



Brandeis University

Crown Center  
for Middle East Studies

Mailstop 010  
Waltham, Massachusetts  
02454-9110

781-736-5320  
781-736-5324 Fax  
www.brandeis.edu/crown

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# Middle East Brief

## The United States and Turkey: Can They Agree to Disagree?

Joshua W. Walker

Given the headline-grabbing actions of Turkey this summer with regard to both Israel and Iran, a powerful narrative is emerging in which the West has already “lost” Turkey.<sup>1</sup> The rise of the conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP) and its Muslim worldview as the dominant and unrivaled force in Turkish politics, as demonstrated by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s successful passage of the September 12 constitutional referendum, has only heightened fears among many in Washington. Rather than seeing further democratization in Turkey and taking note of the domestic pressures facing a populist AKP government, they see a final nail being placed in the coffin of the military and secular elites that once protected American interests, and have concluded that Ankara has already switched sides from the West and turned its back on the historic U.S.-Turkey alliance.<sup>2</sup>

Turbulence in U.S.-Turkey relations should be expected and is ignored only at America’s peril. It would be equally foolish, however, to ignore the important strategic role that Turkey has played and continues to play in a critically important region and the degree to which America’s and Turkey’s interests converge more than they diverge. To this end, this Brief begins by laying out the historical context of the U.S.-Turkey partnership and examines some of the factors that affect it. It ends by evaluating some of the points of divergence and convergence that confront the relationship today.

## The U.S.–Turkey Partnership in Historical Context

Relations between the Republic of Turkey and the United States have always been dynamic and reflective of the historical moment in time. During the Cold War, the common strategic threat posed by the Soviet Union bound the two countries together. Yet even then, relations were not immune to regional developments and domestic politics in both capitals. The traditional bedrock of the U.S.–Turkey alliance has always been the two countries' militaries, which are highly integrated in the context of a common NATO framework and as a result of sustained bilateral cooperation. Turkey's strategic location on Europe's southeastern flank and as part of the "Northern Tier" (with Greece, Iran, and Pakistan) reinforced America's policy of containment throughout the Cold War, and Turkey's inclusion in the "West" protected the country from Soviet aggression.

Despite Turkey's stagnant economy and considerably lesser geopolitical capabilities in the 1970s compared with today's, Ankara under a Socialist Democrat government chose to intervene militarily in Cyprus in 1974 over Washington's objections, and despite the punishment subsequently imposed by Congress's banning military aid. The nationalist military that instigated a coup in 1980 and ruled until 1983 downgraded Turkey's ambassador to Israel and oversaw the tensest period of relations between the two countries since the founding of the Jewish state.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 was met with fear in Ankara that it was no longer relevant to the West, and to Washington in particular. Having been unequivocally part of the West since joining NATO in 1952 during the Cold War and based on the strategic logic of the time, Turkey expected its European credentials to hold up. Having been a part of almost every European organization from its inclusion in the Council of Europe in 1949 to the Ankara agreement of 1963 that created a customs union with Europe, Turkey looked to Europe as its logical home and partner. But Turkey's war in the 1990s against the Kurdistan Worker Party (PKK) led to an inward focus and European protests about human rights violations further strained relations. Meanwhile, America and Israel actively supported Turkey's efforts militarily through arms sales, intelligence cooperation, and joint exercises.

The contrasting styles and presidencies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush led to vastly different outcomes with respect to relations with Turkey. The pinnacle of U.S.–Turkey relations was achieved during President Clinton's emotional visit to Turkey in November 1999, after the devastating earthquake in Izmit. The trip resulted in an outpouring of Turkish affection and support for the United States. By contrast, George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq caused a major riff in relations that many worried would ultimately rupture the alliance.<sup>3</sup> Heedless of Turkish domestic politics, the Bush administration was caught off guard by the internal dynamics that led to the parliament's refusal to allow U.S. forces to pass through Turkish soil in its invasion of Iraq in March of 2003.

### *Changes in Ankara*

Successive American administrations have consistently reiterated that the U.S. does not get involved in domestic matters or take sides. In reality, however, Washington has embroiled itself in domestic Turkish politics from time to time. The prime example of this was the Bush administration's decision in December 2002 to invite then party leader Erdoğan for an official visit to Washington. Many have subsequently credited this visit with solidifying warm relations between Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party and the U.S.<sup>4</sup>

Joshua W. Walker is a Junior Research Fellow at the Crown Center. He is also a Fellow at the German Marshall Fund, and a Research Fellow at the Belfer Center's International Security Program at Harvard University.

