

# Turkey

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## Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) have experienced major transformations in civil-military relations, military operations and military capabilities. The changes that TAF has gone through gives the impression that Turkey is evolving into a more democratic and powerful nation that contributes to world peace and the Western alliance. However, despite these positive developments, there are also continuities with the previous episodes. The enduring domestic and regional problems of Turkey highlight the limits of its democracy, restrictions to its influence in the regional and international arena, and problems in its relations with the US and European powers.

This chapter will trace these elements of change and continuity by, first, analysing security priorities from 1991 onwards, based on the press briefings of the National Security Council and other official defence documents. Then, the chapter will examine civil-military relations, military operations and military capabilities in three separate sections. Each section will be divided into three periods of 1991-2002, 2003-2010 and 2011-2017.

What emerges from the chapter is that the continuities and changes in the three spheres are due to a mismatch between Turkey's regional power aspirations, on the one hand, and the domestic and regional circumstances it faces, on the other. After the Soviet Union ceased to be a threat, Turkey found new opportunities to project its power in its neighbourhood, while at the same time it feared losing its significance for the Western alliance.<sup>1</sup> Turkey has aspired to become a regional power especially in the Middle East in order to influence the nations in its neighbourhood after the vacuum created by the fall of the Soviet Union and to prove its importance to its long-term allies.<sup>2</sup> These ambitions, however, have been confronted with problems at home. Turkey's continued conflict with the Kurds and its struggle to reconcile political Islam with democracy has prevented it to develop its soft power<sup>3</sup> it aimed to be in the region. Moreover, the Middle East itself went

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<sup>1</sup> Ziya Öniş, 'Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence', *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA)* 5, no. 2 (Summer 2001): pp. 66-74 at 66-67.

<sup>2</sup> On Turkey being a regional power, see the volume edited by Kemal Kirişçi and Barry Rubin, *Turkey and Its World: Emergence of a Multi-Regional Power* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> For the concept, see Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

through a major upheaval following the Arab Uprisings, making it difficult for Turkey to project its influence.<sup>4</sup> The impasses Turkey has faced resulted in a mixture of changes and continuities in civil-military relations, military operations and capabilities.

The chapter has two contributions to the literature on Turkish defence policy and armed forces. Firstly, it provides a comprehensive overview of the three spheres, rather than focusing on only one aspect.<sup>5</sup> By providing an all-encompassing analysis of the Turkish military, the chapter shows how civil-military relations, TAF's peacekeeping operations, military capabilities and defence policies are interrelated. Secondly, previous works have analysed changes that Turkish foreign and defence policy went through in detail,<sup>6</sup> but there is seldom any stress on continuities since the Cold War.<sup>7</sup> This chapter shows that, despite major transformations, Turkish defence policy has also displayed significant continuities since the 1990s.

### **Military Strategy and National Security Priorities**

This section provides a framework for the chapter's analysis of the key dimensions of Turkish defence policy. To do so, it first traces national security priorities and military strategy in the post-Cold War era by examining official documents. Second, it divides the years after 1991 into three different eras in order to show how security priorities changed due to domestic and regional circumstances.

### ***Foreign Policy Goals and Strategy***

In many respects, the primary aim of Turkish foreign policy since the end of the Cold War has remained the same. Turkey has aspired to become a regional power by stressing its Western and Muslim identities, and its geographical location bridging the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Asia.<sup>8</sup> The Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1997 and 2002, İsmail Cem, for instance, advocated

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<sup>4</sup> Bülent Aras, 'Turkish Foreign Policy after July 15', Istanbul Policy Center, February 2017, [http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Turkish-Foreign-Policy-After-July-15\\_Bulent-Aras.pdf](http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Turkish-Foreign-Policy-After-July-15_Bulent-Aras.pdf), pp. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> For seminal scholarly works in each sphere of defence policy, see the resources that are cited in each section of this chapter and the selected bibliography.

<sup>6</sup> See for instances, Aaron Stein, *Turkey's New Foreign Policy: Davutoğlu, the AKP and the Pursuit of Regional Order* (Abingdon: Routledge and Royal United Services for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI), 2014); Bilgin Ayata, 'Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing Arab World: The Rise and Fall of a Regional Actor?' *Journal of European Integration* 37, no. 1 (2015): pp. 95-112; Emre Hatipoğlu and Glenn Palmer, 'Contextualizing Change in Turkish Foreign Policy: The Promise of the "Two-Good" Theory', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 29, no. 1 (2016): pp. 231-250.

<sup>7</sup> For a recent work that looks both at changes and continuities, see E. Fuat Keyman, 'A New Turkish Foreign Policy: Towards Proactive "Moral Realism"', *Insight Turkey* 19, no. 1 (2017): pp. 55-69.

