

**UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA**



**Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies**

**MA Dissertation**

*Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of the Masters in “Politics and Economics of Contemporary Eastern and Southeastern Europe”*

*By Mustafa Selcuk*

*“Turkey as mediator between Bosnia-Herzegovina & Serbia during A.K.P. era”*

**Supervisor A: Dr. Nikolaos Raptopoulos**  
**Supervisor B: Dr. Manos Karagiannis**

*Thessaloniki*  
December 2014

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since 2002, with the arrival of the AKP in power, Turkish foreign policy decisions undergone a rapid transformation through new set of foreign policy principles. Ahmet Davutoğlu is perceived as the most influential person on this new foreign policy line who believes that Turkey disposes a “strategic depth”. He tried to put the new foreign policy objectives in practice especially when he became Foreign Minister of Turkey in 2009. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the Balkan foreign policy of the AKP governments and Turkey’s mediation efforts there. We will try also to examine the general approach of the Turkish diplomacy on Balkans and the tools that Turkish government disposes in order to achieve her foreign policy goals. This research work is based on the analysis of AKP government’s new fundamental foreign policy principles and the way that Ankara offer her good services in mediation. More precisely our dissertation focuses on Turkey’s mediation efforts between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia and its results.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. Nikolaos Raptopoulos for his continuous support and guidance in the preparation of this study. Without his invaluable supervision, I would not have been able to finish this thesis.

I would like to thank also my second supervisor Prof. Manos Karagiannis

I would like to thank my colleague Ms Roxana Adrei, too, for her continuous encouragements to finalise this thesis.

## List of Abbreviations

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EC	European Community, 1967-1993
EU	European Union, since 1993
EUPM	European Union Police Mission
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
SEEC	Southeast European Cooperation Process
SETA	The Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research
SFOR	The Stabilization Force
TIKA	Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency
UNPROFOR	United Nation Protection Forces

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## **I. Introduction**

Turkey's foreign policy is usually described as having features and principles that remain unchanged in the time. These foreign policy principles were considered to be largely based on the late 19th century Ottoman heritage, such as great traumas caused by the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and the need to fight for territorial integrity and legitimization of the newly founded Republic.<sup>1</sup> During the most part of the 20th century Turkey's relations with the countries in the Balkans seemed to follow the general pattern of the Turkish foreign policy and were dominated by these traditional principles. After the establishment of the Republic, Turkey's policy towards the Balkan region was in line with preserving the status quo and avoiding escalation of any possible conflicts, which could lead to the change of regional borders and would endanger the hard won sovereignty of the Turkish Republic. For Turkey wars in the Balkans in the 1990s were of major security concern and Turkey actively reacted to the crisis, especially to the war in Bosnia and towards solving Bosnian question. But by the end of the '90s its focus changed and Turkey was again less visible in the region.

The aforementioned "inactivity" started changing after November elections in 2002 and rising to power of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi - A.K.P.). After AKP formed its first government, Turkish foreign policy was presented with a new vision and gained new momentum. The main intellectual architect of what was named Turkey's new foreign policy was considered to be Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, who after AKP formed the government in 2002 became chief foreign policy advisor of the Turkish Prime Minister and from 2009 onwards Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs. In August 2014, davutoglu became Prime Minister of Turkey. According to Davutoğlu, Turkey has the unique character as a country which has simultaneously nurtured long standing partnerships with the West while sharing common civilizational and cultural affinity with many other parts of the world. With this background, Turkey's mediation role blends the ability for empathy with the conflicting sides and an ethical stance in dealings with the parties of a conflict. This dissertation examines, whether Turkey succeeded as a mediator between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2000s? As we will see in the following pages a new area of activism in Turkish foreign policy is opening. This becomes more evident in Turkey's efforts to rise as a mediator in regional and international crises zones. It contextualizes Turkey's reliance on a multitude of actors to support its mediation initiatives, notably its vibrant civil society and dynamic state mechanisms. In the second chapter are examined the Turkish diplomacy on Balkans and Turkey's mediation initiatives between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey is considered as an important mediator between these countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Hale, William, Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000, Armenian Research Center collection, Psychology Press, 2000, pp. 373-375.

It outlines the broad frameworks and characteristics of Turkey's approach to mediation, as laid out by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu. As case study we will focus on the mediation efforts between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia.

## **Research question and Methodology**

The concept of the research is the role of the regional power on the mediation as we will study in more detail below. This thesis is based on historical study method and focuses on a case study in order to illustrate the new set of the Turkish foreign policy principles. It also emphasizes events that brought important changes to Turkey's foreign policy behavior, such as Balkan foreign policy and mediation efforts of Ankara. Having observed Turkey's diplomatic activities towards Bosnia-Herzegovina, we searched sources and collected available data in order to study our case study. These will serve as a way to interpret the relations/activities between states and lead us to valuable conclusions about our research question. A historical approach of international affairs is necessary in order to verify the mediation efforts between Ankara and Sarajevo and Belgrade. The thesis seeks to analyze the influence of new fundamental foreign policy principles and Turkey's mediation efforts under AKP administration between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia since 2002.

The research technique of this dissertation mainly relies on sources such as journal articles, newspaper articles, on-line sources, books and research center reports which are related with the Turkish foreign policy in general and in the Balkans. Especially official documents and official web-sites were preferred as sources.

## **Thesis Outline**

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter introduces the lecture to the main issue. It contains the necessary literature review on the Turkish foreign policy during AKP government, its foreign policy orientation, the new fundamental foreign policy principles and leader's factor on Turkish foreign policy. Chapter two briefly examines the aim and the importance of the mediation. Also examines the tools of Turkish diplomacy. Chapter three analyzes Turkey as mediator between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, and general mediation efforts of Turkey between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Moreover focuses on the evaluation of prospective success and failure of general Turkish foreign policy and mediation efforts. It helps to understand the Turkey's foreign policy better. This study benefits to researchers who are interested in Turkey's Balkan policy and also helps them to understand the relationships between Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Turkey better.

# Chapter 1

## 1. Turkish Foreign Policy Making and Balkans

### 1.1. Turkish Foreign Policy orientation, doctrine and decision making

One of the most distinguishing aspect of current Turkish foreign policy is how different it is from the Foreign Policy that Turkish governments followed 15 years ago. A prominent scholar of Turkish foreign policy Ziya Önis refers to the Turkey of the 1990s as a “coercive regional” power.<sup>2</sup> Turkey during that period was characterised by a readiness to employ force, using the threat of force and other confrontational tools of foreign policy. Foreign policy making in general remained restricted to a narrow elite accustomed viewing the surrounding world from the perspective of “national security” considerations.<sup>3</sup> Against this background, according to American military analyst Jed Snyder the potential of Turkey actually becoming a security risk in the middle-east.<sup>4</sup> All countries are interdependent from each other in the region and every country wants to carry out policy on their own interests. If there are any conflicts with some countries, than all of the countries might be a security risk, therefore one notable issue is the security problem in the region.

There are certain patterns in Turkey’s foreign policy behavior that could be observed, which seem to have structural basis and make long lasting principles of the Turkish foreign policy. Mustafa Aydın in his analysis of the factors that shape Turkish foreign policy suggests that there are certain structural and conjunctural variables that influence the foreign policy formulation of any country including Turkey.<sup>5</sup> The structural variables he describes as continuous and static, not directly influenced by the daily happenings of foreign politics. Aydın consider geographical position, historical experiences, cultural background together with the national stereotypes and images of other nations, another variables are dynamic and subject to change under interrelated developments in domestic politics and international relations.

Traditional works on Turkish foreign policy emphasize the Western-orientation and *Realpolitik* inclination of Turkey’s decision makers, which has led to a relatively consistent security culture in Turkey.<sup>6</sup> Murison notes “Turkey’s inclusion into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952 solidified the country’s role as a bulwark against communist expansion in the Middle East and

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<sup>2</sup> Önis, Ziya, ‘Turkey’s Role in the Greater middle East after September 11: The importance of the EU Dimension’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, vol. 2, no.4, 2003, pp. 5-6

<sup>3</sup> Önis, Ziya, op.cit. pp. 6

<sup>4</sup> U.S Department of Homeland security, “Deterrence and the United States Coast Guard: Enhancing Current Practice with Performance Measures”, Report No. CG-D-03-13, March 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Aydın, Mustafa, ‘Determinants of Turkish foreign policy: historical framework and traditional inputs’, Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 35, no. 4, 2006, pp. 152-186.

<sup>6</sup> Murinson, Alexandre Turkish Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century, Mideast security and policy studies, no.97, 2012, pp. 2-3.

established the main tenets of Turkish foreign policy for the Cold War years.”<sup>7</sup> Yet, despite the best attempts of Turkey’s early modernizers to detach the country from its pre-Republican imperial history, the ideas and memories of the Ottoman Empire era continued to exert an enduring influence upon the Turkish electorate. The leaders ranged from former Prime Ministers Turgut Özal (1983-1989) and Necmettin Erbakan (1996-1997) to current Prime Minister Erdoğan. Ottoman sympathy and religious elements are the common features of all these leaders. Most of these leaders have had a positive stance towards the creation of a more religious society. The above mentioned leaders openly criticized the secularist and nationalist policies imposed by the Kemalist regimes. Developments in the domestic political system rarely left unaffected the foreign policy; thus, if in the domestic policy religious elements come to foreground, then a strong religious element may be present in the foreign policy. Thus Turkish foreign policy has changed since the arrival of the pro-muslim political parties in the power.

According to Kirisci “The engagement of Turkey with the European Union and in revenge the principle of conditionality that the EU employs applies to candidate countries are clearly two critical factors that have brought about the emergence of this “new” foreign policy in Turkey.”<sup>8</sup> However, there are also other reasons behind this change in Turkish foreign policy. The legacy of Turgut Özal’s businessmen-like policies, which emphasized the importance of interdependence and economic relations as well as the interests of growing vibrant export-oriented sector in Turkey, can be cited as additional factors. The Turkish military’s steady involvement in UN and NATO peacekeeping operations also contributed to this transformation as well as to the alteration of perceptions of Turkey especially in the Balkans.<sup>9</sup> As Kirisci notes “A case in point is Turkey’s foreign policy posture towards the wars in the former Yugoslavia and the crisis in Kosovo in 1999. In spite of domestic pressures to intervene in the war between the Serbs and the Bosnian Muslims, the Turkish government refrained from adopting or pursuing policies that conflicted with the position of the international community.”<sup>10</sup> Turkey supported Bosnian Muslims and also many Bosnian Muslim people came to Turkey and the Government gave them housing and financial support. Moreover according to the speech of Doğan Güreş who was the chief of staff of the era; Turkey donated weapons to Bosniaks during the battle.<sup>11</sup>

Turkey participated in UNPROFOR and Turkish military unit in Zenica earned itself a very positive reputation among both the Bosnian and the Croatian population.<sup>12</sup> Once the Dayton peace Accords were signed, Turkey maintained its troops and contributed to the efforts to stabilise Bosnia-Herzegovina; similarly, the Turkish government and foreign policy makers worked closely with the international community during the Kosovo crisis and deployed peacekeeping soldiers under NATO.

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<sup>7</sup> Murinson, Alexander, op. cit. 2012, pp. 2-4

<sup>8</sup> Kirisci, Kemal, ‘Turkey’s foreign policy turbulent times’, Chaillot paper, no. 96, 2006, p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> Kirisci, Kemal, op. cit. p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> Kirisci, Kemal, op. cit., 2006, pp. 29-30.

<sup>11</sup> Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Minutes of the General Assembly, 22. Period 1. Legislative Year, 91. Combination Tuesday June 10, 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Kirisci, Kemal, 2006, pp. 33-34.

According to Kirişçi After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Turkey aimed to preserve its relations with her Western allies strong and also develop its relations with other often neighbouring states who were alienated due to the Cold War period circumstances. In addition to this, in post-Cold War period Turkey's primary objective became the full EU membership.<sup>13</sup> After the fall of communism, decision making process has changed because through globalization security based foreign policy orientation was declined and economical and cultural values emerged<sup>14</sup>. The European Union values and norms such as democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, emergence of the economic markets, increasing role of NGOs and media gained importance.

Regarding the case of middle-east when Cold War over Turkey and Israel relationship became closer and both states strengthened their relations diplomatically and militarily through high level visits and bilateral agreements<sup>15</sup>. Particularly in a post-Cold War period of Turkish foreign policy, Turkey has attempted to project an image of a rising global power while entertaining ideas about its place in its wider neighborhood that hark back to its former imperial days<sup>16</sup>. This process of reincorporating past identities and ideas about religion into Turkey and its regional standing has renewed debates about its foreign policy orientation.<sup>17</sup> M.Kara notes, "In post-Cold War period, Turkey had to deal with several problems, such as the 2001 financial crisis which was the result of the failure of the public sector to maintain the austerity targets and the failure to fully implement the free market rationale of globalization so as a result, in spite of militarily active policy due to the other domestic problems Turkey had difficulties to adapt the new international system values."<sup>18</sup> All these problems were negatively influencing the effectiveness of Turkey's foreign policy.

When the AKP government took the office in November 2002, Turkish economic vulnerability was limiting its options in its foreign policy choices. According to Özdemir Ismail Cem, the foreign minister of two previous governments since 1997 signalled the change in the traditional lines of Turkish Foreign Policy. Özdemir notes "Cem's diplomacy can be traced in the main developments during his foreign ministry and it is impossible to understand today's Turkish foreign policy and the debates around the axis shift without looking at the preceding foreign policy decisions."<sup>19</sup>

What is the Neo-ottomanism? According to H. Yavuz many commentators believe that the change in Turkish foreign policy is related with the embracement of the term neo-Ottomanism.<sup>20</sup> It is still not clear

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<sup>13</sup> Idem.

<sup>14</sup> Kara, Mehtap, "Axis Shift" in Turkish Foreign Policy during AKP Administration: New Fundamental Foreign Policy Principles and Challenges, Master thesis, Gazimağusa, North Cyprus, Eastern Mediterranean University, October 2011, pp.17-22.

<sup>15</sup> Kara, Mehtap, op.cit. pp.46-47.

<sup>16</sup> Murinson, Alexander, Turkish Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century, Mideast security and policy studies, September 2012, no.97, p.3.