*The opinions and findings expressed in this essay are those of the author exclusively, and do not reflect the official positions or policies of the Crown Center for Middle East Studies or Brandeis University.*

When Turkey's governing AKP directly challenged the military in 2007 by selecting a conservative Muslim presidential candidate with a headscarf-wearing wife and the party was not closed or swept out of power by the military, it was a first in Turkish politics. The Turkish military had always positioned itself as a guardian of Turkey's secular character and had promoted itself as the protector of American interests in Turkey. But when the Cold War ended, the logic of politics in Turkey began to change from leftist/Communist versus rightist/ultranationalist to a secular versus Muslim identity polarization. And with greater democratization within the country and a newly emerging conservative ruling elite represented by the AKP, many formerly pro-American secularists began to reveal an ultranationalist tilt that made them instinctively xenophobic, including anti-American.<sup>5</sup> Washington's old Cold War calculus of trying to maintain strong relations with the Turkish military while remaining silent with respect to various domestic issues was no longer viable: The argument floated by the secularist bloc's allies in Washington, that speaking out would cause the U.S. to "lose" the military, no longer carried weight, because in one sense the military had already been lost as a result of Turkish domestic political realities, including a resurgent civilian administration.

The primary focus of the, for lack of better terms, "secular" versus "Muslim" political elite struggle in recent years has centered on a historic court case known as Ergenekon, which is altering the status quo framework of Turkish politics. In that case, Turkish civilian authorities arrested former and current military officials on charges of instigating coup attempts against the government, beginning with the "e-memo" that the military issued in late April 2007 against the selection of Abdullah Gül to the presidency on the grounds that he was a closet Islamist—which triggered an early election, with extremely high voter turnout, in which the AKP captured close to half of the popular vote.

Washington's non-reaction to the "e-memo" and to the subsequent Ergenekon case signaled America's ambivalent response toward democratization in Turkey.<sup>6</sup> Unlike the EU, which immediately condemned the "e-memo" and the allegations made in the Ergenekon case, the State Department waited a week before finally issuing a statement that simply reiterated America's policy of non-interference in domestic Turkish politics and was widely seen in Turkey, given Washington's rhetoric in support of democracy, as cynical and hypocritical, further souring relations between the two countries.

### *A Model Partnership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*

The election of President Obama ushered in what many in both Turkey and the U.S. hoped would be a new era of relations that might redress the difficulties encountered during the Bush years. Making Turkey his first overseas visit,

Obama gave a speech to the Turkish Parliament emphasizing the importance of Turkey and stating that "Turkey's greatness lies in your ability to be at the center of things. This is not where East and West divide—this is where they come together." "In the beauty of your culture," he continued. "In the richness of your history. In the strength of your democracy."<sup>7</sup>

In his speech, delivered on April 6, 2009, the President used the term "partner" or "partnership" no fewer than five times. A day later, Obama inaugurated the concept of a "model partnership" during a joint news conference with Turkish President Gül.<sup>8</sup> The reformulation of Turkey from "strategic" to "model" partner was never fully fleshed out but refocused a historic Cold War alliance of necessity into the framework of an alliance based on converging regional interests along with shared democratic principles and values.

Turkish leaders reveled in their newfound "model partnership," despite not knowing what it meant in concrete terms. As Prime Minister Erdoğan remarked during his subsequent visit to Washington, "[t]he fact that the President visited Turkey on his first overseas trip and that he described and characterized Turkish-U.S. relations as a model partnership has been very important for us politically and in the process that we all look forward to in the future as well. And important steps are now being taken in order to continue to build on our bilateral relations so as to give greater meaning to the term 'model partnership.'<sup>9</sup> At a moment at which Turkey's leverage and help with respect to America's three most urgent strategic issues—Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran—were never more needed, Ankara appeared to be Obama's ideal partner. At the same time, Turkey, under the leadership of Erdoğan and his foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, was eager to prove its importance as a rising regional power.<sup>10</sup> The confluence of these factors in 2009 led to the highest number of bilateral visits between U.S. and Turkish officials in any one year since the creation of Turkey in 1923.

