



**WISE MEN BOARD
REPORT**

TURKEY-ARMENIA RELATIONS



**WISE MEN CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

**Prepared by:
Assist. Prof. Fatih ÖZBAY**

**Translated by:
Hacer ŞARTEPE**

**REPORT NO: 25
İSTANBUL
2011**

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FOREWORD

Making predictions for the future by closely following developments at home and abroad, conducting scientific research on bilateral and multilateral relations and the security strategies of Turkey, as well as on domestic problems in political, economic, technological, environmental and socio-cultural areas, providing also decision-makers with practical recommendations, policy options, and proposals in line with the national interests are all included in the foundation purposes of Wise Man Center for Strategic Studies (BILGESAM).

BILGESAM, with regard to resolutions taken in Wise Men Board's first meeting, is preparing reports to fulfill the purposes quoted above. This report under the name of "Turkey-Armenia Relations" was prepared by Assist. Prof. Fatih Özbay, Director of the Institute for Caucasus Studies at BILGESAM, and it was negotiated during the 9th Wise Men Board Meeting held on December 17th 2010. The Wise Men, making some additions and revisions, decided upon the publication of this study as part of the reports of the Wise Men Board. The report, in light of the evaluations made by the Wise Men, was reviewed by Bilgehan Emeklier, Security Research specialist at BILGESAM, and the required amendments and editing were applied on the report. It was translated from Turkish to English by Hacer Şartepe and it is available on the website <http://www.bilgesam.org/tr>

I hope this report will positively contribute to the process of Turkey-Armenia relations. I would like to extend my thanks to Salim Dervişoğlu, Retired Admiral and the President of Wise Men Board who led this study with the support of other board members. I also would like to thank Assist. Prof. Fatih Özbay, who prepared the report, Bilgehan Emeklier, who made the required changes and revisions in its Turkish version in compliance with the Wise Men Board, Hacer Şartepe, who translated the report from Turkish to English and lastly Eren Okur, who prepared the report for publication.

Assoc. Prof. Atilla SANDIKLI
President of BILGESAM

TURKEY-ARMENIA RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Turkey is situated at the crossroads of the regions which are of utmost importance and which pose many problems at the same time. Turkey, as a requirement of continuity in its foreign policy, tries to adopt a multi-dimensional and active approach. Doctrine and discourse-wise, fundamentals of this multi-dimensional and dynamic foreign policy lies under the principle of Atatürk, "Peace at home, peace in the world." One can see the most concrete implications of Turkey's multi-dimensional and proactive foreign policy in the Sa'dabat Pact and Balkan Pact, which had been established during the budding years of the Republic of Turkey. Turkey's foreign policy approach aims at the formation of domestic, regional and global peace, and stability. As the continuation of this foreign policy approach, Turkey, by virtue of its zero problems with neighbors policy, tries to solve its problems through dialogue and plays an active role in the areas with regional conflicts. Turkey also takes steps that will boost economic and cultural rapport among the countries in the region.

Turkey has been able to make use of the proper conditions arising from the dynamic structure of the new international system after the Cold War Period. Within this scope, Turkey has been able to put into practice its approach of proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy over certain subgeographic systems, namely the geopolitics of the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and other important parts of the world. In other words, the

dynamic structure of the international system, which has undergone a huge change-transformation after the Cold War Period, has also reflected upon the sub-systems. Turkey, as a result of this dynamism, has been able to realize its foreign policy parameters especially in its region due to its unique geopolitical location.

As the concrete examples of Turkey's proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy approach, the following can be shown: the creation of a triple mechanism –Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey- which had been formed at a time when there was no hope of settlement between Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina after the bloody war at the beginning of the 1990s; Turkey's active role in the negotiation process between Syria-Israel and Israel-Palestine, which was halted upon Israel opting for conflict in lieu of peace in the Middle East; putting the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Pact (once previously proposed by Ankara) back on the agenda following the Russian-Georgian War in August 2008; Turkey's efforts with Brazil to solve the problem of the Iranian nuclear dossier through diplomacy and not through conflict; its attempts at reciprocal abolition of visa requirements among Russia, Syria and Greece; first steps taken to establish a free trade zone between Syria, Jordan and Lebanon; Turkey's course towards the normalization process of Turkey-Armenia relations and other similar initiatives.