<sup>8</sup> Yaprak Gürsoy, 'Turkey: Populism and Geography,' in *Shaper Nations: Strategies for a Changing World*, edited by William I. Hitchcock, Melvyn P. Leffler and Jeffrey W. Legro (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2016): pp. 124-137.

independence from Western powers and using Turkey's cultural and historical past as an asset. Cem argued that Turkey should not be at the side-lines but must be at the centre of Eurasia because it had "the biggest economy, the most deep-rooted democracy and the strongest armed forces in the wider region."<sup>9</sup>

These aims were reiterated in the White Papers of 1998 and 2000 prepared by the Ministry of National Defence. Emphasizing the unique geographical position of Turkey in an unstable region, the defence objectives were pronounced as safeguarding the territorial unity and sovereignty of the country, and facilitating and participating in the establishment of international and regional stability. The strategy to achieve these objectives was outlined in four points: Deterrence (maintain and develop military capabilities to deter internal and external enemies); Collective security/defence (cooperate with and contribute to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other regional and international alliances); Forward defence (detect threats across borders and carry out preventative interventions before threats reach Turkish territory); and Military contribution to crisis management and intervention in crises.<sup>10</sup>

### ***The Evolution of National Security and Decision-Making***

These goals and strategies have also been reflected in the National Security Council (NSC) meetings. The concept of national security entered Turkish political terminology with the 1961 constitution following the first coup d'état modern Turkey ever witnessed. The constitution established the NSC and blurred the distinctions between defence and security policies. Domestic and foreign threats were fused into the broadly defined and ambiguous notion of "national security".<sup>11</sup>

In its initial years, the NSC was envisioned as a platform in which the government and the general staff could consult each other on security issues stemming mostly from the Cold War environment. However, after the 1971 and 1980 successful coups against elected governments, both the responsibilities of the NSC and the dominance of the general staff over the civilians were increased. As a result, the NSC and the general staff became the main institutions that determined

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<sup>9</sup> İsmail Cem, "Son Bir Yıldan, Önümüzdeki Yüzyıla," *Sabah*, 01 September 1998, <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/1998/09/01/r11.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Robert Hickok, 'Hegemon Rising: The Gap Between Turkish Strategy and Military Modernization', *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly* (Summer 2000): pp. 105–119 at 109–112; Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu and Mustafa Kibaroğlu, 'Defense Reform in Turkey', in *Post-Cold War Defense Reform: Lessons Learned in Europe and the United States*, edited by István Gyarmati and Theodor Winkler (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2002), pp. 135–164 at 139–142. Also see, Necip Toruntay, 'Turkey's Military Doctrine', *Dış Politika* 1 (2009): pp. 256–264 at 259.

<sup>11</sup> Bulut Gürpınar, 'Milli Güvenlik Kurulu ve Dış Politika', *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 10, no. 39 (Autumn 2013): pp. 73– 104 at 77–78.

strategy.<sup>12</sup> After the election of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) to the government in 2002, the general staff lost its dominance over the civilians.<sup>13</sup> Yet, the NSC has continued to be the main platform where national security priorities are discussed and determined. The NSC has also been the arena where the National Security Policy Document (NSPD), the so-called Red Book, is prepared. The clout of the NSPD is so dominant that it is referred to as the “secret constitution” of Turkey because presumably no law can be legislated in contradiction to it.<sup>14</sup>

Full texts of the NSPD and the NSC meeting minutes are not disclosed to the public. Haphazard information on the NSPD leaks to the public every 4-5 years when it is renewed, which can give some clues regarding national security priorities. Similarly, after each Council meeting, a press briefing is issued on the NSC website summarizing the main matters that were discussed and outlining the policies that are being followed.<sup>15</sup> These briefings also contain warnings and relay wishes addressed to the international community and neighbouring countries, providing a useful tool to understand the main elements of national security.

#### *The Period of 1991-2002*

Figure 1 summarizes the most frequently discussed foreign policy issues in the 154 NSC meetings between 1991 and 2002. This period began with the end of the Cold War and continued until the JDP came to power in Turkey. In international relations, the first remarkable event of the period was President Turgut Özal’s decision to participate in the First Gulf War, enabling the economic embargo (to the detriment of Turkey’s own interests) and allowing the use of air bases on Turkish land.<sup>16</sup> TAF also actively participated in the peacekeeping missions in the Balkans. The importance given to Iraq, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) and the Balkans can be seen in the frequent appearance of the two issues in the NSC briefings.

### **FIGURE 1 HERE**

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<sup>12</sup> Gencer Özcan, ‘The Military and the Making of Turkish Foreign Policy’ in *Turkey in World Politics*, pp. 13-30.

<sup>13</sup> Yaprak Gürsoy, ‘The Impact of EU-Driven Reforms on the Political Autonomy of the Turkish Military’, *South European Society and Politics* 16, no. 2 (June 2011): pp. 293-308.

<sup>14</sup> Zeynep Gürçanlı, ‘Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan Açıkladı: “Kırmızı Kitap” Masada’, *Hürriyet*, 13 October 2014, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-acikladi-kirmizi-kitap-masada-27378303>.

<sup>15</sup> At the time of writing, only briefings from 2003 onwards were available. I relied on Gürpınar, ‘Milli Güvenlik Kurulu ve Dış Politika’, for the earlier briefings.

<sup>16</sup> Ian O. Lesser, ‘Turkey in a Changing Security Environment’, *Journal of International Affairs* 54, no. 1 (Fall 2000): pp. 183–198 at 185.