<sup>17</sup> Murinson, Alexander, op.cit. pp.2-3.

<sup>18</sup> Kara, Mehtap, op.cit. p.28-36

<sup>19</sup> Özdemir, Çağatay, 'The new Turkish foreign Policy in the 21st century A Neorealist Assessment of the Rationale Behind it', Master Thesis, Edinburg, University of Edinburg, 2012, pp. 13.

<sup>20</sup> Yavuz, Hakan, 'Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo- Ottomanism', Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 2, 2008, pp. 9-41.

what we understand exactly by ‘neo-Ottomanism’. Thus we can ask, is it a new foreign policy model for Turkey? Does it hide secret “imperialist” ambitions on the part of Turkey? Or is it a nostalgia? Neo-Ottomanism is an exercise of understanding “how the Ottomans did it.” In that regard, according to Sözen “neo-Ottomanism adopting similar approaches to the Ottoman Empire might help to maintain domestic stability and solve foreign policy problems.”<sup>21</sup> According to Özcan “Neo-Ottomanism’ cannot be regarded as an alternative foreign policy for Turkey, as it is sometimes argued.”<sup>22</sup> However, it may be used in the sense of a metaphor that indicates Turkey’s interest in regions that were parts of the former Ottoman Empire.<sup>23</sup> The basic underlying implication in this metaphor is that elements of Ottoman civilization had exerted a notable influence on the territory of the Ottoman Empire, including the Middle East and the Balkans. It is clear that the AK Party foreign policy executive attaches substantial importance to Turkey’s Ottoman past, but the term of *neo-Ottomanism*, since it carries a negative and imperialistic connotation, is not able to explain the AK Party’s interest in former Ottoman territories<sup>24</sup>.

The role of Davutoğlu in the making of the Turkish foreign policy is undoubtedly important. One of the most interesting innovations in the style of foreign policy making during the AK Party government is own to Professor Ahmet Davutoğlu’s contribution. He was first advisor of Turkey’s Prime Minister, then he became Foreign Minister, and finally Prime Minister of Turkey. Therefore the Davutoğlu factor is important to understand Turkey’s foreign policy. Professor Davutoğlu and his influential book, ‘The Strategic Depth’ (Stratejik Derinlik), published in 2001, has been the focus of attraction of domestic and foreign observers of Turkish foreign policy who try to understand the new dynamics of Turkey’s foreign policy.

According to Davutoğlu;

*“Today, in the new era marked by the aftermath of September 11th, an accurate redefinition of Turkey’s position is urgently needed. Turkey’s new position has both an ideational and a geographical basis. In terms of geography, Turkey occupies a unique space. As a large country in the midst of Afro-Eurasia’s vast landmass, it may be defined as a central country with multiple regional identities that cannot be reduced to one unified character. Like Russia, Germany, Iran, and Egypt, Turkey cannot be explained geographically or culturally by associating it with one single region. Turkey’s diverse regional composition lends it the capability of maneuvering in*

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<sup>21</sup> Sözen, Ahmet, ‘A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges’, published online, Turkish Studies, Vol.11, 2010, pp.107.

<sup>22</sup> Özcan, Mesut, ‘A.Usul, Understanding the ‘new’ Turkish Foreign Policy: Changes within continuity, Is Turkey departing from the west?’,USAK Yearbook, vol.4, 2011, pp. 167.

<sup>23</sup> Özcan, Mesut, A. Usul, Understanding the ‘new’ Turkish Foreign Policy: Changes within continuity, Is Turkey departing from the west? Usak yearbook, 2011, vol.4, pp. 159-185.

<sup>24</sup> Özcan, Mesut, op.cit. pp. 160-167.

*several regions simultaneously; in this sense, it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs”.*<sup>25</sup>

The above passage is an extract from an interview of A. Davutoglu, on the Turkish foreign policy, delivered in mid 2000s. According to Davutoglu Turkey historically has been one of important centers of attraction due to her geographical location. It was for this reason that when Turkey embarked on a successful nation-building process in the aftermath of the Ottoman Empire.

## **1.2. The place of the Balkans in the Turkish Foreign Policy in 2000s.**

As Bahadır notes AKP’s electoral victory in November 2002 and gradual adaptation of a new approach to foreign relations once again brought foreign policy to the center of public debates<sup>26</sup>. In Turkey’s case, the ideological factors were so much emphasized that we need to delve further into this dimension as well as an outcome of the vision that Cem put forward, the AKP government adopted and interpreted a new foreign policy vision<sup>27</sup>. Therefore, as the Turkish economy gradually became more resilient in the first years of the AKP administration, the previous government’s foreign policy objectives could be advanced. The new government’s main advantage was the fact that it had a majority in the Parliament. Turkish foreign policy is described by Turkish Foreign Ministry in its web page it states that the primary objective of the Turkish foreign policy is to help secure and nurture a peaceful, prosperous, stable and cooperative environment that is conducive to human development at home and its neighborhood<sup>28</sup>. Therefore these objectives are also adopted by AKP administration.

According to Ahmet Davutoğlu,

*“Turkey is currently facing pressure to assume an important regional role, which admittedly has created tensions between its existing strategic alliances and its emerging regional responsibilities. The challenge of managing these relationships was acutely felt in recent regional crises in the Caucasus, the Balkans, and the Middle East. Turkey remains committed to establishing harmony between its current strategic alliances and its neighbors and neighboring regions.”*<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007, Insight Turkey, 2008, Vol.10, No. 1, pp. 79-86.

<sup>26</sup> Kaynak, Bahadır, ‘Dilemmas of Turkish Foreign Policy’, Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika, Vol.8, , 2012, pp. 77-96.

<sup>27</sup> Kaynak, Bahadır, op.cit. pp.77-92.

<sup>28</sup> Turkish Foreign Affairs Ministry, Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy (<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/synopsis-of-the-turkish-foreign-policy.en.mfa>)

<sup>29</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, Stratejik derinlik, Küre Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001, pp.120-125.

In fact that Turkey has a mosaic feature. Davutoğlu notes “There are more Bosnians in Turkey than in Bosnia-Herzegovina, more Albanians than in Kosovo, in addition to considerable other ethnicities from neighboring regions”<sup>30</sup>. Thus, these conflicts and the effect they have on their populations have a direct impact on domestic politics in Turkey.

### 1.3 Davutoğlu’s impact on Turkish Foreign Policy

The theoretical formulation behind new policy of Turkey of engagement with his neighborhood has been laid out by the current Prime Minister Davutoğlu. Davutoğlu is detected as key person in shifting Turkish foreign policy with his new policy targets. Nicholas Danforth explains Davutoğlu’s geographical and historical depth vision as:

*“Davutoğlu argued that Turkey is located at the center of several geo-cultural basins the west (including the United States), the Middle East, the Balkans and Central Asia- and that Turkey should pursue an active policy to take advantage of the opportunities that exist in all of them. Davutoğlu also argued that Turkey’s historic depth enhances its geographic depth (these being the two components of the eponymous strategic depth). According to Davutoğlu, a country acquires strategic depth from having been at the epicenter of [historical] event as Turkey was during the Ottoman Empire. Calling on Turkey to rediscover its historic and geographic identity which its traditional foreign policy neglected -Davutoğlu recommended a balance approach towards, all global and regional actors and strong economic linkage with all regional states.”<sup>31</sup>*

Bülent Aras interprets Davutoğlu’s strategic depth and he claims that “Davutoğlu’s doctrine is based on self confidence, good neighborly relations<sup>32</sup>. Methodologically, the doctrine is novel and visionary as well as integrated and inclusive”<sup>33</sup>. The aim of Turkish foreign policy under AKP administration is based on strengthening existing ties or improvement of relationship with Middle Eastern states such as Iran and Syria and also improvement of existing relationship with Balkan countries. Davutoğlu believes that it is difficult to implement the “zero problems” policy in all regions. The ‘strategic depth’ doctrine calls for an active engagement with all regional systems in Turkey’s neighbourhood. In his book he argues that Turkey needs to rediscover its historic and geographic identity and reassess its own position vis-a-vis

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<sup>30</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, Turkey’s Zero-Problems Foreign Policy, Foreign Policy, May 2010. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/turkeys-zero-problems-foreign-policy/>

<sup>31</sup> Nicholas Danforth, ‘Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Atatürk to AKP’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol.7, No.3, 2011, p. 91.

<sup>32</sup> Aras, Bülent, ‘The Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy’, Insight Turkey, Vol.11, No. 3, , 2009, pp. 1-16.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Turkey’s Foreign Policy in a Changing World’, International Conference, Oxford, South East European Studies at Oxford (SEESOX), European Studies Centre, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford, May 2010. <http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/seesox/workshopreports/ReportfromTFPconf.pdf>

regional and global issues<sup>34</sup>. A. Morinson notes, “In an interview with the Turkish newspaper Daily Vatan, Davutoglu said, ‘2003 was the year of “making up for a loss” in foreign policy’<sup>35</sup>. In the same interview he claimed that ‘2004 will be a year when Turkey will be brought on the international agenda’<sup>36</sup>. This would allow Turkey to lead an assertive foreign policy and form its ‘own’ axis. Davutoglu called for re-engagement with the Middle Eastern region, in particular with Iran, Syria and the Gulf States. A. Morinson notes, “In the Balkan region he stressed the importance of Greece and Bulgaria, while in Caucasus he pointed to robustness of Georgian-Turkish relations.”<sup>37</sup> In view of the transatlantic split in the wake of the second Gulf War, the architect of Erdogan’s foreign policy advised developing a balanced approach towards all global and regional actors. He emphasized the importance of economic interdependency in the globalizing world and the need to build strong economic linkages with all regional states. In the final analysis, he envisioned that Turkey would transform itself into a global actor.<sup>38</sup> The fact is that Turkey has some problems almost with all of the neighboring countries. For instance with Syria and Egypt has problems related with their regime, with Irak and Syria problems related to Kurdish issue and the ISIS.

On the other hand, it had to deal with the regional and domestic challenges, which threatened its national security, territorial integrity and political stability.<sup>39</sup> The two sets of challenges often clashed with each other, and the government had to adopt a fine-tuned, careful policy in order to deal with these subtleties. For instance, the democratic reforms in the EU accession process required a commitment for ‘societal peace’ which meant adopting a different attitude when dealing with Kurdish question. Ç. Özdemir notes “Amongst these two challenges, the weakening of the nationwide ‘Sèvres Phobia’ contributed to the decrease of national security-centred foreign policy making, providing more space for confidence building relations abroad. Since foreign policy makers slightly changed their perception, which was historically structured around the conviction that the external world is constantly conspiring to weaken Turkey, they could undertake more proactive incentives.”<sup>40</sup>

Davutoğlu has some predictions about the future aims of Turkey and he believes that Turkey’s strategic depth will help to achieve these goals, he claimed that AKP administration aims;

*“By 2023 when the country will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the republic, I envision a Turkey which is a full member of the EU after having completed all the necessary requirements, living in full peace with its neighbors, integrated with neighboring basins in economic*

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<sup>34</sup> Murinson, Alexander, The Strategic Depth Doctrine of Turkish Foreign Policy, Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 42, No. 6, 2006, pp. 945-964.

<sup>35</sup> Murinson, Alexander, op. cit. pp. 947-949.

<sup>36</sup> Murinson, Alexander, op. cit., pp. 948-950.

<sup>37</sup> Murinson, Alexander, Turkish Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century, Mideast security and policy studies, 2012, no.97, pp. 10.

<sup>38</sup> Murinson, Alexander, op.cit. pp. 10-16.

<sup>39</sup> Kirisci, Kemal, op.cit. 35-38.

<sup>40</sup> Özdemir, Çağatay, The new Turkish foreign Policy in the 21st century A Neorealist Assessment of the Rationale Behind it, University of Edinburg, 2012, pp.11.

*terms and for a common security vision, an effective player in setting orders in regions where our national interests lie, and active in all global affairs and among the top 10 economies in the world”<sup>41</sup>*

Davutoğlu believes that Turkey’s ‘strategic depth’, which is mainly based on historical experience and geographical position, will make Turkey a global actor by 2023. Turkey’s position will give Turkey all it needs to achieve its national interests. Davutoğlu points out that new foreign policy activism follow new vision which is based on mutual respect, stability, peace and prosperity.<sup>42</sup> This means that Turkey aims to establish its relations through peace and use of “soft power” in order to preserve her interests and the stability in its neighborhoods. An important element of Turkish foreign policy is geography. Turkey’s geographical position determines its foreign and security policies, which became a constant element of the foreign policy culture of the Republic of Turkey. Its geographical location and the fact that it is expending from the Balkans to the Middle East and from the Caucasus to the Persian Gulf, influence the perception that threats are coming from all sides, with the great emphasis on the Turkish Straits as a main security concern and strategic point. One of the principles is to develop relations with the neighboring regions and beyond. So Turkey’s regional influence extends to the Balkans. Turkey played an active role in the Balkans, especially when there were crises in the Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>43</sup> So we cannot think Balkans without Turkey.

In addition, Turkey wants to see the Balkans as an area of peace and security rather than conflicts. The Balkans is a bridge between Turkey and the European Union. Turkey needs to add stability to its foreign policy in this region. Turkey considers the integration of all the countries of the region to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions necessary and continues to support their efforts in this direction. Turkish Foreign Affairs Ministry the Balkans is considered to be of a great importance because of geography, economy and culture. It is special for its historic role in shaping the Turkish nation and because of the human bonds that exist across the region.<sup>44</sup> Turkey’s Balkan policy is shaped by the principles of “regional ownership” and “inclusiveness” and based on the four main axes: high level political dialogue, security for all, utmost economic integration and the preservation of the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious social structures in the region.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Abdullah, bozkurt, Davutoğlu sees Turkey among top 10 world players by 2023 ‘, Today’s Zaman, January 05, 2010, Tuesday.

([http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy\\_davutoglu-sees-turkey-among-top-10-world-players-by-2023\\_197582.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy_davutoglu-sees-turkey-among-top-10-world-players-by-2023_197582.html) )

<sup>42</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, Turkey’s Zero-Problems Foreign Policy, Foreign Policy, May 2010. (<http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/turkeys-zero-problems-foreign-policy/>)

<sup>43</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, op.cit. pp.79.

