Central Asian countries). TADOC provides courses in Turkish, English and Russian and it is equipped with all the necessary translation services. It also

²⁹ Information in this section draws heavily on Idris Bal (2000), op. cit.

³⁰ Ibid.

fosters formal and informal networks of cooperation, primarily through the sharing of information.³¹ This link should also provide the basis for a partnership with the EU's European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) in Lisbon. In addition, the police and military academies are receiving considerable numbers of officer cadets from neighbouring regions, ranging from the Balkans to the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The classic pre-accession period sees the EU supply large-scale assistance for the candidate state to comply with existing EU legislation and norms. The Turkish case presents itself with the additional aspect of a candidate state that has a huge interface with Eurasia and the Middle East, which harbours Europe's most serious security interests and concerns. Turkey's potential as a logistical and institutional base for a wide range of cooperation programmes with this huge region is evident.

For the future this invites the prospect of the EU adopting a double strategy in its pre-accession programmes of cooperation with Turkey, which involves addressing Turkey's own modernisation needs and the needs of the neighbouring states. It is now in any case the intention of the EU through its European Neighbourhood policy to seek ways of progressive and partial integration of neighbouring states in line with European norms, standards and operating policies. Turkey thus offers the opportunity for the EU to obtain synergies and economies of scale in combining these two strategic developments alongside each other.

Concretely this could mean that the EU's multiple programmes of assistance (PHARE, TACIS, MEDA and the future Neighbourhood instrument) could have operational centres and programmes in Turkey that could use many of the same institutional bases. This could concern many of the standard categories of programmes for good governance, media, human rights, police cooperation and technical cooperation in a wide range of economic and public policy domains. The EU's technical cooperation programmes in Central Asia have suffered from a lack of solid, experienced institutional facilities functioning in either of the regions' main languages (Russian or Turkic).

5.2 Regulating the movement of people

The official EU doctrine for candidates negotiating accession is that they should become compliant with EU and Schengen visa and border-management rules as quickly as they can, and that new member states shall not have opt-out possibilities for any EU policy. Among the ten newly acceding states, none negotiated or sought derogations from these policies. Nevertheless, the EU's rules respect national competence for part of the visa field, notably for long-term visas and residence permits. The main pressure for special border regimes in the context of the recent enlargement came from Russia on behalf of Kaliningrad, and the EU has negotiated elements of facilitated transit for this region in coordination with Lithuania. The new member states bordering Ukraine reluctantly adopted the restrictive measures required by the EU, and these have indeed greatly reduced the number of border crossings (by 90% for Poland and 70% for Slovakia). But the overwhelming priority given to EU accession meant that there were no strong pressures for derogations.

The present position of the Turkish government is indeed to become Schengen-compliant as soon as possible after the beginning of accession negotiations, in principle by the end of 2005. It appears to be following the Polish model of not wanting to raise difficulties in relation to the EU *acquis*, fearful that this may be used as a reason or excuse for delay in the negotiation process, or for acceding with what is sometimes called 'second class' membership of the Union. Turkey is thus concentrating on building up its reputation as a state that will achieve high standards of border security.

In practice, however, the EU has an external border regime that has considerable exceptions and graduations already, with more under consideration. The UK and Ireland are not part of the Schengen system, so travellers crossing between these member states and the Schengen area are subject to frontier controls. Third-country nationals require separate visas for Schengen and non-Schengen states. On the other hand several non-member states are fully part of the Schengen area and it has

³¹ Interviews were held at the Police Academy and TADOC, Ankara, May 2004.

recently been agreed that Switzerland will join Norway and Iceland in this category. The new member states for their part have had to become Schengen-compliant with respect to visa policies for third-country nationals, but their internal EU borders, for example between Poland and Germany, will not be abolished for a considerable (and today unknown) number of years. Russia has negotiated a special facilitated regime for the transit of Russians between Kaliningrad and mainland Russia, and is negotiating further 'visa facilitation' measures. The European Commission has recently proposed special measures for local border traffic for residents living within 50 kilometres of the EU's external borders. Spain has special arrangements for its two North African territories (Ceuta and Melilla), which are enclaves in Morocco. It is to be expected that further special regimes will have to be developed for the Western Balkans when Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia accede as members.