Among all these regions, the Caucasus somehow plays the role of a bridge between the Middle East, the Balkans and Central Asia. Thanks to this and its proximity to world energy basins which are of topmost importance, the Caucasus lies at a place of strategically utmost significance. Moreover, the Caucasus, throughout history, has been the area where big powers have struggled for influence and has served as the crossroads for old transportation-trade routes. Therefore, the Caucasus has maintained its geopolitical, geoeconomic and geostrategic significance up until now. In today's world, the Caucasus, after the Middle East, is the closest region to the Caspian Sea basin, which teems with the world's richest energy sources and making it highly valued globally. The world has also focused on this region because the region stands at the transit point of international networks of energy pipelines which transport oil and natural gas of the Caspian Sea and the Central Asia to the world markets. Moreover, interest in the region additionally arises due to the international highway and railway networks between Asia and Europe that pass through this region.

Apart from its rich natural resources, geopolitical position and geostrategic importance, the Caucasus has been one of the most urgent items on the international relations agenda as a result of internal problems deriving from its multilingual, multiethnic and multicultural structure. Problems which originate from the complicated structure of the Caucasus are either suspended or can not be solved. These problems result in conflicts among ethnicities and countries and also lead to socio-economic problems and regional instability. Under such a negative atmosphere, regional instability directly influences the Caucasus countries and

the countries that have historical, cultural, political and economic ties with this region. This also establishes the ground for the third powers to intervene and render the problems, which are already difficult to solve, much more complicated and insoluble.

Given all these factors, it is of crucial importance for Turkey, which is the neighbor of the Caucasus and has historical, cultural, political and economic ties with the region, attaches special emphasis to the countries and its foreign policy towards the region. Turkey, thanks to its geographical position, economic potential, and cultural and political structure, is a leading country in the Caucasus region. With its secular and democratic system, its long history with the region, cultural knowledge and with its Western and modern values and sound economy, Turkey poses as an important model for the Caucasian countries. Geographically, for the Caucasian countries, Turkey is the door for the West and Western values. Likewise, the Caucasus stands as the opening door of Turkey to Central Asia and to the Far East.

Turkey's above-mentioned constructive policies towards the maintenance of peace in the Caucasus region have proven helpful in all the Caucasian countries except for Armenia. Turkey-Armenia relations are, in general, a natural part of Turkey's policy towards the Caucasus. In no way can Armenia, a close neighbor of Turkey and an important player of the southern Caucasus, be excluded from this constructive policy of Turkey. Under the scene in which Turkey-Armenia relations come to a deadlock without any progress or in which its deterioration dominates, not only Turkey's regional foreign policy but also its global foreign policy is negatively affected and this calls into question the plausibility of Ankara's policy which aims at the establishment of a peace zone around itself.

PROCESS

Even before Armenia declared its independence, Turkey, by sending Volkan Vural –Turkey’s ambassador to Moscow - to Armenia in 1991 with the purpose of negotiating the ways for the development of bilateral relations, showed its will to establish good relations with Yerevan. This visit had been the first visit paid by Turkish senior officials to Armenia as well. Besides, Turkey had been among the first countries to unconditionally recognize the independence of Armenia. Armenia was also invited to Black Sea Economic Cooperation by Turkey on June 25, 1992 as a charter member, even though it does not have a coast along the Black Sea.

Turkey did officially recognize Armenia on December 16, 1991 but did not yet establish diplomatic ties with the new country. However, it allowed Western humanitarian aid relief pass through its’ territory to reach Armenia. Turkey itself also sent humanitarian relief to Armenia, which was in economic trouble after its independence. With this attitude, among other factors, Turkey intended to improve its relations with Armenia and to establish direct ties with Central Asia. Among these was also Turkey’s objective to eliminate the stumbling blocks in the international arena proposed by Armenian diaspora. Moreover, Turkey, by virtue of creating connections with Armenia, wanted Yerevan not to be affected by Russia and wanted to play a much more active role for the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem.