In domestic politics, the 1990s were marked by several unstable coalition governments, the military's involvement in politics, and the height of the Kurdish insurgency in the southeast. The conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê, PKK), a group that is considered as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union (EU), was seen both as a domestic and foreign policy issue due to the presence of Kurdish groups across the border in Iraq.<sup>17</sup> As a result, Kurdish terrorism was discussed in every NSC meeting, and the issue contributed to the frequent appearance of Iraq in press briefings.

Along with the Kurdish insurgency, political Islam was identified as the most important internal threat Turkey faced in the 1997 NSPD.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, in the February 1997 meeting of the NSC, the general staff forced the coalition government of the Islamist Welfare Party (WP) and the True Path Party to accept a list of recommendations on how to combat religious reactionism. The pressure of the military, along with secular civil society groups and political parties, eventually led to the resignation of the government in what became known as the “post-modern coup”.<sup>19</sup> The covert coup of 1997 demonstrated that the Cold War guardian role of the military was sustained into the 1990s, giving the impression that Turkish civil-military relations were the main impediment to further democratization.

### *The Period of 2003-2010*

After 2002, security priorities changed and Turkish defence policy and armed forces entered a new phase. Following the closure of the WP by the secular judiciary, a younger group of leaders from the party founded the JDP and won the elections in 2002. The JDP supported the EU membership of Turkey and brought together an unprecedented alliance of forces consisting of both liberals and Islamists. Among the supporters of the JDP was also the movement led by Fethullah Gülen, a cleric residing in the United States with millions of followers worldwide.<sup>20</sup> Bringing together a coalition of forces against the military, the JDP started a reform process following EU prescriptions. The government gradually curbed the formal powers of the military in the NSC and the entire system.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> For an up-to-date analysis of the conflict between the Kurds and Turkey, see Ezgi Başaran, *Frontline Turkey: The Conflict at the Heart of the Middle East* (London and New York: I.B Tauris, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Pinar Bilgin, ‘Turkey’s Changing Security Discourses: The Challenges of Globalisation’, *European Journal of Political Research* 44 (2005): pp. 175– 201 at 187– 188.

<sup>19</sup> Metin Heper and Aylin Güney, ‘The Military and the Consolidation of Democracy: The Recent Turkish Experience’, *Armed Forces and Society* 26, no. 4 (2000): 635–57.

<sup>20</sup> For an account of the Gülen movement, see Joshua D. Hendrick, *Gülen: The Ambiguous Politics of Market Islam in Turkey and the World* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2013).

<sup>21</sup> Gürsoy, ‘The Impact of EU-Driven Reforms’, *South European Society and Politics*, pp. 293-308.

## FIGURE 2 HERE

The period after 2002 also benefited from the temporary defeat of the PKK following the capture of its leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999. In this peaceful environment, Turkish governments sought “zero problems” with neighbours and cooperated with them diplomatically and economically under Ahmet Davutoğlu’s leadership.<sup>22</sup> Turkey’s “soft-power” reached its peak, partly with the blessing of the United States that viewed Turkey as a model Muslim democracy for the region.<sup>23</sup>

Figure 2 summarizes the foreign policy issues that were discussed in the 55 NSC meetings until the end of 2010. Ankara continued to be preoccupied with developments in Iraq, the flow of immigrants across the border, and the presence of Kurdish insurgents following the 2003 Iraqi invasion. However, it can also be observed that there was a significant drop in the number of matters that were addressed in the period 2003-2010 when compared to the previous one. In terms of language, the press briefings of 2003-2010 were also more succinct and less antagonistic. The NSPD was revised two times during this period, in 2005 and 2010. In the latter document, religious reactionism and movements, including Gülen, were deleted from the domestic threats section and Iran, Iraq and Greece were removed as top security priorities reflecting Turkey’s new approach to neighbours.<sup>24</sup>

### *The Period of 2011-2017*

National security concerns, however, fundamentally shifted following the Arab Uprisings and the 2011 general elections. As Figure 3 shows, Syria became the most frequently discussed matter in a total of 40 NSC meetings. Refugees from Syria that reached more than 3.5 million as of 2017<sup>25</sup> and immigration as a general issue were debated 20 times. Turkey became more involved with the Middle East; and developments in Libya, Yemen and Egypt were surveyed in the NSC meetings.

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<sup>22</sup> Davutoğlu was, first, an advisor to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, then the Minister of Foreign Affairs after 2009. Following Erdoğan’s election to the Presidency in 2014, Davutoğlu served as the Prime Minister until 2016. For a concise summary of Davutoğlu’s ideas, see his article ‘Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007’, *Insight Turkey* 10, no. 1 (2008): pp. 77-96.

<sup>23</sup> Aslı Aydıntaşbaş and Kemal Kirişçi, ‘The United States and Turkey: Friends, Enemies, or Only Interests?’ Turkey Project Policy Paper, no. 12 (April 2017), [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/aydintasbas-kirisici\\_united-states-and-turkey.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/aydintasbas-kirisici_united-states-and-turkey.pdf), p. 1-2.

<sup>24</sup> Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, ‘Kırmızı Kitap’ta Köklü Değişim’, *Milliyet*, 28 June 2010, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/kirmizi-kitap-ta-koklu%20degisim/asliaydintasbas/siyaset/yazardetayarsiv/28.06.2010/1256142/default.htm>.