All of these exceptions to the standard Schengen regime amount to saying that the EU in practice has been progressively establishing a graduated rather than strictly unitary external border regime for the movement of people. Although the doctrine addressed to the candidate states is a rigid one of no derogations or opt-outs, the EU's actual policy has become much more complex and subtle. The special features of the Turkish case therefore warrant careful consideration.

The most notable feature of the Turkish case is its exceptional degree of openness to all its neighbours, which has accompanied policies of active cooperation involving big movements of tourists, traders, business people and students. But virtually all of these states are on the EU's obligatory visa list, with further rules that require that the visas be obtained from consulates rather than at border crossings (ruling out Turkey's present port-of-entry sticker system). Naturally, the current priority concern of combating terrorism and illegal trafficking reinforces the arguments for strict border controls. Turkey is already reforming the organisation of its border security services in line with European norms. But this concern for security need not be inconsistent with measures for the pre-accession period that aim at minimising the negative effects of stricter border regimes.

Two categories of measures could be considered by the EU to be in its interests as well as those of Turkey. First and easiest are questions of sequencing the introduction of more restrictive visa policies. The EU is already negotiating with Russia on the subject of facilitated visa regimes, perhaps for priority categories of people such as students and participants in official cooperation programmes. Further, some countries in the EU's neighbourhood may in due course qualify for visa-free access to the EU. The EU is beginning its own internal negotiations over the facilitated, local border-traffic regime. Where the EU itself is considering selective liberalisation measures, a candidate state should not be expected to tighten its regime, only to reverse this if the EU liberalises later, especially when the time horizon for accession is a long one. For example, Turkey should not be required to become fully Schengen-compliant until shortly before it can fully enter into the Schengen area itself (complete with the abolition of frontier checks), which would be many years from now (but this would require a change of current EU policy as and when accession negotiations begin).

Second and more fundamentally, is whether it would be in both the EU's and Turkey's interests to have a variant of the UK's Schengen opt-out regime. Turkey in this case would be entitled to continue to admit third-country nationals – at least from some of the neighbouring states with whom it is important to retain openness – with a less restrictive visa regime than that of the Schengen area. For example, there could be a strengthening of the security features of the present system of issuing sticker visas obtained at the port of entry. In this case, the frontier controls would remain between Turkey and Bulgaria and Greece by land, or between Turkey and all EU ports and airports, most notably for third-country nationals. Turkish citizens would pass these frontiers freely with passports, exactly as UK or Irish citizens travel freely in and out of the Schengen area. Turkey already wants to tighten security around its external borders for the same security reasons that apply to the EU. Yet a certain degree of differentiation could help Turkey to continue to serve as an important open country to the states of the former Soviet Union and the Middle East. The central EU territory would thus be protected by a two-tier frontier regime on both Turkey's external and internal frontiers for the movement of third-country nationals, while Turkish citizens would have the normal freedom of movement and citizenship rights as across the EU.

5.3 Security and defence

Turkey spends 2.4% of its GDP on military expenditures, compared with an average of 2% for the rest of NATO's European members. Turkey's military forces are by far the largest in NATO's European contingent by number of personnel, accounting for a quarter of the total, with 514,000 enrolled (but with a large number of conscripts – 391,000). This compares with 210,000 from the UK, 260,000 from France and 296,000 from Germany. Turkey has also a substantial gendarmerie of 150,000, some of whom are effectively elite military troops. More specifically, Turkey has a significant cadre of career NCOs, with considerable combat experience in difficult terrains. Compared with other NATO members such as the UK and France, Turkey has limited strategic lift capacity. Nevertheless, it has been most willing to deploy its assets. As of 2003, Turkey had sizeable contingents in the ISAF in Afghanistan (1,400 troops), in SFOR II in Bosnia (1,200 troops) and in KFOR in Kosovo (940 troops). In Northern Cyprus the Turkish garrison is huge (approximately 35-40,000 troops).