<sup>44</sup> Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘Relations with the Balkan region’, (<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/reasons-with-the-balkan-region.en.mfa> )

<sup>45</sup> Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘Relations with the Balkan region’.op. cit.

## 1.4. Turkey's new foreign policy

Since the year 2002, Turkey has begun to structure its policies on the basis. Davutoğlu criticized dominant theories on how the international structure will be re-shaped after the collapse of the Cold War order. Davutoğlu argues that the collapse of the Soviet system brought the dissolution of the identities existing within bipolar system but also the end of strategic stability and balance, which characterized bipolar world. Mitrovic notes “Davutoğlu opposed at that time the dominant theory of clash of civilizations presented by Samuel Huntington and the idea that problems of different identities will be a future main incentive for conflicts”.<sup>46</sup> It is true that nowadays we witness this clash. She claims that it is actually a strategic, geopolitical, intra-civilizational and intra-systemic competition over the control of power that is behind emerging clashes. She believes that there are particular determinants in the structure of the international system, like global geopolitical parameters, which present realities for its own. These geopolitical areas are of permanent importance for the power configuration in the international system and are in that sense strategically more sensitive. She emphasized that there are certain corridors in the Balkans, Caucasus and the Middle East which are the basic problematic strategic areas. Davutoğlu further explains that in a period following the end of the Cold War, because of the structural transition from bipolar strategic stability to a multi-polar balance of power, a geopolitical and geo-economic vacuum emerged in these strategic zones and turned these areas into the zones of clashes and power struggle.<sup>47</sup> But besides being a source of instability, Davutoğlu believes that this might also be seen as an opportunity for a country like Turkey, who poses strategic depth in all these three regions, to re-establish its influence in these regions and by that in the global system.

What Davutoğlu presented is a new geographic imagination based on the geopolitical position and the role of historical and cultural heritage which he refers to as geographical and historical depth. Turkey, due to its legacy of the Ottoman Empire, possesses a great geographical depth but in the same time the historical depth. Ottoman experience, but at the same time the wish to departure from the Ottoman legacy, is the most commonly presented as a factor, which had a deep and significant impact on the conceptualization of foreign policy of the new Turkish republic.<sup>48</sup> There are two important legacies coming from the Empire's experience that influenced the behavior of Turkish Republic in international affairs in the years of its founding. According to Aydın “The first one is the experiences of being reduced from a vast empire to a medium nation state and the second one is having to struggle to save the national homeland and its independence.”<sup>49</sup> Davutoğlu's speech at the opening ceremony of the conference “Ottoman legacy and Balkan Muslim Communities today” conducted in Sarajevo in October

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<sup>46</sup> Marija, Mitrovic, ‘Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans: The influence of traditional determinants on Davutoğlu's conception of Turkey - Balkan Relations’, GeT MA Working Paper Series, no.10, pp.47-48, Berlin, 2014. pp. 32-36.

<sup>47</sup> Mitrovic, Marija, op.cit. pp.46.

<sup>48</sup> Mitrovic, Marija, op.cit. pp.47-48.

<sup>49</sup> Aydın, Mustafa, ‘Determinants of Turkish foreign policy: historical framework and traditional inputs’, Middle Eastern Studies, Publisher: Routledge, Vol.2, no. 3, 2003, p.152-186.

2009, is meaningful, and in line with his geopolitical approach Davutoğlu defines the Balkan region in geopolitical, geoeconomic and geocultural terms.<sup>50</sup> In geopolitical terms, the Balkans is a buffer zone. From the standpoint of geoeconomics the region presents a transaction area, from sea to inside, land corridor from East to West. In these speeches Davutoğlu once again brings a positive explanation of the Ottoman history and emphasizes the multicultural structure of the Empire. He believes that the Ottoman experience might be a positive example for the establishment of the inter-religious and inter-ethnic relations in the region.

## **1.5. Conclusions**

Turkish foreign policy is described by Turkish Foreign Ministry the primary objective of the Turkish foreign policy is to help secure and nurture a peaceful, prosperous, stable and cooperative environment that is conducive to human development at home and its neighbourhood. The reality is that Turkey still has some serious problems with its neighbors, therefore the theory of Davutoğlu, which claims “zero problems” with the neighbors, is important but it should have a practical implementation. Davutoğlu and AKP officials have adopted to the large degree *realpolitik* diplomacy as an element of foreign policy culture and their perception of foreign relations. Another important point is that, conservative parties leaders are against the Atatürk philosophy because of the nationalism and instead they defend the “Millet” system of the Ottoman times. Domestic policy always affects foreign policy; thus if domestic policy religious elements come to foreground, then it would be a strong religious element in foreign policy. Thus Turkish foreign policy has changed each time a new political party came to power. Turkish foreign policy in times of conservative parties has followed a strong Ottoman discourse through which Turkey tries to recall historical and cultural ties and creates a sense of togetherness and closeness with the citizens in the Balkans. But their explanation of a common history mainly communicates with the Muslim population in the Balkans. It evokes not so positive sentiments among Christian-Orthodox and other religious groups. Turkey historically has been one of such centers of attraction. It was for this reason that when Turkey embarked on a successful nation-building process in the aftermath of the Ottoman Empire, it gained population dynamism through immigration from neighboring regions Turkey implement new instruments for spreading its influence and that is by referring to common Ottoman history of the Balkans. It started using cultural, ethnic and religious commonalities coming from the Ottoman legacy, therefore close affinity relations among the people of the Balkans, for positioning itself stronger in the Balkan affairs and balancing great power influence in the region. Davutoğlu’s vision of the Turkey-Balkan relations is also formulated on clear geopolitical and strategic calculations, which are the basis of Turkey’s traditional understanding of foreign policy.

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<sup>50</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, Speech at the opening ceremony of the conference “Ottoman legacy and Balkan Muslim Communities today” in Sarajevo, 16th October 2009.

## Chapter 2

### 2. Turkish Diplomacy and Mediation

#### 2.1. The aims of the mediation

Mediation is a powerful mean for the peaceful solution of conflicts. According to S. Huntington, the conflict of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating civilizations. According to him civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and, most important, religion.<sup>51</sup> The people of different civilizations have different perspectives, for instance about citizenship and state, and different religions may influence in a different way peoples mentality. Nevertheless, civilizational and cultural differences do not necessarily mean violence. Over the centuries, however, as S. Huntington states differences among civilizations have generated the most prolonged and the most violent conflicts.<sup>52</sup> World is becoming smaller like a village with the increase of technological developments and interactions between peoples of different civilizations. These growing interactions intensify consciousness and awareness of differences between civilizations and commonalities within civilizations. Between different countries or different parties, hostility may increase, as was the case between various Balkan ethnicities in 1990s, therefore mediation that aim the resolution of the conflict is a very important element.

Bercovitch, Anagnoson and Wille (1991) define mediation as a process of conflict management where disputants seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, state, or organization to settle their conflict or resolve their differences without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of the law<sup>53</sup>. As a form of international conflict management, mediation is likely to occur when a conflict has been going on for some time, the efforts of the individuals or actors involved have reached an impasse, neither actor is prepared to countenance further costs or escalation of the dispute, and both parties welcome some form of mediation and are ready to engage in direct or indirect dialogue.<sup>54</sup> Mediation can bolster the benefit an actor accrues from a conflict or crisis in a number of ways. First, mediators can help each side “get its way” in a negotiation; that is, they can lead one (or many) parties to victory in a conflict.

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<sup>51</sup> Huntington, Samuel, ‘The clash of civilizations?’, *Foreign Affairs*, vol.72, no. 3, Summer 1993, pp. 30-49.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/48950/samuel-p-huntington/the-clash-of-civilizations>

<sup>52</sup> Huntington, Samuel, op. cit.

<sup>53</sup> Beardsley, Kyle, ‘Politics by mean other than war: understanding International Mediation’, Thesis, University of California, San diego, 2006, pp. 291-297, (<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2kt632r1#page-7> ).

<sup>54</sup> Bercovitch, Jacob, ‘Resolving International Conflicts: The Theory and Practice of Mediation’, Publisher Lynne Reinner, Colorado, 1996, pp.11-38.

A disputant may also agree to mediation to foster better relations with that third party for the future.<sup>55</sup> Conversely, a negotiating party may try to protect its reputation and image by using the mediator as the scapegoat for any unpopular concessions made as part of the final agreement.<sup>56</sup> Parties may try to find mediation out of the belief that a mediator will act as a guarantor of an agreement, decreases the chances of future costly conflicts. Actors would aspect any of these effects of mediation as added value to the overall outcome of a conflict.

The literature on mediation has converged on three basic styles that mediators can adopt in their efforts to resolve a conflict: the facilitator, the formulator, and the manipulator.<sup>57</sup> The mediator as facilitator serves as a channel of communication among disputing parties. This type of mediation is also referred to as third-party consultation, good offices, or process facilitation.<sup>58</sup> The mediator as facilitator can organize the logistics of the negotiation process, collect information, set the agenda regarding which issues will be discussed and in what order, and/or deliver messages between parties if face-to-face communication is not possible or desired. The mediator as facilitator makes no substantive contribution to the negotiation process but, rather, is restrained to ensuring continued, and hopefully constructive, discussion and dialogue among disputants. The second role defined by Touval and Zartman (1985) is mediator as formulator. Wilkenfeld notes “Unlike facilitation, formulation involves a substantive contribution to the negotiations including developing and proposing new solutions” to the disputants to assist the disputants when the parties reach an impasse in the negotiation process. However, the mediator as formulator is not empowered to pressure the crisis actors to endorse or advocate any particular outcome a capability associated with manipulation, as described below.”<sup>59</sup> Furthermore manipulative mediators maintain a substantive contribution to negotiations.

Wilkenfeld notes “formulating potential solutions, this mediator uses its position and its leverage “resources of power, influence, and persuasion” to “manipulate the parties into agreement”. The mediator augments the appeal of its solutions by adding and subtracting benefits from the proposed solution. Hopmann (1996) indicates that only a powerful mediator can play this role and notes that mediators can influence the direction of negotiations not only through carrot-and-stick measures but also by manipulating the international environment.”<sup>60</sup>

Mediators may intervene to protect the parties and also mediators promote their own interests. Mediators might possess the qualifications required of neutrality and visibility. Mediators might be external to the dispute or they may come from within the dispute environment. Dryzek notes “Taking

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<sup>55</sup> Bercovitch, Jacop and Langley, “The Nature of the Dispute and the Effectiveness of International Mediation.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 37, 1993, pp. 670-691.

<sup>56</sup> Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, ‘Mediating International Crises’, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 47, No.3, june 2003, pp. 279-301.

<sup>57</sup> Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, *Mediating International Crises*, op. cit, pp. 282-284.

<sup>58</sup> Fisher, R. “Third Party Consultation as a Method of Intergroup Conflict Resolution.”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 27, no. 3, 1983, pp.301-344.

<sup>59</sup> Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, *Mediating International Crises*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 47, No. 3, pp. 279-301.

<sup>60</sup> Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, *Mediating International Crises*, op. cit. pp. 285-289.

all these features into account, we see international mediation as a reactive process of conflict management whereby parties seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, or organization to change their behavior, settle their conflict, or resolve their problem without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law.”<sup>61</sup>

## **2.2. Factors (culture, history, policy, leaders) intervening in the mediation efforts**

Mediation is a key aspect of the new Turkish foreign policy. According to Davutoğlu, Turkey has the unique character as a country which has simultaneously nurtured long standing partnerships with the West while sharing common civilizational and cultural affinity with many other parts of the world. With this background, Turkey’s mediation role blends the ability for empathy with the conflicting sides and an ethical stance in dealing with the parties of a conflict. Turkey has material and discursive capabilities to pursue an effective mediator role in a myriad of crises worldwide. In Davutoğlu’s vision, an ideal mediator brings abilities such as understanding the context and the actors, playing an insider role while being able to preserve its reliability, and controlling the role and involvement of outside actors. The uniqueness of Turkish mediators comes from a combination of their broad perspective and material capabilities which are the result of experience and access to a wide cultural and civilizational outreach.

Davutoğlu notes “Turkey’s mediation efforts are visible in the Balkans, the Palestinian question, Iraq, the Iranian nuclear issue and several others. By using the Ottoman legacy and Turkey’s current strategic depth, this concept mainly establishes cultural and historical connections between Turkey and the Middle East, the Balkans, East Asia and even Africa. By this means Turkey can culturally and historically connect to the geopolitical environment in which it is located.”<sup>62</sup> Davutoğlu says that “The historical responsibility concept is an outcome of historical legacy, and for this very reason deals with Turkey’s responsibility to develop new policies in the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus.”<sup>63</sup>

Nowadays, in the world, there are serious problems in the regional and global systems. The end of the Cold War could not help much in regard to developing mechanisms to resolve those problems. The post-Cold War era continued to present big challenges, and the emergence of new issues complicated the deep problems in international politics. There are still serious problems at a regional level. For instance, the Ukrainian crisis with Russia. Ethnic, sectarian and religious conflicts and geopolitical conflicts, as well as frozen conflicts, throughout the world are in need of effective mediation. In the changing security environment, in addition to bilateral disputes and state security, the security of individuals as well as

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<sup>61</sup>Dryzek, J. S. and Hunter, Susan, “Environmental Mediation for International Problems”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 31, no.1, 1987, pp.87-102.

<sup>62</sup> Davutoğlu Ahmet, *Stratejik Derinlik*, op. cit. pp. 119-124

<sup>63</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy”, Speech delivered at an event organised by SETA in Washington D.C, 8 December 2009.

crises sparked by nonstate threats further complicate this grim picture.<sup>64</sup> In addition to the global economic crisis, the broader Middle East is experiencing a political earthquake creating new challenges that are domestic rather than interstate. It is difficult to find the causes of the crisis because there are some questions about this situation; what is the middle-east crisis? Is it sectarian or economic? Actually there are many reasons: firstly the balance of power is changing in the world, Russia and China are becoming stronger states. In this case, there is a threat to peace in the world. The need for mediation is obvious in this new era. As known when the Former Yugoslavia collapsed so many people died because of the battles in Balkans and the bad events have remained in their minds, especially between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Therefore mediation is very important in Balkans in order to create a stabil region.