<sup>25</sup> Adem Yazıcı, ‘HÜGO: Türkiye’deki Toplam Mülteci Sayısı 3,6 Milyonu Aştı’. *Hürriyet*, 12 April 2017, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/hugo-turkiyedeki-toplam-multeci-sayisi-3-6-mi-40425054>.

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) became a cause for distress, at first, as a terrorist group operating in Iraq and Syria. However, after the January 2016 NSC meeting, ISIS was included along with Kurdish separatism as a major domestic threat.

### FIGURE 3 HERE

The Kurdish insurgency regained strength during this period and was addressed both as an internal and external matter, similar to the previous eras. What has changed, however, was the appearance of new actors in Syria. The Kurdish People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel, YPG) and Democratic Unity Party (Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat, PYD) operating in Syria were seen as affiliates of the PKK, and the NSC press briefings asked the international community and allies not to rely on them to combat ISIS. Another matter that changed after 2011 was the re-inclusion of the Gülen movement as a domestic threat. After the June 2014 meeting, the movement was referred to as the "parallel state organization", and following the July 2016 coup attempt (see below for more), it was dubbed as the Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ). In 2015, the NSPD was also revised to include the Gülen movement back into the list of domestic security threats.<sup>26</sup>

#### *Persistent Issues beyond the Middle East*

An element that has remained the same over the three periods analysed above is Cyprus. The island in particular and security in the Eastern Mediterranean in general have been a cause of concern ever since the dispute between the Greek and Turkish communities during the Cold War years. Turkey intervened in 1974 and helped establish the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983 which is still not recognized by the international community.<sup>27</sup> The TRNC has been under the protection of Ankara, and disputes, as well as peace negotiations over the island, have been one of the top priorities of the NSC. Until 2011, Cyprus, TRNC and the Mediterranean were the most frequently addressed issues in the meetings after Iraq. Aside from these two issues, the EU and disputes with Armenia were also on the agenda every period. Although not apparent in the NSC

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<sup>26</sup> 'Cemaat Yeniden Kırmızı Kitap'ta', *Cumhuriyet*, 29 April 2015, [http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/265713/Cemaat\\_yeniden\\_Kirmizi\\_Kitap\\_ta.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/265713/Cemaat_yeniden_Kirmizi_Kitap_ta.html).

<sup>27</sup> For a recent analysis of the Cyprus dispute, see Kıvanç Ulusoy, 'The Cyprus Conflict: Turkey's Strategic Dilemma', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 18, no. 4 (2016): pp. 393-406.

press briefings, disputes with Greece over the Aegean Sea territorial waters, continental shelf, airspace and islands are also known as one of the external threat concerns present in every NSPD.<sup>28</sup>

In sum, Turkish foreign and defence policy aims and strategy remained largely the same after the Cold War. However, the NSC meeting briefings and news on the NSPD show that from one period to another there have been significant deviations in security priorities. After a period of peaceful relations with neighbours and democratization reforms, after 2011, Turkey returned to a period of internal turmoil and conflict with the Kurds, reminiscent of the 1990s. The patterns of continuities and changes in Turkey's defence policy, that have resulted from the mismatch between regional aspirations and domestic constraints, are apparent in the evolution of its civil-military relations, operations and defence capabilities.

### **Civil-Military Relations**

Turkish defence policies and armed forces' operations and capabilities cannot be thought separately from civil-military relations. The Turkish military had been the guardian of the secular and republican character of Turkey until the early 2000s. The formal powers of the military were curbed in the early 2000s, giving the impression that Turkey was democratizing, but the failed coup of July 2016 shows that civil-military relations is still one of the most fundamental impediments to Turkish democratization.

The Turkish Republic was founded by the armed forces in 1923, and for the most part of Turkish history, the military had assumed a guardian role. During the Cold War, Turkey had three successful military coups, in 1960, 1971, and 1980.<sup>29</sup> Following the latter coup, the general staff became the primary decision-maker in security and defence policies, and oversaw the entire political process through the NSC. After the end of the Cold War, the dominance of the military and the NSC continued, as shown by the 1997 coup.<sup>30</sup>

The reforms that were carried out in this sphere in the early 2000s were quite historic. Civilians took control of the military especially in matters related to internal security. However, the coup mentality among some officers stayed the same, as exemplified by the 2007 "e-memorandum". The incident refers to the general staff issuing a warning against the JDP on its website on 27 April

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<sup>28</sup> Gürcanlı, 'Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan Açıkladı'.

<sup>29</sup> William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>30</sup> Ümit Cizre and Menderes Çınar, 'Turkey 2002: Kemalism, Islamism, and Politics in the Light of the February 28 Process', *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2003): pp. 309-332.