For Armenia, the most reasonable way to establish direct ties with the Western world and to enter into the economic development process was to develop relations with Turkey. It is for this reason that (the first President of Armenia) Levon Ter-Petrossian opted for normalizing Armenia’s relations with Turkey in the first years of his administration. Nevertheless, Turkey-Armenia relations were not able to enter into the normalization process since the establishment of the initial contact between the two countries because of the effects of Armenian nationalists who applied pressure on Yerevan’s administration. In the 11th Article of the Armenia’s Declaration of Independence, which was accepted on the August 23rd 1991, there reads that Armenia would support all the efforts for the recognition of genocide in the international arena. This clause did not appear in 1995 Armenian Constitution. Yet, in the prologue of the constitution, it was written: “being aware of the national desires that are written in Armenia’s Declaration of Independence...” and Turkey interpreted it as the probability of arising demands for land and compensation in Turkish territory in the long run. It was stated in the 2nd section of the 13th Article of the Armenia’s Constitution that Mount Ararat, presently situated within Turkish borders, is declared as the state emblem of Armenia. A more important step came from the Armenian Parliament in April 1991. It declared that it did not recognize the 1921 Treaty of Kars, which is a multilateral agreement

that regulates the Turkey-Armenia frontier. All these factors, by some way or another, have negative impacts on the bilateral relations.

Turkey responded to these developments with a resolution taken in the spring of 1992, which states that unless Armenia declares that it recognizes the frontier between the two countries, Turkey will not establish diplomatic relations. With Armenia acquiring an advantageous position as a result of the Armenian-Azerbaijani war and as a result of the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh in 1993, relations between Turkey and Armenia came to total deadlock. Turkey started to impose an embargo on Armenia after the invasion of Azerbaijani lands by Armenian troops, in which 20% was now under Armenian control. Turkey soon closed its land and air frontiers to Armenia as a result. Armenia-Azerbaijan conflicts got increasingly tense and resulted in the Hocali Massacre in 1992. Then, Turkey completely closed its Armenian frontier in April 1993. Due to these conflicts, 30 thousand people died, most of whom being Azerbaijanis and almost 1 million Azerbaijanis had to migrate to other places.

In spite of all, there had been some progress between the bilateral relations. In 1995, the air corridor between Istanbul and Yerevan was reopened to transportation by Turkey. There had been facilitations over visa requirements and charter airplane flights were allowed on certain days. Likewise, as an attempt of goodwill, Armenian works of art and culture in various parts of Turkey were restored. However, with Robert Koçaryan coming to rule in 1998, the issue of recognizing genocide in international arena became one of the priorities of Armenian foreign policy. In turn, this again resulted in increased tension in relations.

In 2000s, relations between Turkey and Armenia were restricted within the borders of status quo due to interventions stemming from the Armenian diaspora, nationalists of both sides, third parties and additional public pressure. This very status quo was reinforced by Armenia's stipulation that Ankara should officially recognize the genocide allegations and by Turkey's condition that Armenia should cease the invasion of the Nagorno-Karabakh so that both sides could maintain bilateral relations. Thus, this had negative implications both on Turkey and Armenia. In the end, Armenia's economy which was stricken by embargos from Azerbaijan in the east and that of Turkey from the west increasingly deteriorated. Furthermore, Armenia found itself increasingly alienated, as it was continuously excluded from transportation and energy transmission line projects, which were planned and implemented in the Caucasian region. The acceptance of genocide allegations by the parliaments of some countries (as a consequence of the efforts of the Armenian diaspora) left Turkey in dire straits in the international arena.

As for today, the implications of forming a peace zone around itself and adopting the policy of zero problems with its neighbors, which have been the item on the agenda by Turkey,

have reflected upon Turkey-Armenia relations as well. Foreign ministers and officials of both sides have initiated a dialogue process, which was once maintained behind closed doors, with the purpose of openly putting into question the elements that hamper the normalization of the bilateral developments. It was the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008 that has mostly accelerated the negotiations between the two countries. After the war, when Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform once again came to the forefront, Turkey explained that it wanted Armenia to be included in this platform. Upon this explanation, it became a clear sign that Ankara did not want to exclude Yerevan in the region. Negotiations, once held behind closed doors and away from the attention of public opinion, came to light with the invitation sent to Turkey's President Abdullah Gül by the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, to attend the Armenia-Turkey football match on the September 6th 2008. Upon this invitation, Abdullah Gül went to Yerevan to watch the match between these national teams. Later, President Sargsyan upon the invitation of the President Gül, came to Turkey to watch a followup match between the two national teams on October 14 2009.

While there were many hot debates on whether the "football diplomacy" initiated by these visits would prove useful or not, there was explained a road map on the relations between the two countries. In addition, with the initialization of the "Protocol on the Development of Relations" and the "Protocol on Establishment of Diplomatic Relations," which envisage the normalization between Armenia and Turkey under the surveillance of Switzerland August 31st 2009, relations between the two countries improved.