Davutoğlu notes “In the last three decades, Turkey’s position has been based on the use of diplomacy in an efficient way to help resolve disputes and conflicts.”<sup>65</sup> Turkey has mediated the talks on the question between Syria and Israel stemming from the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights. He notes “Syrian President firstly introduced a peace treaty in return to Israel’s evacuation the Heights in April 2008. After the suspension of the talks by the Syrian side following the Gaza attacks, new government under Netanyahu refused the continuation of the talks. Prime Minister Netanyahu declared that ‘Israel would not cede the Golan Heights for the sake of peace with Syria’.”<sup>66</sup> The fact that Turkey’s efficiency requires both change in the position of Israel and the US, with Syria’s perpetual support, illustrates efforts of Turkey and Turkey’s position in foreign policy making.

Turkey works to develop effective dispute resolution instruments for various conflicts. It is located right at the center of all the political conflicts of the surrounding regions, and is affected directly or indirectly, historically or culturally, by the myriad crises taking place throughout a wide area. When there was a crisis in Bosnia, all those who were suffering tried to escape among other states to Turkey and Turkish government offered housing, land and financial support to those who came to Turkey. When started crisis in Syria, substantial number of refugees escaping from Syria turned to Turkey as a humanitarian safe haven, and nowadays, during the Kobane crisis, Turkey has opened the door to many Syrians. In times of crisis as in Tunisia, in Egypt or in Libya, when the Arab spring started, Turkey was always among the countries that tried to make a contribution to its resolution. But it doesn’t mean that Turkey was all the time successful, sometimes it gave rise to negative results.

According to Davutoğlu, “The Friends of Mediation platform with Finland was the most meaningful initiative for us with regard to this challenge. The idea is to have a global platform to contribute positively to the resolution of crises.”<sup>67</sup> In many ways, it parallels the Alliance of Civilizations project,

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<sup>64</sup> Davutoğlu Ahmet, ‘Turkey’s Mediation: Critical Reflections from the field’, Middle East Policy, Vol. XX, No. 1, , Spring 2013, p.3.

<sup>65</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, ‘Turkey’s Mediation’, op.cit, p.5.

<sup>66</sup> Hale, William, “Turkey and the Middle East in the New Era“, Insight Turkey, Vol.11, No.3, 2009, p.151.

<sup>67</sup> Davutoğlu Ahmet, ‘Turkey’s Mediation’, op. cit, pp.89-90.

which was initiated with Spain. The Alliance of Civilizations aimed to ease tensions and create a new platform to counteract those who want to create tensions along cultural and civilizational fault lines. Within the framework of this initiative, Turkey hosted the Istanbul Conference on Mediation on February 24-25, 2012, bringing together representatives of NGOs (nongovernmental organizations), experts and officials from a variety of countries. Turkey will continue to promote this platform in order to contribute to greater international convergence on this issue.<sup>68</sup> This is a challenge for Turkey.

What are the mediation impediments? Overcoming psychological barriers, compromising on technical differences, and mustering political will. Psychological considerations play a significant role, perhaps as important as the substantive aspects of the crisis at hand. At the very least, without mutual trust or appropriate psychological preparation, you cannot achieve success. Technical details of negotiations come next, and the rest is about having the right political will to solve the issue. Another psychological necessity is to believe in a solution. For a mediator to solve the crisis, self-confidence is a must. Indeed, if the mediator does not believe that the problem can be solved, he cannot convince others.

According to Davutoğlu;

*“The mediator himself should believe that the problem can and will be solved. If we do not believe that, we cannot convince the conflicting parties that there is the possibility of a solution.”*<sup>69</sup>

Another aspect of the intellectual dimension is that mediators must have a vision. The success of a mediation process depends on the extent to which a mediator can conceptualize, not only the solution, but also the new status quo that he is trying to establish after the solution.<sup>70</sup> Equally significant is the need for the mediator to be clear about this vision in his interaction with the parties, as if he is one of them. There is also the ethical dimension of the negotiation process. Anyone who rises to the challenge of mediation should act ethically and have personal integrity. The relevant question to ask is, “What are the main ethical values relevant to the negotiation process?”. In the first place, the mediator should adopt a value-oriented approach. The mediator should be the defender of shared values rather than a particular interest. He should not be seen as being affiliated with a specific interest. When both sides feel that you are sharing their values, they are ready to accept mediation from your end. Shared cultural and historical values are very important ethical factors. For example, Turkey was very successful in bringing about concrete outcomes through another trilateral platform, the Afghanistan-Pakistan-Turkey Trilateral Process. Beginning with the Ankara Declaration after trilateral meetings in April 2007, it has been the

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<sup>68</sup> Idem.

<sup>69</sup> Idem.

<sup>70</sup> Idem.

most meaningful platform for easing the tension between the two neighbors and for discussing, developing, implementing and overseeing various cooperation projects.<sup>71</sup> In every meeting, it referred to the same values and to Turkey's cultural links with both countries. These are not directly related to any specific interest, but they facilitate Turkey's access to both countries. All mediators should be neutral, but in order to be objective, sometimes you have to say to parties on one side that they are right or wrong. Neutrality means not favoring one side; objectivity means being on the side of truth. The problem is that, each state oversees its own benefit and thus some issue does not have objectivity, for instance, in the case of Kosovo some countries recognize it as an independent country and some countries did not recognize Kosovo. However, in cases where more than one mediator exists, it is of key importance to ensure healthy coordination among the actors and to prevent the possible abuse of such a circumstance by the conflicting parties.

Mediation is, in most cases, a long-lasting process and should be handled with the utmost care, sensitivity and precise planning. Besides psychological, intellectual and ethical considerations, a mediator should have a precise plan for the timing of the mediation and for controlling the interactions of conflicting sides among themselves and with outside actors in a wider context.<sup>72</sup> In addition, mediators should also be able to draw the boundaries of the mediation process and determine the scope and content of the negotiations. Although mediation by a single actor or team is a more preferable method under normal conditions, such a tight approach might not always be possible. Moreover, it might be possible for many different actors, including non-governmental organizations, to make beneficial contributions to a mediation process depending on the nature of the problem. Recognising the need for harnessing the growing interest on the peace making agenda in general and mediation in particular at home, Turkey hosted the annual "Istanbul Conferences on Mediation" with wide international participation. The first Conference was organized on 24-25 February 2012 with the theme of "Enhancing Peace through Mediation" and focused on conceptual and theoretical issues. In the second conference held on 11-12 April 2013 with the theme of "Keys to Effective Mediation: Perspectives from Within", specific conflict cases were discussed.<sup>73</sup> Turkey intends to convene "Istanbul Conference on Mediation" regularly and turn it into an international platform that brings together experts and practitioners.

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<sup>71</sup> Idem.

<sup>72</sup> Idem.

<sup>73</sup> Republic of Turkey minister of foreign affairs, 'Resolution of conflicts and mediation'. ( <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/policy-of-zero-problems-with-our-neighbors.en.mfa> )

### 2.3. The “tools” of the Turkish diplomacy

According to Yeşiltaş “A vision-oriented foreign policy is the principle that was founded and has been exercised in the AK Party era and went on to become one of the main pillars in the government’s foreign policy.”<sup>74</sup> Davutoğlu notes “Instead of the traditional “wait-and-see” foreign policy for both global and regional crises, this principle provides a normative perspective for Turkey’s active role in the emergence, and especially during the resolution, of these crises, and it has been described as the main “principle” on which the “new” Turkish foreign policy has been built.”<sup>75</sup> According to Davutoğlu “It consists of two main elements. The first comprises policies that are directly and actively involved in crises from the very beginning, rather than only making policies regarding events after the crises and problems within the geographical region Turkey is situated in have started. The second is composed of policies that require Turkey to be involved in regions where there are no problems or crises, unlike in the earlier tradition which generally did not develop policies for such regions.”<sup>76</sup> The opening towards Africa in 2005 and the attempts to deepen relations with Latin America in 2006 and East Asia in 2010 are the main examples of this perspective.

Yeşiltaş notes “One of the most significant practical outcomes of this vision-oriented policy was particularly exemplified by the unanimous approval of all African countries on Turkey’s temporary membership to the UN Security Council for 2009- 2010.”<sup>77</sup>

As it is commonly defined, soft power is when foreign policy is based on such elements as diplomacy, culture, dialogue, cooperation, mutual economic dependency and historical understandings. While Turkish foreign policy has not completely ignored hard power and still bases its policy on a “balance” between hard and soft power, the soft power approach has been used in shaping Turkey’s policies to the Middle East and its close geography.<sup>78</sup> Built on foundational principles of historical and cultural connection with the region, the democratic tradition, the democratic institutions and a free market economy soft power has been viewed as a necessary method of diplomacy. Defined as “getting what you want by convincing others”, the concept has been used within Turkey’s foreign policy by “convincing” other countries to pursue fair, rational and persuasive policies.<sup>79</sup>

A proactive diplomacy is a kind of diplomacy that aims for Turkey to lead in resolving all crises in its neighbourhood and for it to develop good relations with other countries. Being one of the main principles of foreign policy in the AK Party era, proactive diplomacy has been accompanied by the concept of pre-emptive diplomacy. According to this latter concept, Turkey needs to adopt a foreign

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<sup>74</sup> Yeşiltaş, M. A.Balçı, ‘A Dictionary of Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Party Era: A Conceptual Map’, SAM Papers, no.7, May 2013, p.9.

<sup>75</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy”, op. cit.

<sup>76</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Kriz Odaklı Değil Vizyon Odaklı Dış Politika”, Interview with M. Mücahit Küçükyılmaz, Anlayış, April 2005.

<sup>77</sup> Yeşiltaş, M. A.Balçı, op. cit., pp.3-4.

<sup>78</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu, op.cit. p.86.

<sup>79</sup> İbrahim Kalın, “Türkiye’nin Ince Gücü”, TUIC Akademi, 8 February 2011.

policy perspective that aims to prevent problems from occurring, primarily in its close geographical region, or to take a leading role in their resolution. The most practical results of this concept in foreign policy can be seen in Turkey's desire to mediate in the Arab-Israeli, Syrian-Israeli, Iranian-Western and Bosnian-Serbian conflicts. Yeşiltaş notes "According to this foreign policy principle, Turkey's foreign policy can be realised not only among nation-states but also among actors and groups within the state with regards to preventing crises or resolving existing ones."<sup>80</sup> Turkey's foreign policy that has been pursued in the Balkans can be seen as an example of this. The fact that Turkey has problems with neighboring countries the mediation effort of Turkey can give positive effect relations with neighboring countries.

Although it has not found an exact conceptual equivalence in international relations theory, rhythmic diplomacy is a specific style of foreign policy practiced in Turkey.<sup>81</sup> According to Davutoğlu "It is a tactical activity that envisages simultaneously and harmoniously using diplomacy in different fields. Being one of the operational foreign policy principles and envisaging a more active role for Turkey in international politics, rhythmic diplomacy sees Turkey as an actor in all international institutions and on all global issues."<sup>82</sup> It was initially thought of as a way for Turkish foreign policy to move from the Cold War's relatively stability to an international environment that is changing; in other words it would enable Turkey to move "from a static diplomatic understanding to dynamic conditions".<sup>83</sup> Therefore, it would allow Turkey to take the right steps day to day and under pressure, in other words making the right calculations progressively without losing concentration and making a tight pursuit underlie rhythmic diplomacy. Another view of this diplomacy is the simultaneous operation of mobility and harmony what is meant by rhythm is the coexistence of mobility and harmony. If there is mobility but not harmony it may lead to chaos. Unneeded leaps may bring along unneeded risks. However, if you have rhythm but no mobility than you will not make any progress. There needs to be mobility as well. Yet, if you desire for the perfect harmony and wait for it there will be no mobility".<sup>84</sup> Turkey's new diplomatic style has been mainly built on the idea that on Eastern issues Turkey needs to use its Eastern identity, while on Western platforms Turkey needs to discuss Europe's future with a European perspective and as a country that has adopted Western norms.<sup>85</sup> In this sense this new diplomatic style forms the foundations of Turkey's multidimensional foreign policy. Having seen a wide use, the concept has been defined as the new vision of Turkish foreign policy with its methods, this new style highlights economic power of Turkey instead of its military power, and therefore constitutes the main soft power mechanism in diplomacy.

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<sup>80</sup> Yeşiltaş, Murat and Balcı, Ali, op. cit., pp.6-7.

<sup>81</sup> Yeşiltaş, Murat and Balcı, Ali, op. cit.

<sup>82</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, "Türkiye'yi Markalaştıran 'Ritmik Diplomasi'", (Interview with Baki Günay), 24 January 2005.

<http://arsiv.netpano.com/turkiyeyi-markalastiran-ritmik-diplomasi>

<sup>83</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet "İş Dünyası Artık Dış Politikanın Öncülerinden", (Interview with Ahmet Han), *Turkishtime*, April- May 2004.

<sup>84</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, "Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy", op. cit.

<sup>85</sup> Davutoğlu Ahmet, "Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı". *Radikal*, 26/02/2004 ( <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=107581>).