2007, threatening to intervene if the government's candidate was elected as president. The threat never materialized, but it sufficiently alarmed the government. The JDP gave Gülen affiliates in the police forces and judiciary its blessing to start investigations on coup plots in 2008. Through the coup investigations, hundreds of officers were dismissed from the military within five years. However, the cooperation between the Gülen movement and the JDP, which led to the extraordinary events surrounding the investigations, did not last long. In 2013, they publicly parted ways over a corruption scandal, involving ministers and Erdoğan's family, and presumably leaked by the Gülenists.<sup>31</sup>

The conflict between the JDP government and Gülenists reached new heights on 15 July 2016 when a bloody coup attempt targeted President Erdoğan, the government and the parliament. The coup was put down by segments within the armed forces that opposed the plotters and citizens who went out on the streets to fight against the putschists.<sup>32</sup> 250 people, including civilians, died, and more than 2,000 were wounded during the coup.<sup>33</sup> The JDP government accused Gülen and his followers, now called FETÖ, as the only culprits of the putsch. Following the events of that fateful night, the government started a major purge within the state. In one year, 50,510 public employees were arrested and 149,411 people, including around 5,000 academics, were dismissed from their jobs.<sup>34</sup>

The purges in the military have been quite significant as well. Until the first anniversary of the coup, 7,655 personnel from TAF were expelled, including 150 generals/admirals and 4,287 officers.<sup>35</sup> Until March 2016, there was a 38% decrease in the number of generals, and the service that was affected the most by these purges was the air force. While before the coup attempt, there were two pilots for every combat plane, the ratio fell to 0.8 after the dismissals.<sup>36</sup> According to

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<sup>31</sup> For the e-memorandum and the coup investigations, see Yaprak Gürsoy, *Between Military Rule and Democracy: Regime Consolidation in Greece, Turkey, and Beyond* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), pp. 151-154.

<sup>32</sup> Metin Gurcan and Megan Gisclon, 'From Autonomy to Full-Fledged Civilian Control: The Changing Nature of Turkish Civil-Military Relations after July 15', IPC-Mercator Policy Brief, August 2016, [http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/IPM\\_PolicyBrief15July\\_12.08.16\\_web.pdf](http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/IPM_PolicyBrief15July_12.08.16_web.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> 'Darbelere Geçit Yok! İlelebet Demokrasi', *Hürriyet*, 15 July 2017, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/darbelere-gecit-yok-ilelebet-demokrasi-40520690>.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> 'Bir Yıllık Bilanço: 15 Temmuz'un Ardından TSK'dan 7 bin 655 Personel İhraç Edildi', *Diken*, 12 July 2017, <http://www.diken.com.tr/bir-yillik-bilanco-15-temmuzun-ardindan-tskdan-7-bin-655-personel-ihrac-edildi/>.

<sup>36</sup> Metin Gürcan, 'How Post-Coup Purges Depleted Turkey's Military', *Al-Monitor*, 16 September 2016, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/09/turkey-military-needs-two-year-fill-ranks-emptied-by-purge.html>

another report, some brigades are now being commanded by colonels because of a shortage of generals.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, a major amendment package was introduced a few days after the coup. With these changes, military high schools and academies were closed down, the path that would allow civilian and religious high school graduates to become officers was opened and a new National Defence University, under the control of the Ministry of National Education, was founded. Additionally, the gendarmerie was split from the general staff and all military hospitals were integrated to the Ministry of Health.<sup>38</sup> Given the weakness of TAF vis-à-vis the civilians after the coup attempt, the government has been the primary decision-maker in senior level military promotions since the coup and is likely to further curb the autonomy of the military.<sup>39</sup>

Another development following the coup has been the straining of Turkey's relations with the United States. The American government has refused to extradite Gülen, to the dismay of the JDP government. There is also a strong belief among the public that the United States was somehow involved in the plot.<sup>40</sup> Public and government opposition to the United States, along with the purges and the amendments, increases the likelihood that TAF would be re-shaped with new recruits in the following decades, possibly also affecting its NATO and Western orientation, as well as capabilities.<sup>41</sup>

In sum, civil-military relations have witnessed important changes from the dominance of the military over politics in the 1990s to the formal civilian control of the 2000s. The 2016 coup attempt, however, demonstrated that civilian control has not meant democratic control and there were elements within the armed forces that still contemplated taking over the government by force.

## Military Operations

The patterns of continuity/discontinuity that have characterized Turkish defence policy are also apparent in its military operations. Specifically, since 1991, TAF's military operations have illustrated

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<sup>37</sup> Sertaç Eş, 'Fiilen "Tuğbay" Rütbesi', *Cumhuriyet*, 10 July 2017, [http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/777788/Fiilen\\_\\_Tugbay\\_\\_rutbesi.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/777788/Fiilen__Tugbay__rutbesi.html).

<sup>38</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), 'Chapter Four: Europe', *The Military Balance 177*, no. 1 (2017): pp. 63-182 at 68-69.

<sup>39</sup> Abdulkadir Selvi, 'Yüksek Askeri Şûra'nın Perde Arkası', *Hürriyet*, 03 August 2017, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/abdulkadir-selvi/yuksek-askeri-s-ranin-perde-arkasi-40538807>.

<sup>40</sup> Soli Özel, 'Darbe Girişimi ve ABD', *HaberTürk*, 31 July 2017, <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/soli-ozel/1274475-darbe-girisimi-ve-abd>.