As clearly indicated in the "Protocol on Establishment of Diplomatic Relations," it was accepted that the frontier between the two was mutually recognized pursuant to the related treaties of international law. In the same protocol, both Turkey and Armenia reiterated their commitments that they would not pursue any policy which would not comply with the understanding of the good neighborhood relations. Likewise, with the "Protocol on the Development of Relations," both sides reiterated their commitments that they would solve regional and international disputes and conflicts in congruence with the principles and norms of the international law and by applying to peace. Additionally, both sides agreed upon the implementation of a dialogue process which would encompass impartial scientific investigation of historical sources and records with the purpose of establishing trust between the peoples of both countries and with the intention of designating the problems and proposing suggestions in relation thereof.

Protocols were signed by the foreign ministers of Turkey and Armenia on September 10th 2009 in a ceremony held in Zurich, Switzerland. The reciprocal objections of ministers to their speech texts during the ceremony somehow gave the signal of a challenging diplomatic process. However delayed the protocols became, they were ultimately signed. These protocols, after this step, were supposed to be conveyed to the parliament of the countries

involved and to be enforced after their approval. Armenian law first required the transfer of the protocols to the Armenian Constitutional Court to audit the compliance of the protocols with the constitution. On January 12th 2010, the Armenian Constitutional Court declared its resolution in relation to the protocols. The resolution confirmed the compliance of the protocols with the Armenian Constitution, yet the justified resolution said that some articles could not be in contradiction with the Armenian Constitution and the 1990 Declaration of Independence referred by the constitution. With this resolution, Armenia somehow declared that it did not agree with the stipulation of Turkey on the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh for opening the frontiers and that it did not recognize the joint frontiers. Armenia announced that “genocide” had actually happened and this fact was unquestionable and that the establishment of Joint History Commission (which was implied by the protocols) was not plausible.

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted to this resolution with this explanation: “There have been designated prerequisites and restrictive provisions that do not comply with the content and the nature of the protocols. This can not be accepted by us.” After this resolution of the Armenian Constitutional Court, the normalization process for Turkey-Armenia relations (which commenced with diplomatic relations behind closed doors, accelerated with football diplomacy and was sustained thanks to the road map that showed bigger progress as a result of protocols) was ultimately blocked. For now, aforementioned protocols have been suspended within the parliaments of both countries and it is not yet clear when they will be reopened to discussion.

EVALUATION

The protocols aimed at forming diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia and opening of the common frontier. For Azerbaijan, who has one fifth of their lands under the occupation of Armenia, an Armenia under embargo would be to its advantage. It would be of utmost advantage for Azerbaijan because it would be the only way of exercising political, economic and psychological power over Yerevan for the retrieval of the invaded lands and for the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Turkey's signing of the protocols caused big concerns among Azerbaijani public opinion. There aroused the concern that the above-mentioned policy applied by Baku for almost 20 years would fail. Therefore, there were many protests and backlashes against Turkey in Azerbaijan. These protests were to such an extent that new discourses appeared hinting that indignation meetings would be held by Azerbaijan and policies for closer relations with Russia would be developed, thereby increasing the price of the natural gas sold to Turkey.

Thus, Azerbaijan perceived the solution for the issues of invasion and Nagorno-Karabakh as not something gradual but as something that would be attained at once as a result of an explicit military or political defeat of Armenia. In effect, it was one of the most important reasons why Turkey intensely focused on seeking ways for an immediate solution. Upon escalating reactions from Azerbaijan, senior committees from Turkey paid visits to Baku and suggested that they would not open the frontier and establish diplomatic relations before the invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh came to an end. Nowadays, a cautious atmosphere exists regarding the relations between Ankara and Baku. All of these developments have, despite the slogans of friendship, pinpointed the dire need of political dialogue within Turkey-Azerbaijan relations.

In Armenia, protocols also resulted in quiet serious debates. The Armenian diaspora, the opposition, nationalist groups and media groups that have ties with these groups seriously criticized the protocols. Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan found himself among the protests and harassment run by Armenian diaspora in his visits abroad. Upon such reactions, many declarations came which told the diaspora and internal public opinion that the protocols signed would not lead to the abandonment of either the issue of genocide or Nagorno-Karabakh. As a result of Azerbaijan's reactions Turkish officials set a precondition within the protocols for Armenia. This precondition guaranteed that frontiers would not be opened unless the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is settled. The approval process of the protocols was suspended in this manner. Accordingly, Armenia stated that it could sign the protocols, yet that could only be realized after the Turkey's approval of the protocols.