### *Problems in Washington*

Unfortunately, 2010 has been anything *but* a model year for U.S.-Turkish relations. Since the House Foreign Relations Subcommittee voted in March 2010 to pass the Armenian Genocide Resolution Ankara has been upset with Washington.<sup>11</sup> In turn, Ankara's rhetoric and behavior with respect to both Iran and Israel have caused anger and confusion in Washington. The linkages between domestic American politics and foreign policy have rarely been understood in Turkey, but have become increasingly difficult to manage in light of recent events. The summer of 2010 in particular has been brutal for the "model partnership." Turkey's fiery rhetoric following an Israeli raid on the Gaza-bound ship *Mavi Marmara*, and its subsequent decision to recall its ambassador until the Israeli government officially apologizes, has all but collapsed strategic relations with Israel. At the same time, Ankara has been actively engaging with

Tehran, culminating in its “No” vote against additional United Nations sanctions on Iran, which Washington championed and on which it was able to achieve transatlantic, Chinese, and Russian consensus.

As a result, many in Washington have begun to openly question Ankara’s future as an American ally and its commitment to a Western vocation. Congressman Michael Pence, chairman of the House Republican Conference, spoke for many when he delivered a fiery statement on June 9, condemning Turkey for the Gaza flotilla incident and arguing on the House floor that “Turkey needs to decide whether its present course is in its long-term interest.”<sup>12</sup> Democratic Congressman Gary Ackerman took these criticisms one step further when he wrote on June 15 that “Turkey’s foreign policy under Foreign Minister Davutoğlu’s leadership is rife with illegality, irresponsibility and hypocrisy.”<sup>13</sup>

## Points of Divergence for the U.S. and Turkey

The AKP’s broad regional strategy of seeking good relations and “zero problems” with its neighbors has typically been understood in Washington as being in line with America’s own desire for stability in the region.<sup>14</sup> When applied toward non-state actors such as Hamas and Hezbollah, however, or to the current regimes in Damascus and Tehran, the strategy has put Turkey directly at odds with the American goal of containing and isolating these actors. There is an affinity between the AKP and conservative Muslim movements like Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Muslim Brotherhood; high-level officials, including Prime Minister Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, have met with leaders of these groups and made the case for engaging with them so as to bring them into a political process and thereby moderate them: Turkey has also served as an interlocutor between Israel and these groups.

While the AKP has argued that these relationships strengthen Turkey’s foreign policy options—and outreach to these groups serves Turkey’s agenda as a regional actor and would-be mediator—Turkey has yet to persuade these groups to lay down their arms and recognize Israel’s right to exist. Washington’s belief that Ankara has been emboldening Hamas and Hezbollah has placed Turkey at odds with the United States, and its lack of success in obtaining concessions from these groups or integrating them into a peaceful political process has occasioned resentment both in the U.S. Congress and in Israel—and put Ankara in direct conflict with policymakers in Washington and Jerusalem. Turkey’s engagement with these groups has, moreover, only exacerbated the sensitivity of working with non-state actors—which is ironic given that Ankara reacts strongly when outsiders reach out to its own domestic non-state actors, such as the PKK.

The value of AKP’s close working relationship with these groups is credible to Washington only if Ankara is seen as an unbiased and unaffiliated mediator, which is increasingly difficult given the state of Turkish-Israeli relations. Since Israel’s 2009 attack on Gaza, a wave of anti-Israeli sentiment has engulfed Turkey’s political discourse. Even as they have insisted on the difference between legitimate criticism of Israel and anti-Jewish sentiment, the Turks have been particularly harsh, and engaged in what some have called a crude form of Jew baiting: Erdoğan averred, for example, that Americans did not see what was really happening in Gaza because “Jews control the media.”<sup>15</sup> Reports of threats made to Jewish-owned businesses in Istanbul and Izmir as well as the appearance of billboards plastered with anti-Semitic messages have alarmed Jews around the world and in particular Turkey’s 27,000-strong Jews, whose ancestors escaped the Inquisition for the safety of the Ottoman Empire. As a result, Sylvio Ovadya, the leader of the Turkish Jewish community—which generally keeps a low profile—has asked President Abdullah Gül to make anti-Semitism a crime.