Furthermore, as Yesiltas notes the fact that among the foreign policy principles of the AK Party era there is no principle in which the economy is directly cited, economic interdependence has become one of the fundamental elements of the policy that has been developed concerning Turkey's near neighbourhood<sup>86</sup>. This policy is based on the assumption that countries with economic interdependence will be able to more easily resolve their problems and avoid conflict. Primarily used in terms of intense economic relations with neighbouring countries, this concept is considered to be one of the fundamental conditions for building sustainable peace and stability in the region.<sup>87</sup> In this respect, it is a move from a security-based foreign policy to one in which political and economic tools are highlighted, and which is based on economic interdependence among neighbouring countries. For Davutoğlu, the main priority of humanitarian diplomacy is not the state but citizens, and Turkey, as it follows humanitarian diplomacy, should be interested in urgent humanitarian crisis in conflict areas. Another notable initiative is the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), established on January 24, 1992 in order to “provide development assistance foremost to developing countries where Turkish is spoken and countries that border Turkey as well as improve cooperation through projects and programs in economic, commercial, technical, social, cultural and educational arenas. This organisation is significant for maintaining cultural ties. TIKA has a strategic mission to promote a positive image of Turkey and to establish durable relationships with foreign publics. Generally speaking, TIKA's role is to facilitate economic, commercial, technical, social, cultural and educational cooperation with developing countries via projects aimed at assisting the development of these countries. TIKA works to enhance infrastructure, improve living standards, provide vocational training and employment, protect monuments of joint heritage and culture, improve cultural relations, provide information and publishing services, and assist in the teaching of the Turkish language. One effort of particular importance to Turkey's public diplomacy activities is TIKA's “Turcology Project”, established in 1999.<sup>88</sup> In an attempt to encourage further study of the Turkish language and its relationship to similar languages and dialects, this project has aggressively worked to “widen the reach of the Turkish language, improve communications, and establish a shared cultural platform with neighboring countries. A Turcology Center has been established in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A linguistic center has been opened at the International University of Sarajevo. The analysis of Turkey's relations with the Bosnia much more Ottomanist. Today, TIKA is one of the biggest actors in the cultural resurgence in Bosnia Herzegovina. The Turkish minister Mustafa Said Yazicioglu inaugurated a linguistic center which was funded by TIKA in Sarajevo. Yazicioglu said Turkey's Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) was running many projects in Bosnia-Herzegovina, including the restoration of historical sites in the country.

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<sup>86</sup> Yeşiltaş, Murat and Balcı, Ali, op; cit.pp.9-11.

<sup>87</sup> Yeşiltaş, Murat and Balcı, Ali, op. cit. May 2013, pp.14-16.

<sup>88</sup> Republic of Turkey, Prime ministry, Turkish Cooperation and coordination Agency, ( <http://www.tika.gov.tr/en> ).

## **2.4. Results of Turkey's post-war mediation efforts.**

In the post-cold-war era, threats to security are changing. Modern threats arise at multiple global, national and local levels. New and diverse types of violent political conflict are emerging. Intra-State conflicts and these new kinds of violence have common sources such as underdevelopment, unemployment, corruption, competition for resources, arms proliferation and lack of security. Turkey is geographically located in the centre of Afro-Eurasia where both opportunities and risks interact. Because of its economic, social and cultural wealth, Afro-Eurasia has an extremely positive potential, not only for the countries of the region but also for the entire world. However, this region also harbours serious risks to global security in terms of both conventional disputes and asymmetrical threats, which are gradually increasing in the post Cold War period.<sup>89</sup> In this environment where both opportunities and threats emanate from a dynamism brought on by globalization, the entire international community should exert active and efficient efforts to resolve current conflicts and to prevent potential disputes so that opportunities can prevail over risks and globalization's most positive aspects can be made to bear.

As one of the most important centers of power of the region and as a nation directly affected by any development in this geography, Turkey strongly feels the need for conflict prevention and spares no effort to bring about lasting peace, stability and welfare in the region. Turkey in recent years has pursued a more dynamic foreign policy, and endeavors to place cooperation and dialogue on solid footing in the Afro-Eurasian landscape. Turkey attaches special importance to preventive diplomacy, pioneers a great deal of mediation attempts in a wide geography and works actively for the peaceful settlement of disputes.<sup>90</sup> Turkey's approach on this issue is based not only from the fact that successful preventive diplomacy is the most effective and economic method of dispute settlement, but also on the reality that the reduction of potential disputes and conflicts directly contributes to Turkey's development. In other words, strengthening the basis of peace and stability creates an environment of mutually beneficial cooperation that Turkey wants to see in her near abroad; this will help the region to develop as a whole together with Turkey. On the other hand, if potential conflicts cannot be averted through the timely detection of the core reasons of a conflict, the emerging crisis can necessitate more costly and long-term measures for the region and for the whole international community. In this respect, one should keep in mind that each conflict can trigger additional tensions.

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<sup>89</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, 'Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation', (<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/resolution-of-conflicts-and-mediation.en.mfa>).

<sup>90</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, 'Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation', (<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/resolution-of-conflicts-and-mediation.en.mfa>).

Vracic notes In the words of Milorad Dodik, President of Republika Srpska (RS): “Turkey is causing a lot of problems in BiH. It does not have absolute right to meddle into regional issues.”<sup>91</sup>. Veso Vegar, a public relations officer of second-largest Croatian political party, known as the Croatian Democratic Union 1990 (HDZ 1990), is of the same opinion. He points to the lack of a warm welcome for Erdoğan’s overtures (cited above) by many citizens in BiH, particularly by Croats and Serbs. Vegar concludes: “I do not believe that someone likes to hear that BiH is an Ottoman legacy.” According to Vracic “Ottomanist policy creating a positive impact on the Balkan Muslims, but non-muslim people of the Balkans constitutes a negative impact.”<sup>92</sup> At the same time, Turkey also finds this to be a real issue that must be addressed, as its stated policy is to support the whole country rather than just one of the entities. Vracic notes, The former First Counselor at the Turkish Embassy in Sarajevo, Yasemin Eralp, explains: “This is the major problem we Turks have in Bosnia the image. We support the country, not any entity specifically, and we are working on changing this perception.”<sup>93</sup>

Turkey has worked in recent years for the resolution of many problems in her near abroad. Turkey’s endeavors to bring about internal reconciliation in Iraq, Lebanon and Kyrgyzstan; two separate trilateral cooperation processes Turkey launched with the participation of Serbia and Croatia to achieve lasting peace and stability in Bosnia-Herzegovina; similarly, a trilateral cooperation mechanism implemented with Afghanistan and Pakistan, a country which has an important role in ensuring peace and security in Afghanistan; the constructive attitude Turkey adopted for the peaceful resolution of Iran’s nuclear program issue through dialogue; and the contributions to launch a broad-based resolution process between the Government of Somalia and conflicting parties are concrete examples of Turkey efforts. The most important experience Turkey gained in this process is that each problem has its own dynamics and conditions; and that mediation efforts should be carried out with a view to safeguard differences and in a manner which is flexible and free from uniformity. However, it should not be forgotten that preventive diplomacy has some golden rules and that there are some principles to be respected, no matter the nature of the dispute.<sup>94</sup> For instance, in order to be a successful mediator, actors should demonstrate competency on all dynamics of the problem and should be able to show long-term commitment from the outset. Likewise, the mediator should propose flexible but values-based strategies from the beginning of the process and be able to present a common vision to the parties of a dispute.<sup>95</sup> Additionally, earning the trust of parties of a dispute and demonstrating cooperation based on mutual will in the process of finding solutions to a conflict are among the most important requirements of a successful mediation

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<sup>91</sup> Vracic, Alida, ‘A Political Romance: The Relationship Between Bosnia and Turkey’, *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.13, no.1, spring 2014, pp.186-187.

<sup>92</sup> Vracic, Alida, *op.cit.* pp.187.

<sup>93</sup> Vracic, Alida, *op.cit.* pp.187-188.

<sup>94</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, ‘Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation’, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/resolution-of-conflicts-and-mediation.en.mfa>

<sup>95</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, ‘Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation’, *op. cit.*

attempt. A mediator's ability to communicate with all parties and maintain an even-handed attitude - provided that the values he puts forward in the beginning are preserved figure among the key elements of success. Communication becomes even more important in situations where a perception of contradiction exists between peace and justice. In this regard, the main duties of a mediator are to strike a balance between these two indispensable values and to introduce a framework for resolution that will not require parties to sacrifice one value at the expense of the other. It is also of crucial importance for a mediator to comply with the confidentiality of the process of delicate negotiations as well as to avoid actions or statements about the process that may compromise the parties. By all means, this requires the implementation of a mediation process with a certain degree of confidentiality. Such discretion becomes more essential in environments where more than one mediator exists, and it demonstrates the elements of coordination and leadership.

While mediation by a single actor or team is a more preferable method under normal conditions, such a tight-knit approach may not always be possible. Moreover, it can be possible for many different actors, including non-governmental organizations, to make beneficial contributions to a mediation process depending on the nature of the problem. However, in cases where more than one mediator exists, it is of key importance to ensure healthy coordination among the actors and to prevent the possible abuse of such a circumstance by the conflicting parties.<sup>96</sup>

Turkey continues its mediation activities within the framework of these general principles. Depending on the value added by mediation activities, Turkey acts in mutual trust with all parties to a dispute and on the basis of certain values. In this vein, provided that the confidentiality of the process is ensured, Turkey maintains its activities with transparency and pays strict attention to coordination and cooperation with all related actors. In fact, the "Mediation for Peace" initiative launched by Turkey with Finland in September 2010 in New York under the auspices of the UN also takes as a basis the principles of coordination and complementarity for the success of a mediation process. This initiative, which was launched with a view to enhance the prominence of mediation in preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution and, consequently, to effect additional resources for mediation efforts, also aims at enhancing the preventive diplomacy/mediation capacities of the UN, regional organizations and individual countries. In this respect, the resolution adopted by consensus on 22 June 2010 in the UN General Assembly (A/65/283) in line with these principles and objectives of the initiative is of special importance, since it is the first resolution regarding mediation adopted in the UN. At this point, the "Mediation for Peace" initiative has gathered significant interest, with membership in the "Friends of Mediation Group" reaching 46 (38 countries and 8 major regional and international organizations

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<sup>96</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, 'Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation' op. cit.

including the UN). Turkey took the lead in translating the Guidance for Effective Mediation into Turkish and disseminating it widely across the academic and civil society circles.<sup>97</sup>

Turkey along with Finland and the Swiss Presidency formed a “Friends of Mediation Group” in the OSCE on 6 March 2014 in Vienna. In addition to serving as a platform for sharing experiences, the main objective of this Group is to raise awareness among the OSCE members on the importance of mediation as an effective tool for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Recognising the need for harnessing the growing interest on the peace making agenda in general and mediation in particular at home, Turkey hosts annual “Istanbul Conferences on Mediation” with wide international participation. The first Conference was organized on 24-25 February 2012 with the theme of “Enhancing Peace through Mediation” and focused on conceptual and theoretical issues. In the second conference held on 11-12 April 2013 with the theme of “Keys to Effective Mediation: Perspectives from Within”, specific conflict cases were discussed.<sup>98</sup> Turkey intends to convene “Istanbul Conference on Mediation” regularly and to turn it into an international platform that brings together experts and practitioners.

In line with Turkey efforts in the field of mediation, Turkey’s profile in the peaceful resolution of conflicts is increasing. Turkey is consulting closely with the relevant departments in the UN to establish a “Retreat Center” in Istanbul for use in the UN’s mediation activities.<sup>99</sup> Under any circumstances, Turkey is committed to continuing its active efforts to enhance mediation and conflict resolution, both in concrete areas of dispute and in the international arena.

Mediation is an integral part of this policy. Davutoğlu notes, “Turkey’s unique access to both the global north and south makes it a suitable mediator over a wide geographical range. Turkey’s cultural-civilizational background and long experience with Western political and security structures creates an advantage in the field.”<sup>100</sup> There is also strong political will and considerable societal support behind Turkey’s engagement in finding solutions to chronic problems, in particular to those in Turkey’s neighboring regions. Turkey has assumed for itself a central role in regional and international politics, and mediation is a necessary tool for contributing to peace and stability at various levels. According to Davutoğlu “Turkey’s dynamic civil society is also active in conflict zones through humanitarian assistance, further supporting the dynamism of Turkey’s mediation efforts. For its part, Turkey is working hard to ensure that the Friends of Mediation and other platforms can create a new international intellectual atmosphere where states and NGOs can work for peace and stability in regions over the entire globe.”<sup>101</sup> Mediation has become an important component of the new Turkish foreign policy.

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<sup>97</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation, op. cit.

<sup>98</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation, op. cit.

<sup>99</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation, op. cit.

<sup>100</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, ‘Turkey’s Mediation: Critical Reflections from the field’, Middle East Policy, Vol.XX , No. 1, Spring 2013, p.11.

<sup>101</sup> Davutoğlu, Ahmet, ‘Turkey’s Mediation: op. cit., pp.10-11.

Turkish policymakers are pursuing an ambitious policy of mediation between conflicting parties throughout the world and of contribution to the understanding of effective mediation at the international level. Turkey's mediation role and attempts for supporting mediation as a means of peace making is more visible than ever.

Turkey's main challenge in this regard will be in dealing with resistance from entrenched mediation mechanisms, structures and actors. However, Turkey may benefit from the emerging roles of new State and non-State actors which support a broadening of perspectives on internal mediation. Turkey will remain an effective mediator, but more time is needed to evaluate Ankara's impact on the emergence of a new thinking on mediation in general. Turkey considers the Declaration adopted last night by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia condemning the grave crime in Srebrenica as an important step for reconciliation between the peoples of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the long overdue condolences and apology to the families of the victims.

Serbian trade minister and deputy prime minister Rasim Ljajic, Bosnian trade minister Mirko Sarovic and Turkish economy minister Zafer Caglayan, Turkey's Minister of Economy signed a declaration on economic and trade cooperation in Ankara on Tuesday. The declaration is intended to improve the three countries' economic cooperation in all fields and increase trade and joint presence on other markets. Ljajic said after the meeting said that the good political relations between Serbia, Turkey and Bosnia had to be accompanied by appropriate economic cooperation."There is a certain lack of confidence when it comes to political trilateralism, but if the citizens of our countries see tangible benefits of the cooperation between Serbia, Bosnia and Turkey, that lack of confidence will disappear," Ljajic said in a statement. According to Ljajic, the potential exists for joint projects between Serbia and Bosnia in tourism, energy, construction, agriculture, the food industry and the arms trade, and with Turkey's help, there could be breakthroughs in former Soviet countries' markets and in Africa. Sarovic said Serbia was Bosnia's third closest trade partner, and that Sarajevo and Belgrade saw a great opportunity for economic growth by cooperating with Turkey. Caglayan said that Turkey looked forward to any improvements in economic cooperation between the three countries. Tanjug notes "The three officials agreed to hold their next meeting in Sarajevo as soon as possible, to run simultaneously with a business forum involving companies from the three countries."<sup>102</sup> Later on Tuesday, the heads of the three states are also scheduled to meet in Ankara. This is the third trilateral summit of its kind. The first was held on 2010, also in Turkey, while the second took place in 2011 in Serbia. Turkey believes that normalization of relations among the states of the Former Yugoslavia is crucial for advancement of good neighbourly relations and progress towards regional integration as well as realization of Euro-Atlantic perspectives of these states.