In Turkey, upon signing the protocols, both the government and Foreign Ministry were quite harshly criticized by the opposition. Disagreements on this issue among the media,

academicians, politicians and the public indicated how confused people were in Turkey as well. Criticisms from this direction came to a deadlock on these issues:

- the fact that the protocols were not explicitly written,
- despite the lack of urgent need, Turkey's overwillingness to improve relations with Armenia at the expense of Armenian pressure on Turkey,
- not explicitly talking about the Kars Treaty (which is a multilateral agreement that regulates the frontier between the two countries),
- not including the commitment of the withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh and the places under invasion,
- the possibility of losing Azerbaijan as a result of establishing diplomatic relations and opening the frontier for the sake of being close to Armenia (before even the invasion comes to an end and before the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh is solved),
- the claim that the real purpose of Armenia is the recognition of the so-called genocide and for this purpose, Armenia's not taking serious steps but instead entering into inconclusive negotiations so that it can keep Turkey in political hotwater in the international arena until 2015, the centennial of the so-called genocide.

In conclusion, indefinite suspension of the protocols in the parliaments has not terminated the normalization process, yet it has brought this process to a halt. Turkey's peace diplomacy has commenced behind closed doors, then it has been declared to the world's public opinion via the protocols which has proven Turkey's determination as such. Nevertheless, this peace process seems to have lost its speed for now. The biggest contribution of this policy, which seems to be suspended or presently blocked, has been the fact that it has pulled the attention of the world and especially the attention of the Minsk Group, both of which who have not been able to produce effective solutions to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue and the lands under invasion since 1992. Within this scope, Turkey's willingness and initiatives have played a key role in carrying the issue onto international platform. Likewise, the Minsk Group's active involvements and Russia's efforts to assemble the Armenian and Azerbaijani sides around the same table by applying to various occasions could be evaluated as positive steps to this end.

Turkey and Armenia have different expectations over the same issue and one waits for another to take further step. On the one hand, Armenia waits for the establishment of diplomatic relations and the opening of the frontier without facing any prerequisites. On the other hand, Turkey waits for the withdrawal of Armenia from Azerbaijani lands it invaded and expects Armenia to propose solutions for the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh. The 1993 resolutions (numbered 822, 853, 874 and 884) passed by the United Nations Security Council following Armenia's invasion of Azerbaijani lands, in fact, have strengthened the status of

Turkey. These resolutions read that there should be respect paid to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and that of other states in the region, and they dwell on the unacceptability of acquiring lands by force. Resolutions numbered 853 and 884 denounce the invasion of lands that belong to Azerbaijan while resolutions 822, 853 and 884 demand, in particular, the withdrawal of the occupying forces from the invaded regions.

Protocols between Turkey and Armenia are of utmost importance not only because they concentrate on the relations between the two countries but also because of the fact that it has been a crucial step for the solution of the problems in the Caucasus basin and Black Sea region, which is within the sphere of influence of Ankara. In general, the only obstacle for the maintenance of Turkey's policy of zero problems with its neighbourhood and creating a stability zone (especially for the effective foreign policy in the Caucasus) seems to derive from the relations between Armenia and Turkey. Problems in the Caucasus complicate Turkey's foreign policy initiatives related to economy, politics and energy. Any step Turkey takes towards the solution of its problems with Armenia will strengthen its status as a regional power in the Caucasus.

Each problem Turkey has in countries within the Caucasus region is recorded as a loss in Turkey's policy record towards the Caucasus, providing such countries as Russia with the chance of taking more initiatives in the region and thus being much more effective. As it is well known, Russia is a crucial regional player between northern and southern Caucasus. Hence, any solution proposal which rules out Russia is out of question. Additionally, the security treaty between Russia and Armenia has been recently extended to 25 years and this agreement gave a Russian division the chance of being deployed into the Armenian lands. This, in turn, expands Russia's freedom of movement and accordingly, the contention that problems between Turkey and Armenia can not be solved without Russia becomes much more valid. Nevertheless, apart from taking into account the Russian Federation, the wide-ranging ethnicities such as the Chechen, Circassians, the Abkhaz etc. in the geography of northern Caucasus, which stands as the "soft belly" of Russia and Russia's relations with these ethnicities and the instability in this region should be considered. Thus, wide-ranging sociological structure in the geopolitics of northern Caucasus may have effects on the scope of the problems in southern Caucasus, and in general may render the affairs in the Caucasus into an equation with multiple variables.