<sup>41</sup> Leela Jacinto, 'Turkey's Post-Coup Purge and Erdogan's Private Army', *Foreign Policy*, 13 July 2017, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/07/13/turkeys-post-coup-purge-and-erdogans-private-army-sadat-perincek-gulen/amp/>.

two trends. First, Turkey has continuously contributed to international security and peacekeeping operations within the NATO, United Nations (UN) and EU frameworks. Turkey has prioritized such participation by establishing separate Peacekeeping Departments in each of the three forces and the general staff<sup>42</sup> and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Training Centre in Ankara in 1998.<sup>43</sup> Second, TAF has carried out numerous unilateral operations across the Iraqi border in the 1990s, and after a period of inaction, again in Northern Iraq and Syria after 2007. TAF has also had a significant presence with more than 40,000 troops in Northern Cyprus.<sup>44</sup> While participation in international missions is in tune with the second and fourth elements of Turkish strategy (namely collective security and military contribution to crisis management), independent actions against especially Kurdish elements in Northern Iraq and Syria are congruous with Ankara's security priority of internal unity and the third element of its strategy (forward defence).

The appendix to this chapter lists in detail Turkey's participation in international operations according to years, areas, operations and contribution levels. As the list clearly shows, TAF's commanding roles and involvement in peacekeeping missions in BiH, Kosovo and Afghanistan have been quite significant. Although most international operations involved the land forces, the Turkish air force and the navy have been also active in several NATO missions. Overall, Turkey was 37<sup>th</sup> in the world and 4<sup>th</sup> in NATO in its number of uniformed UN Peacekeepers in 2012. When it is considered that TAF participates more in NATO and EU operations than UN ones, it is clear that it has been one of the leading forces in Western efforts of peacekeeping.<sup>45</sup>

The proactive role Turkey takes on in places far away from its own territory, such as Somalia and East Timor, cannot be solely explained in terms of security threats originating from these areas. There is no major public support in such involvement either. For instance, sending troops to Lebanon was highly unpopular because it was seen as a pro-Israeli decision.<sup>46</sup> Ankara has, indeed, persisted in providing for collective security mainly because of its general security anxiety. As the only Muslim majority country in the Western alliance, Turkey has wanted to prove its continued

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<sup>42</sup> Karaosmanoğlu and Kibaroglu, 'Defense Reform in Turkey', p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> George E. Gruen, 'Turkey's Role in Peacekeeping Missions', *American Foreign Policy Interests* 28 (2006): pp. 435-449 at 443.

<sup>44</sup> IISS, 'Chapter Ten: Country Comparisons and Defence Data', *The Military Balance* 117, no. 1, (2017): pp. 549-564 at 169.

<sup>45</sup> Nil Satana, 'Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: Turkey', *Providing for Peacekeeping*, September 2012, <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/04/03/contributor-profile-turkey/>.

<sup>46</sup> Gruen, 'Turkey's Role', p. 435-440.

worth by contributing to Western security following the Cold War.<sup>47</sup> Turkey has been trying to also show to allies that it is not a culprit of instability in the Middle East and is an integral part of peace efforts in the region. This image has been stressed also with the hopes that the United States and European powers would support Turkey's efforts vis-à-vis the Kurdish insurgency.<sup>48</sup>

When TAF's operations are taken into account, military campaigns against Kurdish elements in Northern Iraq and Syria have indeed been quite significant. The first operations in Northern Iraq started in 1983 and after three border crossings in the 1980s, TAF's land and air strikes in the region became recurrent in the period of 1991-1999, at the height of Kurdish separatism.<sup>49</sup> By one account, TAF carried out a total of 42 operations against the PKK in the 1990s, the most significant ones being the Steel operation in 1995 (involving 35,000 soldiers) and the Hammer and Dawn operations in 1997.<sup>50</sup> In another small-scale operation in Kenya in February 1999, the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan, was captured. This development ushered in an era of peace and there were no cross-border deployments after 2002, marking a period of change.<sup>51</sup>

Peace did not last long and operations restarted in late 2007, continuing with the Sun Operation in Northern Iraq in February 2008 and three months of air and land strikes on Qandil in 2011.<sup>52</sup> More recently, after ISIS forces captured Mosul in Iraq, Turkey sent troops and arms to its Bashiqa camp near the town, presumably to train Iraqi forces, but possibly also to prevent the strengthening of the PKK in the region.<sup>53</sup> There is now one Turkish battle group with around 2,000 combatants in Iraq, to the disdain and vocal opposition of Baghdad.<sup>54</sup>

With the start of the Syrian War, TAF has been involved in the conflict in Northern Syria as well. The first operation was carried out in February 2015 and it was a limited mission to transfer 35 Turkish personnel from the tomb of Suleyman Shah and the monument itself, a Turkish enclave to

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<sup>47</sup> Tarık Oğuzlu and Uğur Güngör, 'Peace Operations and the Transformation of Turkey's Security Policy', *Contemporary Security Policy* 27, no. 3 (2006): pp. 472–488.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 481.

<sup>49</sup> For Turkey's relations with Iraq since the 1990s, see Meltem Müftüler-Baç, 'Changing Turkish Foreign Policy towards Iraq: New Tools of Engagement', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 27, no. 3 (2014): pp. 538-552.

<sup>50</sup> Bengi Cengiz, 'TSK'nın Sınır Ötesi Harekatları ve Tezkereler', *Doğruluk Payı*, 24 August 2016, <http://www.dogrulukpayi.com/bulten/57bda0a0070b1>.