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<sup>102</sup>Tanjug , 'Bosnia, Serbia and Turkey Sign Trade Agreement, Balkaninsight, 14 may 2013, (<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-serbia-and-turkey-sign-cooperation-protocol>).

Turkey expresses its appreciation for the visionary leadership displayed by the leaders of both Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina for their courageous steps taken in this direction and reiterates its readiness to continue to support fully their efforts for reconciliation and normalization through bilateral and regional platforms.<sup>103</sup>

## **2.5. Conclusion**

In the geopolitical environment of Turkey country's historical legacy is one of the fundamental pillars that provide Ankara's strategic depth. By using the Ottoman legacy and Turkey's current strategic depth, this concept mainly establishes cultural and historical connections between Turkey and the Middle East, the Balkans, East Asia and even Africa. By this means Turkey can culturally and historically connect to the geopolitical environment in which it is located, thus Turkey has ties with many countries. Turkey aims to become a strong state in the region, therefore it seeks an important role in terms of mediation. The fact that Turkey has political problems with almost all neighboring countries, obliges Ankara to improve relations with these countries.

Mediation is one of the main instruments of peace and happiness for humanity. Obviously, there remain many challenges to the realization of effective mediation in world politics. Mediation has become an important component of the new Turkish foreign policy. Turkish policymakers are pursuing an ambitious policy of mediation between conflicting parties throughout the world and of contribution to the understanding of effective mediation at the international level. Turkey's mediation role and attempts for supporting mediation as a mean of peace making is more visible than ever. Turkey's mediation approach will likely continue to be included in the resolution of future conflicts.

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<sup>103</sup> Republic of Turkey Minister of Foreign Affairs, No: 71, Press Release Regarding the Declaration Adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, 31 March 2010.

## Chapter 3

### 3. Turkey as mediator between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia

#### 3.1. Identifying Bilateral Confrontation Areas

According to Mariya “Turkey has achieved much more in bilateral relations with Serbia than in managing the Bosnian stalemate. Rapprochement with Belgrade gathered pace in 2009 and 2010. President Gül visited Belgrade in October 2009, at time of visit, relations had hit rock bottom.”<sup>104</sup> Davutoğlu was involved in mediation between rival factions headed by Muftis Muammer Zukorlic and Adem Zilkic, one supported by Sarajevo and another looking towards Serbia, in the local Islamic community. Erdoğan’s visit to Serbia also led to signature of an agreement for lifting visas with the hopes of boosting travel and trade between two countries. Serbia is a clear achievement for Turkey’s Balkan policy. The challenge is making rapprochement sustainable, especially if the ruling Democrats lose power in Serbia to the nationalist-populist opposition headed by Tomislav Nikolic. Kadioğlu notes “Turkey has thus far been unable to use its improved relations with Belgrade to mediate the Kosovo issue.”<sup>105</sup> Why mediation is broken down? Recently Erdogan during his visit to Kosovo (in Prizren on 23 October 2013 ), when he was holding the office of the Prime Minister, said: “Turkey is Kosovo and Kosovo is Turkey” This declaration arose animosity among natives, especially Serbs. Since Kosovo issue is a very sensitive issue for Belgrade, Serbia's President said that he won't take part in a Balkan initiative in which participates Turkey, in protest over the above mentioned remarks by Turkey's prime minister in Kosovo. Serbian media have quoted Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as saying in Kosovo. The comment has been widely criticized in Serbia which is sensitive to the past Ottoman rule in the Balkans and to any acknowledgement of Kosovo's independence. President Tomislav Nikolic on October 26 sought an apology for the "scandal", The move further strains relations after Serbia's government sought a formal explanation after some days.<sup>106</sup>

Remarks which have been cut out from the whole speech were taken to grounds we don't want. We also aim to have good relations with Serbia. Turkey maintains an equal distance to all Balkan countries,” Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu told state-run TRT television today. “Prime Minister Erdoğan talked about the common fate of Balkan nations. All Balkan countries should move all together for peace and stability,” he said.

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<sup>104</sup> Marija, Mitrovic, Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans: op. cit., pp. 36-47.

<sup>105</sup> Kadioğlu, Ayşe, K. Öktem, M. Karlı, “Another Empire? A Decade of Turkey’s Foreign Policy Under the Justice and Development Party”, İstanbul Bilgi University, SEESOX, no.12, İstanbul, May 2012, pp.23.

<sup>106</sup>The Associated Press reported.”Serb president wants Turkey's apology on Kosovo” (<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/serb-president-wants-turkeys-apology-on-kosovo.aspx?pageID=238&nID=56904&NewsCatID=351> ). Hurriyet Daily News, 26/10/2013.

### **3.2. Establishment of peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms**

Modern diplomacy is no longer confined to traditional diplomacy actors, as contemporary conflicts are more complex and complicated in nature. Therefore multilayered nature of conflicts requires multifaceted, and at times unconventional, approaches to conflict resolution.

This in turn provides increased opportunities for non-State actors in conflict resolution. This is why today non-governmental actors are increasingly present at every stage of conflicts, be it prevention, mediation or post-conflict rehabilitation. In principle, the involvement of non-governmental actors in mediation efforts is a welcome development, as it increases the overall mediation capacity of the international community and provides fresh impetus and energy to the field of mediation.<sup>107</sup> In addition, they are more agile in responding quickly to crises, as they have fewer bureaucratic constraints. They also have comparative advantages in terms of maintaining confidentiality, thinking creative ideas outside the box and maintaining an impartial approach, thanks to the lack of a strong political motivation. They are also better at employing local experts who help them to better understand the root causes of conflicts.<sup>108</sup> However, non-governmental organizations have the disadvantage of not having enough “leverage” to be used in peace processes. They can also face questions as to whether they have the legitimacy and effectiveness required to sustain a mediation process in volatile and sensitive conflict situations. In the light of the foregoing considerations, it is apparent that the contributions of non-governmental organizations have become increasingly important in mediation processes, but that their comparative advantages and disadvantages should always be kept in mind when employing their capabilities.

The United Nations is the central body for the maintenance of international peace and security. This is particularly so with respect to preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts, since the fundamental task of the United Nations is to create the necessary conditions for peace to prevail by eliminating the sources of conflict in a timely manner. However, the United Nations has not always been very effective in preventing and/or mediating conflicts. In retrospect, one can find both highly successful examples of conflict resolution/prevention and failed attempts.<sup>109</sup>

With the significant increase in the number of actors engaged in mediation, coordination has become ever more important in ensuring coherence and avoiding “forum-shopping”. Indeed, it is more often than not that we see multiple actors involved in the same conflict situation trying to mediate it through their own means.

The role of the United Nations in facilitating coordination among various mediation actors should be further explored. It is probably not possible to use the United Nations as a strict clearing house

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<sup>107</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, Letter dated 9 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, Sixty-sixth session, may 2012, p.5-6.

<sup>108</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, Letter dated 9 May 2012, op. cit, p.6.

<sup>109</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, Letter dated 9 May 2012, op. cit, p.7.

mechanism, but it might be possible to enable the United Nations to see the big picture at all times and make the necessary recommendations to steer the course of mediation processes in the right direction. As there is uneven coverage of conflicts around the world, the United Nations, through its wider grasp of the available mediation capacities, might also be of use in channelling them to where they are needed most.<sup>110</sup> Dominant mediation practices tend to focus on the parties to conflicts individuals, States and organizations rather than on the relationships among those entities. However, a large number of cultures emphasize relationships. Prioritizing entities over relationships compromises understanding of cultures and accompanying conflict dynamics. Therefore, there is a need to recognize cultural differences and include local approaches and people in mediation efforts. On the other hand, it might not be helpful to look for a distinctly African, Asian or Islamic approach to mediation. Instead, there is a need to recognize differences, respect them and engage in dialogue about them in order to ensure better analysis of the situation and thus conduct more effective mediation. It is important to continue the work to enhance capacity in the field of mediation. There is still not enough such capacity, particularly at the level of regional actors, and the quality of mediation activities has a direct impact on the ability of peace to prevail.<sup>111</sup> In this regard, mediators need to be adept, culturally sensitive, gender-attuned, relationship-oriented and politically imaginative, as opposed to process-driven. They need to have a vision and a repertoire of ideas and to strongly believe that success is within reach. These qualities should be fostered in the training of future mediators.

### **3.3. Ankara mediating between Sarajevo and Belgrade**

Turkey's efforts to play a mediating role between Muslims of Bosnia and their neighbouring nations is not new. It goes back to the first years of post-Cold war period, when the war of Bosnia went off. For the needs of our essay in the lines that follow we are going to focus to the post-war period mediation efforts of Ankara.

Turkey took a number of steps towards establishing itself as a mediator. Ankara took advantage of the fact that it held the chairmanship of the SEECP in the second half of 2009. On 8 October Davutoğlu met with Serbian and Bosnian bureaucrats in Istanbul. Kadioğlu notes "In this meeting he emphasized the need for the constitutional reform in Bosnia as a prerequisite for reforming the Office of the High Representative (OHR), the international community's principal tool established by the Dayton Agreement for intervening in Bosnia's politics."<sup>112</sup> This meeting was realised in accordance with the preference of the Bosniaks, though the Minister was careful not to be seen as partial by singling out the very existence of Republika Srpska as a problem. Therefore having Serbia onboard was crucial and

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<sup>110</sup> Idem.

<sup>111</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, Letter dated 9 May 2012, p.8.

<sup>112</sup> Kadioğlu, Ayşe, K. Öktem, M. Karlı, op. cit, pp. 220-221.

Davutoğlu sought to involve Serbia in the dialogue. Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic and later president Boris Tadic, the country's foremost pro-Western politician, represented Serbia, in regular trilateral meetings among Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Turkey.

The official policy papers put special emphasis on the trilateral consultation mechanisms as the significant example of Turkey's contribution to good neighborly relations and regional cooperation. The trilateral consultation mechanisms were founded upon Turkish initiative between Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Turkey was very proud on the Trilateral Balkan Summit, held in Istanbul in April 2010. The Second Meeting of the Trilateral Balkan Summit was held in Karadjordjevo, Serbia on 26 April 2011. Until the end of 2012 there were held six meetings of Foreign Ministers of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. and six of Foreign Ministers of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.<sup>113</sup> Through these meetings Turkey managed to convince Serbia to approve the appointment of ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina after three years of deadlock and for Serbian Parliament to adopt the resolution on Srebrenica in April 2010. This for sure improved the relation between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, though it provoked negative reaction in Republika Srpska. Hajrudin notes, "From the beginning the Serbian entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina was opposing to Turkey's involvement in the matters of Bosnia accusing it for supporting only the interests of Bosniak entity and at the same time accusing Serbia for betray."<sup>114</sup> Türbedar notes "Serbian member of Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency refused to validate this agreement. Republika Srpska and its leader Milorad Dodik are of the belief that Turkey is working on the abolition of this entity."<sup>115</sup> Still an official visit of Davutoğlu to Milorad Dodik in Banja Luka was organized in January 2011. Marija notes "Also during the same visit Davutoğlu did not manage to meet with Nebojsa Radmanovic, Serbian member of Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency, although this meeting was planned."<sup>116</sup>

According to Marija "Turkey emphasized special relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina and pointed out its firm support for territorial integrity of this country. For this reason Turkey demonstrated great interest to participate in the 'Butmir process'. But the leaders of the main Bosniak, Serb and Croat parties rejected the proposed package of reforms and process was stopped."<sup>117</sup> Turkey has also intensified its contacts with Serbia. It tried to implement its flexible foreign policy and to develop close relations with all regional players, despite their possible conflicting interest. Turkey in its official statement defined Serbia as its neighbor despite the fact that they don't share the common border. According to its principle to maintain good relations with all neighbors, Turkey made a significant effort to develop stable and close relations with Serbia. Conflicts in Bosnia and NATO intervention in Kosovo

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<sup>113</sup> Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Relations with the Balkan region, (<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-with-the-balkan-region.en.mfa>).

<sup>114</sup> Somun, Hajrudin, 'Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans and "Neo-Ottomanism": A Personal Account', *Insight Turkey*, vol.13, no.3, 2011, pp.33-41.

<sup>115</sup> Türbedar, Erhan, 'Turkey's new activism in the Western Balkans: ambitions and obstacles', *Insight Turkey*, 13/3, 2011, pp.148.

<sup>116</sup> Marija, Mitrovic, op. cit., pp.46-49.

<sup>117</sup> Marija, Mitrovic, op.cit. pp.36-47.

in 1999 had negatively influenced relations between Serbia and Turkey. Nevertheless, since the democratic changes took place in Serbia in October 2000 and after AKP government active engagement in the Balkans, the relations between these two countries improved significantly. There were many steps in that direction. Serbian president at that time Boris Tadić visited Turkey in 2007 and 2010 and its Prime Minister Mirko Cvetković visited Turkey in 2011.

Moreover, Turkish President Abdullah Gül visited Serbia in 2009 and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan made a visit to Serbia in July 2010, when visa free agreement between two countries was signed.<sup>118</sup> During this period tripartite consultation meetings between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Turkey were carried out, followed by a number of visits on a ministerial level. In a number of occasions Turkish officials emphasized that for Turkey Serbia is a key country for peace and stability in the Balkans. Although Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize Kosovo declaration of independence in February 2008, it is clear that this issue did not contribute to the deterioration of the relations between these two countries to a greater extent<sup>119</sup>. Indeed, Turkey and Serbia signed free trade agreement in June 2009. Besides offering its good service in mediating with Bosniaks in Bosnia, Turkey has also mediated between divided blocs of Muslims in Sandzak region of Serbia<sup>120</sup>. During the Erdoğan's visit to Serbia in November 2011 he brought together local representatives of Bosniak community who were in a year's long conflict.<sup>121</sup> Marija notes "What is also significant is that during the same visit Erdoğan showed significant distance from the Mufti Zukorlić who is known by his radical stances on the position and the role of Bosniak community in Serbia."<sup>122</sup> After Kosovo declared independence in 2008, Turkey believes that borders of the newly independent states in the region have become definite and it supports mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, Turkey believes that the international presence in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina is still necessary both for the strengthening of the state structures in these countries and for managing regional stability.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Türbedar, Erhan, 'Turkey's new activism in the Western Balkans: ambitions and obstacles', *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 2011, pp. 139-158.