In light of the already inflamed sentiments toward Israel in the aftermath of its treatment of the Palestinians in Gaza, broadcast daily on Turkish television since 2009, the killing of nine Turkish citizens in international waters aboard the Gaza-bound ship *Mavi Marmara* this summer helped bring about an explosively toxic domestic environment in Turkey. The reaction of the government was actually restrained when compared with that of the Turkish street, and of opposition parties that called for revenge and even for war with Israel. The nexus of Israel’s Gaza policy and resentment towards the way Turks have been treated by Israel has produced a nasty strain of Turkish nationalism, of which anti-Israeli rhetoric—a phenomenon historically alien to Turkey for the most part—has become a central component. The incentives for attacking Israel were further enhanced by the portrayal of the *Mavi Marmara* incident, both by the media and by opposition parties, as being above politics—as involving an issue of national pride. Given the resurgence of nationalism, along with a political movement galvanized less than a year away from upcoming national elections, it is not surprising that Turkish leaders, particularly the politically savvy prime minister, indulged in Israel-bashing.

Given the timing of the deterioration of relations with Israel and the *Mavi Marmara* incident in the lead-up to the Iran sanctions vote at the UN, many in Washington have linked these events and simplistically pointed to the AKP’s “Islamist” roots rather than looking at the tough domestic realities confronting Erdoğan. The prime minister’s continued attacks on Israel and his simultaneous support for Iran and Hamas have galvanized nearly all Israeli and some American public opinion against him and his party. While joint military exercises with Israel as well as permission for Israel to use Turkish air space for such exercises have been canceled

and Turkey remains without an ambassador in Tel Aviv, diplomatic relations and unofficial channels between the two countries remain intact. Deep-seated bureaucratic, historical, and military ties between Turkey and Israel have limited further political fallout and the worst seems to be over, as evidenced by the restraint shown by Erdoğan since August of 2010. Turkish-Israeli relations may never reach the level of their historic cooperation (which included the signing of a strategic partnership) in the 1990s, but they appear to be leveling out after an exceptionally difficult period.

With respect to Iran, there is a clear difference in the actions and approaches of Turkish and U.S. officials, despite the same publicly stated desire to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. In an attempt to head off coercive action that would hurt its own citizens living near Iran, who are dependent on cross-border trade for their economic livelihood, Turkey attempted its own trilateral diplomacy, with the help of Brazil, to deal with Iran. These attempts—which were originally encouraged by the Obama administration—have led to discord with regard to the means necessary to secure the end goal of a nuclear weapons-free Iran.<sup>16</sup> The subsequent recriminations over the “Tehran agreement” achieved by Turkish mediation, along with the rhetorical outbursts of Prime Minister Erdoğan in defense of the agreement and of the Turkish-Brazilian process, has further clouded Turkey’s stance with respect to the Western consensus on preventing a nuclear-armed Iran.<sup>17</sup>

Turkish officials who insist that their approach represents only a difference in tactics and not ends have clearly not internalized the fact that the Obama administration regards preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons as one of its primary strategic goals. The complex workings of Washington, which comprise legislative as well as executive pressures, make coordinating with Ankara exceedingly difficult, given the two countries’ divergent threat perceptions regarding Iran. Despite its “No” vote at the UN, Ankara insists it will uphold the letter of the law concerning sanctions. But given Turkey’s efforts to triple its trade with Iran, many in Washington complain that Ankara is undermining the very spirit and intention of the sanctions, which is to isolate Tehran and persuade it to change its present course.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, many Western diplomats and officials have begun to feel that the Turkish prime minister’s rhetoric of closer relations between Turkey and Iran is at odds with its transatlantic obligations and partnership.<sup>19</sup> The Obama administration has increasingly sidelined Erdoğan on account of his perceived bias toward Iran and his repeated calls for a nuclear-free Middle East that single out Israel, instead turning to President Gül to deliver messages and warnings. Unfortunately for Washington, Erdoğan represents the majority view in Turkey, which does not think that a nuclear Iran would hurt Turkey’s interests.<sup>20</sup> This is short-sighted, however: A nuclear Iran would be a

long-term destabilizing factor that would ultimately change the existing strategic calculus, which currently favors Turkey’s considerable conventional military advantage over its competitors. Perhaps even more damaging, it would dangerously alter Ankara’s relationship with Washington.