Turkey is actively involved in NATO's adaptation to its new challenges. Turkey has established the headquarters of 3rd Corps in Istanbul as a High Readiness Force (Land) HQ. Additionally, one of the two air component commands in the new NATO command structure (CC-Air HQ) will be located in İzmir in August 2004. Turkey has signed military cooperation and training agreements with 45 nations. In this regard Turkey makes an extensive use of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, with training support for the partner states. Turkey also undertakes training programmes in the military facilities of the Turkish armed forces on a bilateral basis, free of charge. The total number of personnel trained by Turkey amounts to almost 30,000, of which about a half were trained in the home countries by Turkish training experts and about half in Turkey. Turkish training support within the NATO and partnership mechanisms are provided by the Turkish PfP Training Centre in Ankara, which was established in 1998 and was the first such centre recognised by NATO. Since its inception, the Turkish PfP Training Centre has trained more than 3,600 personnel from 50 NATO, PfP, and Mediterranean Dialogue countries. In addition, the Centre has established mobile training teams, which have provided training for about 1,000 personnel from a dozen countries.

In Afghanistan Turkey has participated in all phases of the ISAF operations from the beginning. During the ISAF-II operation in 2002-03, Turkey undertook the leadership of the international force, contributing 1,500 personnel and also operating the Kabul international airport. Turkey handed over the leadership to Germany and Holland in February 2003, but continues its participation with an infantry company and other resources including three Black Hawk helicopters.

In October 2002 the EU reached an agreement with Turkey and other non-EU NATO member states concerning these countries' possible participation in EU military operations and the EU's use of NATO military assets and capabilities in such operations. This agreement took two years to negotiate, and was blocked for some time for two reasons of importance to Turkey. First, Turkey sought the maximum participation in the shaping if not decision-making by the EU. An elaborate consultative process was established involving the associated states in the workings of the EU's Political and Security Committee and Military Committee. Second, there were sensitive concerns over military aspects of the Greek-Turkish relationship in general, as well as the Cypriot conflict in particular. It was agreed that the EU would in no circumstances use its military against a NATO ally and that NATO would in no circumstance act against the EU. The final deal reached at the December 2002 Copenhagen European Council also provided for the exclusion of Cyprus (and Malta) as non-NATO or PfP countries from possible ESDP operations. Overall this difficult negotiation revealed the sensitivity in Turkey concerning the key difference between being a close associate versus a full member of the EU.

A final area of possible and desirable cooperation concerns the sharing of intelligence. In June 2004, the EU announced that it would establish enhanced cooperation among its member states. Given that many of the targets of EU intelligence services have a Turkish connection (terrorism, narcotics and migrant trafficking, arms dealings and money laundering), cooperation with Turkish intelligence services would also be useful. In addition, Turkish intelligence has assets and contacts in some neighbouring countries, where EU intelligence is poorly represented. Fruitful cooperation, however,

would also require EU assistance to Turkish services (such as the gendarmerie, the police, customs and coastguard) to counter traffickers attempting to reach the EU via Turkey. This would be the necessary EU step so as to prevent Turkey from acting alone as the gatekeeper of Europe.

6. Conclusions

This paper has explored whether the idea of integrating Turkish and EU foreign and security polices holds out the prospect of something important and valuable for both parties. Would Turkey be an asset or a liability? Our conclusions are unambiguously positive.

This result does, however, depend on the EU's level of ambition for its foreign and security policy. Does the EU aspire to become a major actor in the nearby southern and eastern neighbourhoods, or does it prefer to retreat into itself behind the most secure possible external borders? If the EU truly aspires to play a stabilising, pacifying and modernising role in its neighbourhood beyond mere token actions, then the incorporation of Turkey into the common external policy offers the prospect of real advantages. In the contrary case it would be consistent for the EU to reject Turkey's future membership once and for all. Yet in that scenario the EU would run the risk of destabilising Turkey, which could mean adding to the chaos of the wider neighbourhood.