In the southern Caucasus, an ossified status quo and its proponents exists, and only if this status quo is removed can there be a real change-transformation in the Caucasus. Azerbaijan's adopted policy of "economic embargo" towards Armenia, with the intention of reclaiming the invaded lands and for the solution of the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh, has not yielded any result for almost the last 20 years. Turkey, by making it obligatory to first solve the problem of the Nagorno-Karabakh so that it can approve the protocols, has somehow

complicated the process itself. Dominant actors of the international system would not let Turkey solve the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh alone, a conflict whose origin dates back many years and to which a special emphasis has to be attached. After all, Turkey does not have the power to settle the problem singlehandedly. Likewise, the approval of the protocols does not imply that such a complicated problem would suddenly be solved.

Similarly, in case the protocols are signed, it would not be realistic to expect Armenia and Armenian diaspora to give up their genocide allegations. This is because the subject has been regarded as the integral part of the Armenian nationalistic identity, especially with the support of the Armenian diaspora. Besides, the diaspora is a driving force for the genocide claims. Thus, Armenians living in Armenia should be considered different from the Armenians within the diaspora. The optimization of the Armenians of the diaspora greatly differ from that of Armenians living in Armenia. For instance, Armenians within the Armenian diaspora maintain their economic and political opportunities by abusing the so-called genocide. It stems from the fact that genocide allegations reinforce the existence and legitimacy of the diaspora. Therefore, normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia could be appreciated by the Armenians in Armenia, yet, their diaspora would not want the advancement of the relations. In brief, the diaspora and Armenians within the borders of Armenia greatly differ from each other in their attitudes. Accordingly, this differentiation should be meticulously taken into account in the upcoming period. From Turkey's point of view, it is not possible and realistic to accept the genocide allegations. Thus, if all the relations were oversimplified by merely being focused on genocide, it would deal a big blow to the negotiations and the relations would deteriorate, let alone progress. Then, Armenia could avoid proposing the placement of genocide allegations on the agenda in its relations with Turkey.

In the early September of this year, in a conflict on the frontier of Azerbaijani lands invaded by Armenia, 3 Armenians and 2 Azerbaijani soldiers were killed. In previous months, there had been frontier violations of a ceasefire and several Armenian and Azerbaijani soldiers lost their lives. Both sides were warned by the co-chairs of the Minsk Group (Russian co-chair Igor Popov, French co-chair Bernard Fassier, and American co-chair Robert Bradtke) and co-chairs wanted the ceasefire violations to stop. Thus, any war between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the Caucasus may not only lead to a confrontation between these two countries but also between Russia and Turkey, possibly triggering a total conflict with encompassing repercussions.

Running the risks of a new war in southern Caucasus and bearing the consequences likely would lead to undesired results. Firstly, Armenia should be forced to withdraw from the Azerbaijani lands that it has invaded in addition to the Nagorno-Karabakh. Next step is to extend the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem over a period of time and to solve it

under the surveillance of the EU and Minsk Group. Giving back the entire or partial control of the invaded lands excluding the Nagorno-Karabakh region to Azerbaijan and also Azerbaijan's whole omission of a military option throughout Azerbaijan may provide the basis for a probable agreement. The legal status of the Nagorno-Karabakh and the return of the "runners" will constitute the basic issues of the negotiations to be later discussed. At this point, for the solution of the problem, the item of topmost importance for Turkey is to try to persuade Azerbaijan that a détente policy, which will provide Armenia with the sense of being safe, instead of a deadlock that has lasted 20 years, would be much more useful and that the process should proceed in this way.

Thanks to the efforts of the Minsk Group and Russia, Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders have convened many times. From time to time, there have been made some claims from Azerbaijan that, if needed, the problem will be solved by war. Yet, it is assumed that the "renewed" Madrid Principles, which have often been expressed by the parties, will form the base for the solution of the problem in the near future. Renewed Madrid Principles are currently negotiated by the parties; both sides look for the ways to be at the most advantageous position with the least concessions. In the upcoming period, there will be a debate held over the Madrid Principles to settle the problem. It is reported that recently Azerbaijan has leaned towards such a solution and likewise, Armenia is getting prepared to withdraw from either the whole or some of the lands it invaded, excluding the Nagorno-Karabakh.