## Opportunities for Convergence for the U.S. and Turkey

Turkey’s engagement with Athens, Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, Erbil, Nicosia, Sarajevo, and Yerevan—unlike its proactivism with respect to Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran—has been a major asset to U.S. policymakers in a difficult region. As demonstrated by Ankara’s moves toward rapprochement with Armenia through the signing of protocols in Switzerland and the establishment of High-Level Strategic Cooperation Councils (HLSCC) with Syria and Iraq in 2009, Turkey has been seeking to transform itself from a static Cold War bulwark into a paragon of regional stability. Turkey’s rising self-confidence and regional prominence have led to major mediation efforts to end sectarian violence throughout its neighborhood.

Turkey’s involvement in the Middle East has increased since the 1990s, but the nature of that involvement has changed in recent years. In the 1990s, Turkey’s military ties with Israel, its coercive pressure on Syria over its patronage of the PKK, and its participation in Western sanctions against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq were largely framed within a realist understanding of the Middle Eastern balance of power. Today, Turkey presents itself as a mediating power in the region, intent on developing relations with all actors in order to promote peace and regional integration. To date, Ankara has mediated between Israel and Syria, Fatah and Hamas, Syria and Saudi Arabia, and within the broader Sunni and Arab world, as well as between the U.S. and Iran. In addition, the continuing withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq has changed the regional dynamics for Turkey and allowed Ankara new space for maneuvering—a space that Turkey has seized by promoting a Kurdish regional initiative.<sup>21</sup> The 2009 HLSCC agreements between Turkey and Syria and Turkey and Iraq are unprecedented—as would be a possible one with Iran in the future.<sup>22</sup> The mere discussion of cooperation between Turkey and Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, or Iraq would have been unthinkable in any other period of Turkey’s modern history.

Most strikingly, in Lebanon, Ankara has actively intervened to help maintain the delicate balance achieved under the March 14 coalition that has held the country together despite all odds. As Washington decides how to best support a democratic and non-radicalized Beirut, given Congressional attempts to limit American support, Ankara offers a more attractive, responsible, and willing partner than either

Damascus or Tehran. Similarly, the transformation in Turkish-Syrian relations, which went from a near war in the 1990s over Damascus's support of the PKK to an HLSCC, has had important benefits in terms of American interests, such as Ankara's mediation attempts between Syria and Israel. And as the largest and most dynamic economy in the region, Turkey has championed the idea of an economic Middle Eastern Union modeled explicitly on the European Union, comprised currently of Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and, one day in the future, Iraq.<sup>23</sup> These countries have all already established free movement, free trade, and no visa areas with Ankara. Greater economic interdependence in the Middle East augurs well for regional stability and also limits Iran's influence in the wake of America's withdrawal from Iraq.

The most successful venue for Turkish foreign policy, judging by agreements signed and conflicts resolved, has been the Balkans, where agreements with Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Serbia over their complicated pasts and future linkages have allowed the region to take a major step toward further integration with Europe. In the Black Sea, Turkey's interest in open markets and transparent governance so as to enhance trade relations converges with America's own interests. In the Caucasus there is cautious room for optimism, despite the lack of progress since the signing of historic protocol agreements in 2009 which promised to normalize ties with Armenia by addressing the outstanding issues of history dating from the breakup of the Ottoman empire and the tragedies of 1915 that have led to the mutual non-recognition of borders and the lack of diplomatic representation between Ankara and Yerevan. There is clearly a determination, however—demonstrated particularly by President Gül—to keep the process alive until domestic tensions in both countries subside, and the protocols have simply been frozen rather than outrightly rejected. In addition, the economic linkages to Turkey being created in Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia via land borders and by the opening of transit connections and the laying of energy pipelines point toward an integrated region in the near future that would also enhance U.S. and NATO interests in the area.

The Obama administration has been keen to focus Turkish activism and support on its own trouble spots in Afghanistan and Iraq in a way that has highlighted Turkey's role as a vital transatlantic connection and its newly emerging leadership role in the Muslim world. In this Washington has been supported by a broad consensus within Ankara—one that is rarely found—between the ruling AKP and the military establishment about the potential for Turkish influence in Afghanistan and Iraq and Turkey's responsibility for exercising that potential. The AKP sees these "neighbors" as offering positive examples of the constructive role Turkey's newly activist post-Cold War foreign policy can play in producing regional stability. Indeed, Turkey was and is both internationally and domestically well positioned to play a

larger role in both Afghanistan and Iraq as America continues its withdrawal.