<sup>51</sup> For the 2002 operation, see 'NATO and non-NATO Europe', *The Military Balance* 102, no. 1 (2002): pp. 27–84 at 33.

<sup>52</sup> For Turkey's operations in Northern Iraq and Syria since the 1980s, see Cengiz, 'TSK'nın Sınır Ötesi Harekatları ve Tezkereler'; 'Geçmişten Günümüze Irak'ın Kuzeyine Tüm Harekatlar', *Hürriyet*, 12 July 2010, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gecmisten-gunumuze-irakin-kuzeyine-tum-harekatlar-15292244>; 'Türkiye'nin Sınır Ötesi: 1950'den Bugüne Harekatlar Tarihi', *Yeni Şafak*, 04 July 2017, <http://www.yenisafak.com/bilgi/turkiyenin-sinir-otesi-1950den-bugune-harekatlar-tarihi-2745679>.

<sup>53</sup> Tolga Tanış, 'İşte Başika'daki Türk Üssü', *Hürriyet*, 05 July 2016, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/iste-basikadaki-turk-ussu-40132255>.

<sup>54</sup> 'Chapter Four: Europe', *The Military Balance*, p. 169.

the south of Kobane.<sup>55</sup> Following several terrorist attacks in the south of Turkey targeting civilians, however, Turkey heightened its involvement in the Syrian War, from implicitly assisting and providing safe haven to anti-Assad groups, to direct intervention. TAF's Euphrates Shield campaign lasted almost a year between August 2016 and March 2017. Turkey first targeted ISIS, and then captured al-Bab, preventing the Kurdish autonomous regions of Afrin and Kobane to unite and the YPG to take hold of the west of Euphrates, Turkey's previously declared diplomatic 'redline'.<sup>56</sup>

Following the end of the Euphrates Shield operation, President Erdoğan warned that Turkey could carry out strikes again.<sup>57</sup> Ankara views Kurdish autonomy in Northern Syria with anxiety, fearful that it would lead to an independent Kurdish state that might eventually lead to a loss of Turkish territory or at least strengthen the PKK. The recent armed transfers and cooperation between the United States and PYD against ISIS is also seen as detrimental to Turkey's interests in the region.<sup>58</sup> The Syrian War will continue to preoccupy Turkey and the chances for a return to the 2002-2011 period of no conflicts with the neighbours is unlikely in the foreseeable future.

There is also the potential of Ankara to get entangled in more and unexpected conflicts in the Middle East, such as in the dispute between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Turkey has committed to take Doha's side on the issue and deployed around 300 military personnel, armoured vehicles and howitzers in the summer of 2017.<sup>59</sup> Doha and Ankara had cooperated in economic relations before the crisis began, and Turkey's current involvement in the predicament is parallel to its continued regional power aspirations.

By way of summary, TAF's participation in international operations since 1991 reflects its goal to become a regional power and to continue to be a part of the Western alliance. However, the Kurdish insurgency in the periods of 1991-2002 and 2011-2017 has shown the limits of these goals. Turkey had to deploy troops across its borders, which jeopardized relations with its southern neighbours and the United States. These push and pull dynamics between external aspirations and

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<sup>55</sup> 'Turkey Enters Syria to Remove Precious Suleyman Shah Tomb', *BBC*, 22 February 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-31572257>.

<sup>56</sup> Spyridon Plakoudas, 'The Syrian Kurds and the Democratic Union Party: The Outsider in the Syrian War', *Mediterranean Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (March 2017): pp. 99–116.

<sup>57</sup> 'Türkiye'nin Sınır Ötesi: 1950'den Bugüne Harekatlar Tarihi'.

<sup>58</sup> Bethan McKernan, 'Turkey Condemns US for Arming Kurds with Weapons ahead of Raqqa Assault', *Independent*, 31 May 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/us-kurds-weapons-arms-turkey-erdogan-condemns-raqqa-offensive-a7765811.html>.

<sup>59</sup> Uğur Ergun, '25 Türk Askeri Katar'a Gidiyor', *Hürriyet*, 21 July 2017, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/120-turk-askeri-katara-gidiyor-40497765>; 'Türkiye'den Katar'a Üçüncü Askeri Sevkiyat', *Hürriyet*, 18 July 2017, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/turkiyeden-katara-ucuncu-askeri-sevkiyat-1962017-40524302>.

domestic constraints have also shaped the patterns of continuity and discontinuity in the evolution of TAF's defence capabilities and budgets.

### **Military Capabilities, Procurement and Expenditure**

Security priorities have led to a drive to increase TAF's capabilities and building up of a defence industry from the late 1980s onwards. These efforts and military operations discussed above resulted in high military spending when compared with other European countries. TAF has significantly increased its arms and modernized its weapons, becoming a significant military power on the world stage. However, TAF is still a conscript army and dependent on Western countries in terms of arms supplies, limiting its overall capabilities and restricting its ambitions of becoming a regional power.