Here, the item of primary importance for Turkey is related to the aftermath of these protocols. There has been a gradual progress in Turkey's relations with Armenia, commencing behind closed doors, accelerating with football diplomacy, the road map and ultimately with the aforementioned protocols. At this point, termination of the protocols either because of genocide allegations or the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh would mean more pressure over Turkey. Armenia reluctantly sitting around the table as the requirement of economic, political and conjunctural situation, under such an atmosphere, would start to start propaganda that Turkey, from the very beginning, was in favor of the deadlock as such. If Armenia withdraws from the all or some part of the lands it invaded or declares that it officially recognizes the frontier, Turkey should put the long-awaited protocols on the parliament's agenda and act accordingly. However, unless Armenia follows such a direction, the Turkish Grand National Assembly, just like the Armenian Constitutional Court did concerning the protocols, may continue to hang onto the protocols. To reach this end, the Turkish Grand National Assembly may take the recommendation which dwells upon the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, recognizing of the frontiers and both parties agreeing not to conduct any hostile campaigns against each other for any reason.

As stated earlier, both Armenia and its diaspora are making preparations for the 2015 centennial commemoration of the so-called genocide. Realization of the efforts exerted for the normalization of the relations between Turkey and Armenia would call into question the basis of this centennial ceremony of the diaspora. It is for this reason that diaspora heavily objects to all the attempts for normalization. Therefore, for the next five years, Turkey should actualize all these efforts and thus prevent the diaspora from putting into practice its plans. The way to reach this purpose is not to terminate this very process, but instead, cautiously and steadily follow this course.

CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES

Within this scope, the dialogue process initiated between Turkey and Armenia should be maintained. Protocols signed between the two countries are of unequalled significance in providing the basis for dialogue and compromise. With the initialization of the protocols, the legal dimension of the process has been completed. From then on, the political process has started and taking confidence building measures for both sides during this process will play a crucial role in this sense. While developing those confidence building measures, some principles need to be taken into account so that the scope of these measures can be drawn. These principles are as follows:

- Starting with the activities of the simplest nature within the scope of the measures to be developed by the both countries,
- Step-by-step confidence building measures,
- Being explicit and sincere,
- Collaborating with independent people and institutions of both sides,
- Taking into consideration the diversity of views,
- Giving priority to common positive values in the history of both sides,
- Envisaging upon certain formats for the activities,
- Inviting participants from the third parties to activities when those activities prove efficient and positive developments are attained,

As for the confidence building measures for Turkey and Armenia, they can be categorized as follows:

Border Crossings under the authority of provinces;

- Allowing the trucks with Armenian license plates to enter into Turkey through Georgia and Iran before the official opening of the frontier,
- Allowing the border crossings during special days or certain events such as festivals and holidays,

- Letting those living in villages adjacent to the frontier regularly cross the frontier,
- Besides, border authorities are always in touch with each other and the maintenance of this poses great importance.

In the Field of Education;

- Awarding scholarships to Armenian students during their education processes at Turkish universities,
- Concluding scientific and cultural agreements aiming at the exchange of academic members and students at the universities of both sides,
- Establishment of the Department of Armenian Language and Literature at Turkish universities (especially at some of the universities in the provinces of the eastern Anatolia) and collaborating with Armenian universities for teaching Armenian,
- Opening joint doctoral programs in compliance with the bilateral agreements between the two countries with the purpose of analyzing Turkish-Armenian problems in detail and training researchers for this end. Maintaining this bilateral training by forming reciprocal juries to monitor dissertations.

In the Field of Communication;

- Organizing discussion programs via television and other media organs with the participation of Turkish and Armenian specialists on multiple subjects,
- Joint proclamations by both sides on certain subjects.

In the field of socio-culture, tourism and within the frame of business ventures;

- Opening of a center in Yerevan by Yunus Emre Foundation¹,
- Conversion of the site of Ani, the medieval Armenian city, into a cultural center,
- Repairing the bridge at Ani by Turkey and Armenia,
- Forming a joint mechanism concerning border crossing,
- Granting the visitors from Armenia with daily permission to reach Turkey,

¹ A foundation named after the great 13th century Turkish poet and mystic.

- Seeking the ways to develop cooperation between the private sector firms and the maintenance of these efforts.