Ankara has close historic ties to Afghanistan that date back to the 1920s when the founder of the modern Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, served as a model for modernization—one that collapsed only after great power interference in Kabul carved up the country. Often referred to as Afghanistan's "closest neighbor without borders," Turkey also shares numerous cultural, ethnic, and linguistic links with Afghanistan that make it an ideal partner for the U.S. The Turks have taken command for the second time of the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Kabul and doubled their troop levels in the last few months.<sup>24</sup> Each place the Turks have controlled has experienced considerable and consistent improvement in ways that few other Western allies can claim, mostly because of the emphasis placed on civilian infrastructure, such as the building of hospitals and schools.<sup>25</sup> Having at one point contributed the third largest number of troops in Afghanistan, the Turks today, with their 2.5 million soldiers, are an underutilized potential ally for Washington.

With respect to Iraq, there is renewed impetus to resolve the long-simmering Kurdish issue, given Ankara's battle against the PKK and continued Turkish military incursions into northern Iraq. Given the tensions in domestic Turkish politics and civil-military relations, the Kurdish issue has the potential to be the biggest spoiler for Turkey, and for the region—and a viable and sovereign Iraq is in Turkey's as well as America's vital interest.<sup>26</sup> As the largest economic and military power in the region, Turkey can, working in coordination with U.S. actions and policy, be part of a political solution in Iraq, rather than being a principal irritant to both Baghdad and Erbil.

The remarkable improvement in Ankara's attitudes toward the Kurdish Regional Government since the 2007 intelligence-sharing deal struck with Washington concerning the PKK was one of the most positive developments in US-Turkish relations that has continued from the Bush to Obama administrations. As demonstrated by the droves of Iraqi officials of all sectarian stripes who continue to come to Turkey, Ankara is becoming a hub for Iraqi business and politics. Given the logistics involved in removing American equipment and troops from major combat operations, Turkey is the logical geographic route and continues to be a major asset to the United States.

## Conclusion

Turkey is at the center of one of the most critical regions of the world, and recent changes to the country as well as the region have only heightened the country's confidence on a global stage. With the second fastest growing economy in the world—after only China in the second quarter of 2010—Turkey is clearly no longer a European backwater,

but a regional hub that is defining dynamic change in its neighborhood. As a G-20 founding member, holder of a European seat on the UN Security Council, European Union aspirant, and head of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Ankara has transformed itself into a more autonomous actor, seeking greater regional and global influence. There are real causes for concern regarding changes in Turkish domestic politics and foreign policy that could lead to even greater tensions in U.S.-Turkey relations down the road; but it is clear that Turkey continues to offer the U.S. numerous opportunities for strategic cooperation and support and thus remains a critically important partner for the U.S. in the Middle East.