<sup>119</sup> Marija, Mitrovic, *op.cit.* pp.26-27.

<sup>120</sup> Marija, Mitrovic, *op.cit.* pp.39-46.

<sup>121</sup> Republic of Turkey ministry of foreign affairs, Relations between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina (<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-bosnia-and-herzegovina.en.mfa>).

<sup>122</sup> Marija, Mitrovic, *op.cit.* pp.36-47.

<sup>123</sup> Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Relations with the Balkan region' *op. cit.*

### **3.4. Conclusions**

Mediation has become an important component of the new Turkish foreign policy. Turkish policymakers are pursuing an ambitious policy of mediation between conflicting parties throughout the world and of contribution to the understanding of effective mediation at the international level.

Turkey has worked in recent years for the resolution of many problems in her near abroad. The Istanbul Summit in April 2010, Istanbul Declaration was signed between Turkey, Bosnia and Serbia, which Turkey praised as its great success because it brought together president of Serbia and Bosnia for the first time since the War in the '90s. Indeed it was good decision for BiH, Serbia and Turkey because these countries need to have good relations for stable region. The trilateral consultation mechanisms were founded upon Turkish initiative between Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. When, Erdogan made the infamous declaration: "Turkey is Kosovo and Kosovo is Turkey" then this sentence created a huge negative impact on the relationship between Turkey and Serbia. BiH's relations with Turkey are complex, but also vital as Turkey is becoming an increasingly important regional and global player. In Bosnia, however, Turkey stil has lots to do. Differing views about perceptions of its influence based upon the historical heritage within the country present a real challenge for Turkey. Bosnian foreign policy toward Turkey should take a position on its own priorities and future aspirations in bilateral relations.

## General conclusions

Turkish foreign policy officially aims to help secure and nurture a peaceful, prosperous, stable and cooperative environment that is conducive to human development at home and its neighborhood. Domestic policy always affects foreign policy; thus if in domestic policy religious elements come to foreground, then there are chances to detect a strong religious element in foreign policy. Turkish foreign policy in times of conservative parties has followed a policy of Ottomanism thought, the strong Ottoman discourse thought which Turkey tries to recall historical and cultural ties and create a sense of togetherness and closeness with the citizens in the Balkans.

Davutoğlu and AKP officials have adopted to the large degree *realpolitik* diplomacy as an element of foreign policy culture and their perception of foreign relations. Since AKP coming to power, Turkey even more took the pro-active stance and followed more flexible and multi-dimensional foreign policy approach. But this type of activism was mainly visible in the field of soft power. According to Türbedar “Turkey initiated great number of political dialogs and intensified initiatives for face to face contacts. It also tried to reinforce its influence acting as an agent of mediation between its clashing neighboring countries.”<sup>124</sup> Development of new soft power capacities which to a great extent relied on Ottoman legacy was especially evident in Turkey’s approach to the Balkans. Davutoğlu vision of the Turkey-Balkan relations is also formulated on the clear geopolitical and strategic calculations, which is the basis of Turkey’s traditional understanding of foreign policy. He emphasizes geography as key determinant of Turkey’s foreign policy but also adds history as the second one. Nevertheless his historical axis relies deeply on the geography and is expressed in the form of *geoculture*, making cultural relations in the service of *geostrategic* interests, as it can be seen from his conceptualization of Turkey-Balkan relations. New rhetoric made it so that Turkey’s new activism in the Balkans was seen as a form of a Turkey’s return to the Balkans in the Ottoman and imperialistic way. This was perceived as a confirmation of the great shift which happened in Turkey’s ideational foreign policy structure. It was argued that new, Islamic and Ottoman foreign policy identity is now on the stage.

Mediation is one of the main instruments of peace and stability for humanity. Obviously, there remain many challenges to the realization of effective mediation in world politics. The “UN Guidelines for Effective Mediation” is not quite sufficient in dealing with the new challenges of an era of global turmoil. There is a need for a wider plurality of perspectives. Aras notes “The broad international acceptance of Turkey’s mediation framework and the transformation of the current mediation practices

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<sup>124</sup> Türbedar, Erhan, ‘Turkey's new activism in the Western Balkans: ambitions and obstacles’, *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 2011, pp. 140.

and structures of the UN will be a long and difficult process.”<sup>125</sup> Additionally Turkey has worked in recent years for the resolution of many problems in her near abroad and beyond.

Overall, Turkey exhibits a closer attitude with Bosnia as a mediator, but it is quite important that a mediator should keep equal distances for both countries. Ottomanist policy of Turkey is creating a positive impact on the Balkan Muslims, but for the non-muslim people of the region it constitutes a negative impact. That’s why Turkey should behave equal for both of the countries in order to have a more effective impact as a policy.

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<sup>125</sup> Aras, Bülent, ‘Turkey’s Mediation and Friends of Mediation Initiative’, International policy and Leadership institute, TEPAV, no.6, 2012, p.10-11.

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## 6. Annexes

### **Annexe I. Letter dated 9 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General Summary report on the Istanbul conference on mediation**

United Nations

A/66/800



**General Assembly**

Distr.: General  
12 May 2012

Original: English

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## **Sixty-sixth session**

Agenda item 34

### **Prevention of armed conflict**

#### **Letter dated 9 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to convey herewith the summary report of the Istanbul Conference on Mediation, held in Istanbul on 24 and 25 February 2012 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and the annex thereto could be circulated as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, "Prevention of armed conflict", as a contribution to the informal high-level meeting of the Assembly on "The role of Member States in Mediation", to be held on 23 May 2012.

(Signed) Ertuğrul **Apakan**

Permanent Representative

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## **Annex to the letter dated 9 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

### **Summary report on the Istanbul Conference on Mediation**

**24 and 25 February 2012, Istanbul**

The Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs organized the first Istanbul Conference on Mediation on 24 and 25 February 2012, with the theme “Enhancing peace through mediation: new actors, fresh approaches, bold initiatives”. The Conference was held under the auspices of H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

The Conference was designed to bring together international, governmental and civil society actors engaged in conflict prevention and mediation activities to discuss how to enhance interaction, understanding and cooperation among themselves with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the international community’s mediation efforts.

Representatives from the United Nations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia and the members of the Group of Friends of Mediation, formed within the framework of the Mediation for Peace initiative, attended the Conference.

The programme of the Conference is attached to the present report. As can be seen, five main sessions were held, on “Increasing relevance of non-governmental actors in conflict resolution”, “The evolving role of the United Nations in mediation”, “Addressing the coordination and capacity-building challenges”, “Alternative approaches to mediation” and “Ideas for the future”.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Finland and Brazil, as well as the President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, addressed the Conference at its high-level session. The Permanent Representatives of Turkey and Finland to the United Nations also briefed the participants on the activities of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

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The main points raised and discussed at the Conference are set out below.

## **1. Increasing relevance of non-governmental actors in conflict resolution**

Modern diplomacy is no longer confined to traditional diplomacy actors, as contemporary conflicts are more complex and complicated in nature. Thus, the multilayered nature of conflicts requires multifaceted, and at times unconventional, approaches to conflict prevention/resolution.

This in turn provides increased opportunities for non-State actors in conflict resolution. This is why today non-governmental actors are increasingly present at every stage of conflicts, be it prevention, mediation or post-conflict rehabilitation. In principle, the involvement of non-governmental actors in mediation efforts is a welcome development, as it increases the overall mediation capacity of the international community and provides fresh impetus and energy to the field of mediation.

Non-governmental organizations bring added value to preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts mainly because of the informal nature of their engagement. They can deal with parties to the conflict more easily than States or international/ regional organizations. Therefore, they can also create a forum for informal talks among the conflicting parties even when the time is not ripe for formal negotiations, thus preparing the ground for full-fledged peace processes.

In addition, they are more agile in responding quickly to crises, as they have fewer bureaucratic constraints. They also have comparative advantages in terms of maintaining confidentiality, thinking creative ideas outside the box and maintaining an impartial approach, thanks to the lack of a strong political motivation. They are also better at employing local experts who help them to better understand the root causes of conflicts.

However, non-governmental organizations have the disadvantage of not having enough “leverage” to be used in peace processes. They can also face questions as to whether they have the legitimacy and effectiveness required to

sustain a mediation process in volatile and sensitive conflict situations. Moreover, project- or country- specific funding limits the flexibility of the work of non-governmental organizations.

In the light of the foregoing considerations, it is apparent that the contributions of non-governmental organizations have become increasingly important in mediation processes, but that their comparative advantages and disadvantages should always be kept in mind when employing their capabilities. Therefore, for effective mediation, ensuring complementarity and coherence between track I and track II actors is essential.

## 2. Evolving role of the United Nations in mediation

The United Nations is the central body for the maintenance of international peace and security. This is particularly so with respect to preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts, since the fundamental task of the United Nations is to create the necessary conditions for peace to prevail by eliminating the sources of conflict in a timely manner. However, the United Nations has not always been very effective in preventing and/or mediating conflicts. In retrospect, one can find both highly successful examples of conflict resolution/prevention and failed attempts.

As to the reasons for this mixed record or the gap between norms and practice, the very nature of the United Nations comes first to mind. The set-up of the Security Council, for instance, and its inability to effectively represent the global community hampers the efforts of the United Nations to deal in a timely manner with brewing or actual conflicts. The power politics among major players is yet another factor weakening the Organization's response.

Moreover, there is not sufficient and effective coordination within the United Nations among its various organs and agencies. Divergent positions taken by various United Nations bodies vis-à-vis conflict prevention and mediation issues inevitably limit the effectiveness of the United Nations in this field.

That said, the mediation capacity of the United Nations has increasingly been streamlined and enhanced over the past few years. The establishment of the Mediation Support Unit, the Mediation Support Standby Team and the Mediation Roster, as well as the setting-up of programmes to train the next generation of mediators and the provision of assistance to regional organizations and States in building their own mediation capacities, have been significant steps in the right direction.

However, there is still considerable room for improvement. To this end, the United Nations should make the best use of its comparative advantages, such as its ability to set norms. In this regard, the recent General Assembly resolution 65/283, on mediation, and the preparation by the Secretary-General of guidance for effective mediation are welcome developments. The United Nations should

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indeed be able to guide mediation efforts in an increasingly crowded field through coordination and capacity-building, as appropriate.

Another challenge that the United Nations will have to address with regard to its role in mediation is the need to improve coordination within United Nations agencies as well as between the United Nations and regional organizations.

The United Nations will also have to think about how to strengthen the link between different elements of its peace toolbox, including a wide range from mediation to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, so that there can be coherence as to when, why and how each is employed.

The selection of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General is another challenge, as their failures have had consequences for both the United Nations and people living in conflict zones. Therefore, it is important that the Special Representatives have sufficient understanding of the sensitivities involved in mediation processes, as well as an accurate picture of the conflict in its entirety.

### 3. Addressing the coordination and capacity-building challenges

With the significant increase in the number of actors engaged in mediation, coordination has become ever more important in ensuring coherence and avoiding “forum-shopping”. Indeed, it is more often than not that we see multiple actors involved in the same conflict situation trying to mediate it through their own means.

The fact that there are many mediators at the same time is not necessarily a bad thing. On the contrary, the greater the number of mediation actors, the wider the outreach to the conflicting and affected parties and the greater the motivation for the parties to the conflict to explore political options, as opposed to military ones. Multiparty mediation is also valuable in getting community and civil society behind a peace process and engaging disaffected and alienated groups. The challenge is to ensure that all of them complement one another while rowing in the same direction.

Naturally, it would be ideal to determine which actor has the comparative advantage in making a difference in a mediation process, to coalesce around it and to ensure full coordination with it. However, it is not realistic to expect such full coordination, not least because of the need to preserve the confidentiality of any mediation process. Therefore, a loose form of coordination among mediation actors whereby they acknowledge and respect one another’s presence is a more plausible scenario.

That said, the role of the United Nations in facilitating coordination among various mediation actors should be further explored. It is probably not feasible to use the United Nations as a strict clearing house mechanism, but it might be possible to enable the United Nations to see the big picture at all times and make the necessary recommendations to steer the course of mediation processes in the right direction. As there is uneven coverage of conflicts around the world, the United Nations, through its wider grasp of the available mediation capacities, might also be of use in channelling them to where they are needed most.

As to capacity-building, this is a requirement that has not yet been sufficiently addressed. The United Nations has certainly made considerable progress over the past few years in increasing its own mediation capacities. Some non-governmental organizations have also started conducting extensive training programmes and made increasing contributions to the studies on mediation. However, there is still more to be done to develop mediation capacities.

In this regard, given that regional and subregional organizations are playing greater roles in conflict management in their own neighbourhoods, it should be a particular priority to help enhance their mediation capacities, for they still lack sufficient assets to deal with serious conflicts in their areas of responsibility on their own.

In fact, there have always been local peacemakers conducting work in their own environments. However, in order to systemize and institutionalize these efforts, regional capacity-building is very much needed. Greater effort should thus be made to increase capabilities at the national and regional levels mainly by the United Nations, but also by the other relevant and well-equipped States and non-governmental actors.

To this end, the proposal by some Member States for the establishment of United Nations centres of mediation in various parts of the world, close to conflict situations, with a view to providing training and building capacity should be further explored.

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#### 4. **Alternative approaches to mediation**

In the light of the lessons learned from the decades-long experiences gained in mediation efforts, there is now a pressing need to employ alternative approaches to current mediation practices, mainly by making them more culturally sensitive to local contexts.

Stepping back from the currently dominant practices, one sees the need to apply different forms of mediation as necessitated by each specific circumstance. There are, of course, useful applications of Western liberal approaches to mediation. However, there are many different manifestations of value and individualism that go beyond the Western understanding of participation or deliberation.

In this respect, mediation has remained slow to engage with social and cultural differences. Nevertheless, there has been progress over the past two decades, and now there is widespread acknowledgement of the need to engage with local approaches to conflict and its management.