Other Views on Cooperation;

- Conducting research on Aras River and on its neighbourhood,
- Cooperation on humanitarian subjects,
- Initiating scheduled flights to Yerevan by airline companies,
- Seeking the ways for collaboration within the World Trade Organization ,
- Organizing football tournaments with the joint contributions of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia,
- Implementing of process of stamping the entrance seals on Armenian travellers' documents upon entering Turkey similar to the procedure of Azerbaijanis going to Armenia.

Current Cooperation Formats;

- Cooperation on the issue of earthquakes is currently in force,
- Various cooperation models between the two societies through researchers and representatives of think tanks and non-governmental organizations are currently in place. In this sense, non-governmental organizations are of utmost importance for the development of bilateral relations. Likewise, contacts between ambassadors of both sides are maintained. What's more, in the academic field, meetings and contacts proceed among universities and rectors. As for the cultural field, there are some common cultural activities such as the joint cinema platforms and mixed orchestras,
- Broadening the range of such joint activities and rendering them more visible through appropriate communication policies will be of great importance.

Issues to be Addressed of Official Characteristics;

- Entrance of Armenian trucks into Turkey,
- Entrance of Armenian products into Turkey,

- Seeking the chances for money transfer between the two countries,
- Initiation of contacts among the members of the respective parliaments;
- Experience sharing on the issues related to the EU.

CONCLUSION

During the application of these confidence building measures between Armenia and Turkey, topmost significance should be attached to the coordinated behavior of the two countries. In other words, dynamism and impetus deriving from the protocols for the progress of the two, should be sustained by reciprocal and synchronous steps.

Besides, confidence building measures in favor of Armenia should be reinforced by the steps to be taken in favor of Azerbaijan. Turkey, in its relations with Armenia, has to take into account Azerbaijan as well. Problems between Turkey and Armenia can not be solved with the understanding of “contrary to Azerbaijan.” Given both cultural and historical ties along with international lines of energy and communications, Azerbaijan is, without a doubt, of utmost priority in the Caucasus.

In addition to this, by adopting the zero problem policy with its neighbours, Turkey wishes to enhance its diplomatic power and its room for manoeuvre by forming a security and peace zone in its neighbourhood. Taken into account all of these factors, Turkey does not have the option to choose either Azerbaijan or Armenia. But instead, it is obligated by its own interests to be close with both Azerbaijan and Armenia. If all attempts for getting closer to Armenia come to an end just because of the objections of Azerbaijan, it would be a drastic error on Turkey’s part. Withdrawal of Armenia from the lands it invaded, establishment of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia and opening of the frontier will lead to a synchronized progress in the relations between Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Such a synchronized progress in Turkey-Armenia and Azerbaijan-Armenia relations will considerably decrease the potential of conflict in the Caucasus both in the short and long run.

Assist. Prof. Fatih ÖZBAY

Fatih Özbay was born in 1972. He graduated from the Public Administration of the School of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Hacettepe University in 1994.

He took his master degree at Nizhny Novgorod State University from the Faculty of International Relations, the Department of History in 1999. The topic of his thesis was the “Actual Problems of Turkey-Russia Relations in the 20th century.” He completed his doctoral degree in 2005 on the “Actual Problems of Turkey-Russia Relations in 1990s” at the same university.

He worked as the academic member at Nizhny Novgorod State Linguistic University between the years 1996-2006. After his doctorate, he also worked as an academic member at Nizhny Novgorod State University, in the Department of Regional Studies, the Faculty of International Relations. During the years 2005-2007, he worked as the representative of Turkish-Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM) in Russia (Moscow).

He was granted with a “Certificate of Appreciation” from the Turkish Ministry of Education represented by the Turkish embassy’s Educational Consultancy in Moscow, as a result of “praiseworthy works at the Turkish Cultural Center of Nizhny Novgorod State Linguistic University and because of his success in representing the best profile of a Turkish educator.” After completing his academic studies in 2007, he left Russia for Leicester, England, where he received his English language training between June 2007 until January 2008.

Moreover, he worked as research coordinator and project manager at the Wise Men Center for Strategic Studies (BILGESAM) between April of 2008 and August of 2009. He currently focuses on Russian studies within the think-tank. He has started to work as Assistant Professor at Istanbul Technical University, within the Faculty of Science and Letters the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences.

He has reports on Turkish-Russian relations including a book published on the topic, in addition to other essays published within domestic and foreign journals.

Fatih Özbay has a good command of Russian and an intermediate knowledge of English.

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