## Endnotes

- 1 For example, see Michael Rubin, "Turkey, from Ally to Enemy," *Commentary on michaelrubin.org*, July/August 2010.\*
- 2 New York Times' Thomas Friedman recently devoted a column to sounding the alarm bell about Turkey's shifting alliances under Erdoğan and the consequences for U.S.-Turkey relations. See "Letter from Istanbul," *New York Times*, June 15, 2010.\*
- 3 The perception of Turkey's strategic drift away from the alliance is summarized in Sally McNamara, Ariel Cohen, and James Phillips, "Countering Turkey's Strategic Drift" (*Heritage Foundation, Backgrounder #2442*, July 26, 2010).\*
- 4 For more on the relationship between the AKP and the U.S., see Joshua W. Walker, "Re-examining the U.S.-Turkish Alliance," *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2007–8, pp. 93–109.\*
- 5 See Economist special section on Turkish nationalism "Waving Atatürk's Flag" May 2007.\*
- 6 For more on the U.S.'s reaction, see Joshua W. Walker. "The Challenge for Turkey's True Friends: The AK Party Closure Case and the West," *Insight*, April–June 2008 (vol. 10, no. 2), pp. 117–24.
- 7 For the full text of the speech delivered April 6, 2009, see [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-turkish-parliament](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-turkish-parliament).\*
- 8 For a transcript, see [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/joint-press-availability-with-president-obama-and-president-gul-turkey](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/joint-press-availability-with-president-obama-and-president-gul-turkey).\*
- 9 For a transcript of remarks by both President Obama and Prime Minister Erdoğan, see [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-Erdoğan-turkey-after-meeting](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-Erdoğan-turkey-after-meeting).\*
- 10 See Owen Matthews, "Triumph of the Turks," *Newsweek*, November 28, 2009.\*
- 11 The Subcommittee passed the resolution 23 to 22, but never made the full House where proponents are now once again seeking recognition. Available at: <http://bradsherman.house.gov/2010/03/co-sponsored-by-sherman-armenian-genocide-resolution-passes-committee-by-1-vote.shtml>.\*
- 12 Available at: [www.gop.gov/press-release/10/06/09/pence-turkey-needs-to](http://www.gop.gov/press-release/10/06/09/pence-turkey-needs-to).\*
- 13 Available at: [www.ackerman.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=186&parentid=4&sectiontree=4,186&itemid=1029](http://www.ackerman.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=186&parentid=4&sectiontree=4,186&itemid=1029).\*
- 14 "Zero problems" is a principle articulated by Foreign Minister Davutoğlu as being a core value of seeking no problems with any of Turkey's neighbors. See Ahmet Evin et al., "Getting to Zero: Turkey, Its Neighbors, and the West" (Washington, DC: Transatlantic Academy, 2010), pp. 7, 12, and elsewhere.\*
- 15 For more on this, see the related piece by Joshua W. Walker, "What's the Matter with Turkey?" *Foreign Policy*, October 24, 2010

16 For one insider account as reported in *Foreign Policy* magazine, see Joshua Keating, "Turkey: Obama Wanted Us to Make a Deal with Iran," *Foreign Policy*, May 19, 2010.\*

17 The final history of the "Tehran Agreement" has yet to be written, but Brazil leaked a letter purportedly sent by President Obama and the Turks have vigorously defended their position with no official answer from Washington to date. For more see: "Brazil reveals Obama letter in spat over Iran nuclear deal," *Today's Zaman*, May 29, 2010.\*

18 Joe Parkinson, "Turkey Aims to Triple Iran Trade, Despite International Sanctions," *Wall Street Journal*, September 17, 2010.\*

19 Turkey and Iran have historically had tense relations, and privately many Turkish diplomats voice concern about how the prime minister's support for the Iranian regime may be counterproductive vis-à-vis their efforts to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. Author interview with senior officials in Istanbul and Ankara, May 15–19, 2010.

20 The most recent Transatlantic Trends survey, conducted by the German Marshall Fund, found that Turkey is most out of step with the West with respect to the issue of Iran's nuclear weapons program. One in four Turks were willing to accept Iran's acquiring nuclear weapons, while only 6 percent of EU respondents and 4 percent in the United States were willing to do so. See *Transatlantic Trends, "Key Findings 2010,"* p. 24.\*

21 While the initiative began with great optimism, it has run into a series of domestic challenges from Turkey's nationalists yet continues. See Nicholas Birches, "Turkey: Kurdish Peace Initiative Builds Momentum," *Eurasia Group*, October 28, 2009.\*

22 The HLSCC is a mechanism to coordinate cooperation on culture, economics, energy, transport, tourism, education, science, customs, defense, water, and the environment presided over by the heads of state and administered by reciprocal and regular ministerial meetings.

23 For more on the Middle East Union see: "Turkey, Arab neighbors gear up for Mideast free trade zone," *Today's Zaman*, September 27, 2010.\*

24 For the most recent troop increases, see "Turkey Extends ISAF Role in Afghanistan," *WorldBulletin.net*, October 1, 2010.\*

25 Afghanistan has been one of the largest recipients of Turkish developmental aid and assistance—from TIKA, Turkey's equivalent of America's USAID. See [www.tika.gov.tr/TR/Icerik.ASP?ID=31](http://www.tika.gov.tr/TR/Icerik.ASP?ID=31).\*

26 See Henri Barkey, "On the Issues: Turkey and Its Relations with Iraq" (United States Institute of Peace, May 27, 2010).\*

\* Weblinks are available in the online version found at [www.brandeis.edu/crown](http://www.brandeis.edu/crown)



Brandeis University Crown Center  
for Middle East Studies

Mailstop 010  
Waltham, Massachusetts  
02454-9110

781-736-5320  
781-736-5324 Fax  
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