Turkey's EU accession stands to be of comparable importance for the EU's emerging foreign and security policy as the recent accession of the ten new member states put together, if not more so. Turkey is almost completely surrounded by a set of regions that represent the EU's prime security concerns, from the residual instability of the Balkans to the west, the Caucasus, Central Asia, Iraq and Iran to the east, and Israel-Palestine and the Mediterranean to the south. The Turkish accession would mark the end of the EU's enlargement to the east, while at the same time opening new dimensions to the EU's relationship with the Middle East and Eurasia to the south and east – a region that is unstable and unpredictable.

The potential advantages for the EU in integrating Turkey as a foreign and security policy actor are several. Objective factors lie in concrete logistical and geographical advantages, coupled with military capabilities and civilian human resources that can be readily deployed in the Eurasian and Middle Eastern neighbourhoods. More subjective but perhaps even more important are the prospects for the Turkish experience to be viewed as a positive precedent by its neighbours. This general statement has a number of versions, some of which have been recently tried but failed (e.g., the pan-Turkic experiment in Central Asia in the early 1990s). Other variants are also likely to provoke adverse reactions, such as over-selling the Turkish model of multi-party democracy and secularism in parts of the Arab world. Not only does Turkey's democracy still have important shortcomings, but Turkey's Arab neighbours, in view of the legacy of Ottoman rule, react adversely to arguments suggesting their emulation of Turkey's political and economic system.

More subtle arguments, however, seem full of promise. The Turkish case suggests that the values of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and secularism are not specific to any particular culture or religion. On the contrary, these are universal values with no geographical, cultural or religious limitations. Rather than representing a static model of democracy, the continuing process of Turkey's democratisation could act as a source of inspiration to its neighbours. The same is also true of the gradual transformation of Turkey's security and foreign policy culture. While in the past Turkish foreign policy had focussed on the importance of military security and balance-of-power politics, it now increasingly appreciates the value of civilian instruments of law, economics and diplomacy, as well as multilateral settings in which to pursue its aims. Related to this, the Turkish example demonstrates the value of European integration as a key external anchor to domestic processes of modernisation.

The final point concerns the EU's own model, recalling our initial contrast of the sharply delimited Euro-federal model versus one of differentiated forms in relation to its outer edges or neighbourhoods. Turkey's EU accession and integration would vindicate the EU's ambitions to represent an inclusive project and a multi-cultural community of values. If the EU and Turkey were to make the best use of

their joint opportunities in the foreign policy domain, Turkey would build on the advantages of its comparative openness as well as proximity to the Middle Eastern and Eurasian neighbourhoods. The EU and Turkey could thus devise an original blend of openness towards their southern and eastern neighbours, with the model of a graduated external border of the EU. Nevertheless Turkey would need to be reassured that this would not in any way deprive it of normal political rights as a future member state. To have a graduated border regime that adds value is not to be confused with the negative connotations of a second-class member state.

Finally, an integration of EU and Turkish strategic cultures in the context of the present turmoil in the Middle East and transatlantic discord over Iraq could carry a message to Washington as well, supporting a shift back towards multilateralism, moderation and the rule of law.

Our conclusions in viewing Turkey as a potential asset to the EU's foreign and security policies can be distilled into two terms used in military security studies: bridgehead and spearhead. In the present context these words have meaning in terms of the civil values and the objectives of an expanding European Union. The democratising Turkey would be the bridgehead of a modern, multi-cultural Europe right up to and alongside the ideological chaos and violence of the neighbourhood beyond. Its civilian, military and human resources could be integrated with those of the EU and serve as a spearhead of the EU's soft and not-so-soft power projection into the region.

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