Dominant mediation practices tend to focus on the parties to conflicts — individuals, States and organizations — rather than on the relationships among those entities. However, a large number of cultures emphasize relationships. Prioritizing entities over relationships compromises understanding of cultures and accompanying conflict dynamics.

Therefore, there is a need to recognize cultural differences and include local approaches and people in mediation efforts. On the other hand, it might not be helpful to look for a distinctly African, Asian or Islamic approach to mediation. Instead, there is a need to recognize differences, respect them and engage in dialogue about them in order to ensure better analysis of the situation and thus conduct more effective mediation.

Conflicts cannot be understood from only one angle. Thus, an interdisciplinary approach and interdisciplinary intervention teams are needed in mediation processes. For instance, mental health practitioners should be included in these processes to address the complex nature of issues that the people are facing, especially with regard to social trauma and values-based conflicts.

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In addition, interveners should be explicit in their commitment with regard to the service of justice and peace. There is also a need to incorporate and address religion and its role in public life. Likewise, the mediators should make the best use of technology in reaching out to different/marginalized groups. Equally important is the development of local partnerships.

In this regard, the role of the “insider mediator” is also extremely important and should be given due consideration. Insider mediators are trusted and respected local actors who have a deep knowledge of the dynamics and contexts of the conflict, share normative and cultural closeness with the conflicting parties and demonstrate a nuanced sensitivity in their contributions to find solutions to conflicts that are owned and valued by the parties themselves.

In many cases, therefore, it would be better to have insider mediators as the main actors in mediation, since in certain regions there are reservations concerning “outsider mediators”, who are perceived as contributors of peace packages that do not take local realities into account.

That said, insider mediators need the support of the international community in order to effectively bring their comparative advantages to bear, and thus the United Nations should pay more attention to their needs and roles.

## 5. Ideas for the future

In the post-cold-war era, threats to security are changing. Modern threats arise at multiple global, national and local levels. New and diverse types of violent political conflict are emerging. Intra-State conflicts and these new kinds of violence have common sources such as underdevelopment, unemployment, corruption, competition for resources, arms proliferation and lack of security.

In this regard, mediation needs to be relevant not only to classic inter-State/ intra-State wars, but also to these lower-level threats to security. It also needs to be relevant not only in “post-conflict” societies, but also in vulnerable, fragile or failed States, including “democratizing” regimes. This new security agenda calls for wider coordination and cooperation in mediation efforts among Governments, the United Nations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, development agencies and local communities.

The United Nations has significantly increased its mediation capacity over the past decade, and it continues to be the principal actor in the field of mediation. However, there is less consensus within the Security Council regarding how to act in dealing with the increasing number of complex cases. There is also normative change, especially with regard to justice, accountability and the responsibility to protect, which to a certain extent complicate and limit the possibilities for United Nations-led mediation and reconciliation efforts. This has opened up space for other actors.

Regional and subregional organizations and civil society actors are playing a greater role in conflict management and mediation in their own neighbourhoods. Regional actors attuned to local sensitivities and cultural traditions are better positioned to support, sustain and reinforce negotiation processes, including those in which external actors are involved. In other words, they are catalysts and legitimizers of action in their neighbourhoods.

However, they still lack sufficient assets or capabilities to deal with serious conflicts on their own, so they continue to reach out to others, including the United Nations. In this regard, track I and track II actors have their respective

comparative advantages, and they should complement each other in their efforts. This would also contribute to the effective use of limited resources.

With the proliferation of actors engaged in mediation, coordination has assumed greater importance, and the key word for successful coordination is “respect”. Coordination is essential for ensuring effectiveness and avoiding situations in which the various actors are played against one another. Therefore, although it is difficult, it would be ideal to have a lead mediator and to encourage all the relevant sides to adhere to the singularity of the process.

It is important to continue the work to enhance capacity in the field of mediation. There is still not enough such capacity, particularly at the level of regional actors, and the quality of mediation activities has a direct impact on the ability of peace to prevail. In this regard, mediators need to be adept, culturally sensitive, gender-attuned, relationship-oriented and politically imaginative, as opposed to process-driven. They need to have a vision and a repertoire of ideas and to strongly believe that success is within reach. These qualities should be fostered in the training of future mediators.

On the other hand, internal factors such as the willingness of the parties are certainly more important for success than outside factors. However, even when the contesting parties are willing to resolve their conflict, the international community must be active in mediation, facilitation and conflict resolution. In this regard, the mediator’s role and goals should be carefully determined, while due significance should be attached to the service of justice, along with peace and reconciliation.

It should also be borne in mind that mediation does not end with the signing of peace agreements. What is needed is not just a peace in which there is no fighting. Building a quality peace which would address the root causes of the conflict and helping to implement such agreements should be the ultimate aims in order to avoid a recurrence of violence. Cooperation, rather than competition, among the various actors engaged in mediation is essential in achieving this ultimate aim.

## 6. High-level session of the Conference

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu, touched upon the drastic changes that had occurred in the global environment over the past two decades and stressed that Turkey had been directly or indirectly affected by all these changes owing to its geostrategic location. Therefore, the country felt compelled to undertake more responsibility towards the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts in its region and beyond. He stated that the Mediation for Peace initiative launched by Turkey and Finland had been a concrete reflection of this understanding. He underlined the importance of maintaining the momentum achieved through this initiative and thanked the President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly for designating mediation as one of the priorities of the session. Minister Davutoğlu then shared his experiences with regard to mediation and facilitation and elaborated on the psychological, intellectual, ethical and methodological dimensions of mediation.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, H.E. Erkki Tuomioja, commended the Conference for bringing together a broad and experienced group of representatives from civil society, the United Nations, regional organizations and Governments with a view to providing a forum for interactive discussions and helping to map out future work in the field of mediation. Furthermore, he emphasized the role of mediation as a significant tool for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and confidence-building. He stressed the importance of having early warning information on emerging conflicts and the ability to use it for concrete preventive action. He also elaborated on the role of civil society in preventive mediation, and the importance of cooperation and coordination among the various actors involved in mediation. Minister Tuomioja also expressed Finland's commitment to maintaining the momentum within the framework of the Mediation for Peace initiative, including by organizing workshops and seminars.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, H.E. Antonio Patriota, praised the Conference and the Mediation for Peace initiative under which it was held as a very useful tool for enhancing the global commitment to mediation. He explained the role of prevention and mediation in Brazilian foreign policy as well as the responsibilities that Brazil had undertaken in this field worldwide, with a particular focus on Latin America. He underlined the interdependence among peace, security and development and highlighted the need to take a deeper look at

the root causes of conflicts and deal with development issues. He also stressed the importance of sustaining the efforts aimed at disarmament and proliferation, since the most serious threats to peace came from heavily armed societies. Emphasizing that prevention was the best way to deal with tensions and conflicts, Minister Patriota also reiterated Brazil's strong support for the work of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

The President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, stressed the importance of mediation in today's complex world. In this regard, he indicated that as President of the General Assembly, he had identified mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes as one of his four priority areas. He expressed satisfaction with the momentum created by the first- ever General Assembly resolution on mediation, adopted on 22 June 2011. He touched upon the developments that had occurred at the United Nations since the adoption of this landmark resolution and expressed his intention to build on that momentum and carry it forward. In this regard, he informed the participants of the informal high-level meeting of the General Assembly that he would host on 23 May 2012 in New York, with a focus on the role of Member States in mediation. He also expressed his readiness to follow up on the conclusions of the Istanbul Conference on Mediation, particularly in the light of the preparations for the informal high-level meeting of the Assembly on 23 May.



## Attachment

Istanbul Conference on Mediation

### Enhancing Peace through Mediation: New Actors, Fresh Approaches, Bold Initiatives

Istanbul, 24 and 25 February 2012

24 February, Friday

9.00-9.45                      Registration

9.45-11.15                    **First session**

***“Increasing relevance of non-governmental actors in conflict resolution”***

*What are the unique strengths and comparative advantages of*

*non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in mediation processes? What role do civil society organizations perform in nurturing peace processes? In which conflict situations have such groups or individuals made the greatest contribution and why? What are the disadvantages of the proliferation of mediators (competition, forum-shopping, incoherent messaging, etc.), and how can they be mitigated? How will the increasingly diverse cast of (non-State) mediators impact the traditional (State-sponsored) mediation efforts? Are NGOs better equipped to grapple with the pressure for quick success and ensuring local ownership in their mediation efforts? What is the best way to meet the challenges of maintaining impartiality and getting the necessary funding for the NGOs involved in mediation?*

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Moderator: Necla Tschirgi, Professor of Practice, Human Security and Peacebuilding, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego, United States of America

## Speakers

- Fabienne Hara, Vice-President, International Crisis Group, New York, United States of America
- Dr. Katia Papagianni, Director for Policy and Mediation Support, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Geneva, Switzerland
- Tuija Talvitie, Executive Director for Crisis Management Initiative, Helsinki, Finland

11.15-11.45

Coffee break

11.45-12.15

**Presentation** by H.E. Ertuğrul Apakan, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, and H.E. Jarmo Viinanen, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, on the activities of the Group of Friends of Mediation in New York

12.15-13.45

Lunch break

13.45-15.15

**Second session*****“Evolving role of the United Nations in mediation”***

*Has the United Nations been successful in promoting and supporting the peaceful resolution of disputes? To which direction is the role of the United Nations evolving in mediation? What can be done to strengthen the ability of the United Nations in mediating conflicts and heading off potential crises before they erupt? Is there any specific kind of conflict (armed, ethnic, intercommunal, etc.) with respect to which the United Nations is better equipped to take on a mediation role? Is there room for improvement for the United Nations to enhance its relationship with NGOs? What is the overall evaluation of the activities conducted by the Mediation Support Unit in the Department of Political Affairs before, during and after conflict? Is there a need to broaden the scope and extent of United Nations outreach through new mechanisms such as the United Nations regional offices?*

Moderator: H.E. Levent Bilman, Director, Policy and Mediation Division, United Nations Department of Political Affairs

**Speakers**

- Professor Radha Kumar, New Delhi Foundation, New Delhi, India
- Professor Edward C. Luck, Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, New York, United States of America
- Youssef Mahmoud, Senior Adviser, International Peace Institute, New York, United States of America

15.15-15.45

Coffee break

15.45-17.15

**Third session*****“Addressing the coordination and capacity-building challenges”***

*What can be done to maximize synergies and coherence among the sometimes disparate actors (States, the United Nations, other regional organizations, NGOs, individuals) involved in prevention and mediation? Where has coherence suffered and where has it prospered? How can the spirit of cooperation, sharing of information and coherence in messaging be encouraged and enhanced between the various actors involved in mediation? Which types of partnership arrangements (lead role, joint mediation or co-mediation) have proved most effective, and in which contexts? On what basis can it be determined which mediator/mediation team would be most appropriate and effective in each case? How can more funding be attracted to mediation activities? Which aspects of capacity-building issues (such as training, financing, knowledge-sharing, joint assessment, rosters of experts) should receive the highest priority at this point? Should the United Nations play a leading role in building capacity and ensuring coordination, and how? Which other international organizations and entities should be involved in such efforts?*

Moderator: Professor Fuat Keyman, Director of the Istanbul Policy Centre and Professor of International Relations at Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey

## Speakers

- Jan Egeland, Europe Director and Deputy Executive Director, Human Rights Watch, Oslo, Norway
- Vasu Gounden, Founder and Executive Director, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, Durban, South Africa
- Michael S. Lund, Senior Fellow, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C., United States of America

17.15-17.45

Coffee break

17.45-19.15

**Fourth session**

### ***“Alternative approaches to mediation”***

*What do “mainstream” and “alternative” mean within the realm of mediation? How did alternative approaches emerge in the area of mediation? Who are the main actors and promoters of alternative approaches in mediation? To what extent have alternative mediation approaches been effective and why? Do alternative approaches in mediation bridge the gap between theory and practice? What are the limits of being alternative to the mainstream mediation approaches? What is the role of “insider mediators”, who come from within the conflict region and often play key roles by connecting the parties in collaboration with other insiders? How are cultural differences relevant to the area of mediation? What does “non-Western mediation” mean? Is there a clear-cut difference between the mediation approaches of Western and non-Western actors? Is there an Asian or Islamic way of mediation? To what extent could or should the United Nations take into account the alternative approaches in mediation while preparing its guidance for more effective mediation?*

Moderator: Professor Bülent Aras, Chairman of the Centre for Strategic Research, MFA, Ankara, Turkey

- Dr. Morgan Brigg, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
- Professor Alma Abdul-Hadi Jadallah, President and Managing Director, Kommon Denominator, Virginia, United States of America
- Dr. Norbert Ropers, Program Director, Berghof Foundation, Bangkok, Thailand

20.00-22.00

Dinner/venue: The Marmara Hotel

25 February, Saturday

9.30-11.00

Speeches by

- H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Turkey
- H.E. Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Finland
- H.E. Antonio Patriota, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Brazil
- H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly

11.00-11.30

Coffee break

11.30-13.00

**Final session**

***“Ideas for the future”***

*What key insights emerged from the discussions that could inform future choices about tools, capacities, partnerships and strategies for mediation? What will be the impact of the increasing profile of NGOs in international mediation efforts on traditional mediation activities? Has the field of international mediation become too crowded to the extent that the competition among various actors could undermine the overall work? How might recent trends towards greater support for prevention and mediation be sustained in the years ahead? In view of the rapidly changing nature of conflicts in the world, what will be required of the United Nations in performing its mediation role? Does the idea of setting up regional offices for mediation strengthen the ability of the United Nations to coordinate and build capacity?*

Moderator: H.E. Şafak Göktürk, Director-General for Policy Planning, MFA, Ankara, Turkey

- Professor William Zartman, Professor Emeritus, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., United States

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States of America

- Professor Fen Hampson, Chancellor’s Professor and Director, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada
- Professor Peter Wallensteen, Dag Hammarskjöld Professor of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Sweden

13.00-14.30

Lunch

15.00-18.00 **Simulation** on mediation to be conducted by Sabancı University/venue: The Marmara Hotel

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Source: [www.mfa.gov.tr](http://www.mfa.gov.tr)

## Annexe II: The Balkans Map I



Source, [www.iss.europe.eu](http://www.iss.europe.eu)

The Balkan map II



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