The military modernization program and domestic procurement of weapons can be traced back to the Reorganization of Defence Industry Act of 1985. The Defence Industry Development and Support Administration (DIDSA), which directed the Defence Industry Support Fund, was founded with this act. In 1989, DIDSA became the Under-secretariat of the Defence Industry (Savunma Sanayii Müsteşarlığı, UDI), which has functioned under the Ministry of Defence since then, with its own off-budget and auditing-free accounts.<sup>60</sup>

Following the experience of the First Gulf War that highlighted Turkey's inferior capabilities vis-à-vis its NATO allies, a military modernization program was announced in 1996, with the purposes of procuring new and advanced equipment, improving the systems that were already in stock and developing domestic defence production. The program assigned \$150 billion for the increase of military capabilities through domestic production until the 2020s. In the first decades of the program, Turkey produced F-16 fighter jets, Armoured Infantry Fighting Vehicles (AIFV) and radio systems.<sup>61</sup>

There were two interrelated reasons for these initiatives. First, as discussed above, Turkey felt insecure regarding the continued support of the United States and Europe against internal threats after the Cold War. The US arms embargo following Turkey's intervention in Cyprus in 1974 had shown that this type of dependence could result in equipment shortages directly influencing TAF's capabilities. Since the 1990s, successive German governments have also occasionally banned selling military equipment to Turkey due to its record of human rights in its combat with Kurdish

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<sup>60</sup> Karaosmanoğlu and Kibaroglu, 'Defense Reform in Turkey', p. 23.

<sup>61</sup> Elliot Hen-Tov, 'The Political Economy of Turkish Military Modernization', *MERLA: Middle East Review of International Affairs* 8, no. 4 (December 2004): pp. 49–59 at 49, 55.

guerrilla forces in the southeast.<sup>62</sup> Second, it was believed that only a capable military and a developed defence industry would provide the necessary prestige and hard power to carry out Turkey's ambitions in its neighbourhood. This is why, despite changing governments, efforts to increase military capabilities have continued for three decades. The recent JDP governments, as well, have prided themselves with many procurement projects and launches, showing them off as major achievements for both domestic public support and external prestige.<sup>63</sup>

Through the military modernization and defence industrialization programs, Turkey has been able to produce new military equipment. Some of the highlights are Göktürk-2: a high resolution, remote sensing satellite; Altay: a Main Battle Tank (MBT); Ejder Yalçın: an armoured vehicle for urban and cross-country terrains; Kirpi/Hedgehog: a mine resistant ambush protected vehicle for carrying troops, weapons, command and control systems, and detecting and disposing of mines; Anka: a Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE-class) Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV) system for reconnaissance, surveillance and target detection; Atak: a T-129 attack and tactical reconnaissance helicopter; and Milgem: a patrol and anti-submarine warship (corvette).<sup>64</sup> According to the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan of the UDI, some of the on-going projects include the development of air and ballistic missile defence systems,<sup>65</sup> the TF-X fighter jet, the Anti-Air Warfare (AAW) defence frigate, and submarines with air-independent propulsion systems.<sup>66</sup>

As a result of these procurement efforts, TAF ranks among the top militaries of the world in terms of some of its equipment and systems. For instance, Turkey is one of the 15 countries in the world that has Military Information, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Satellites.<sup>67</sup> The Turkish Air Force has 1,018 aircrafts, and Turkey's total fleet size is outranked only by the United States in

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<sup>62</sup> The most recent incident occurred in March 2017. See, 'Rheinmetall fails to get clearance for Turkey export contracts', *Reuters*, 23 March 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-rheinmetall-turkey-idUSKBN16U1LL>.

<sup>63</sup> For an overview of these reasons, see Hüseyin Bağcı and Çağlar Kurç, 'Turkey's Strategic Choice: Buy or Make Weapons?' *Defence Studies* 17, no. 1 (2017): pp. 38–62 at 41–46, 54–57.

<sup>64</sup> 'Turkish Defence Industry Products 2015–2016', Republic of Turkey, MoND, Undersecretariat for Defense Industries, accessed 15 August 2017, <http://www.ssm.gov.tr/urunkatalog/>.

<sup>65</sup> The need to develop domestic missile defence capability became apparent when Turkey had to rely on NATO for such capabilities after the First Gulf War and, more recently, as a result of the Syrian civil war. As with the general decision to sustain a domestic defence industry, the retraction of the Patriot antimissile system by the Dutch government in 2014 urged Turkey to build up its own systems and not to rely on Western powers. Gulden Ayman and Gulay Gunluk-Senesen, 'Turkey's Changing Security Perceptions and Expenditures in the 2000s: Substitutes or Complements?' *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal* 11, no. 1 (2016): pp. 35–45 at 39.

<sup>66</sup> 'Stratejik Plan 2017–2021', Savunma Sanayii Müsteşarlığı, accessed 15 August 2017, [www, http://www.ssm.gov.tr/anasayfa/kurumsal/sp/Sayfalar/default.aspx](http://www.ssm.gov.tr/anasayfa/kurumsal/sp/Sayfalar/default.aspx), at pp. 18, 62, 86–123; 'Frigate Projects: TF-2000', Turkish Naval Forces, accessed 12 December 2016, [https://www.dzkk.tsk.tr/icerik.php?dil=0&icerik\\_id=76](https://www.dzkk.tsk.tr/icerik.php?dil=0&icerik_id=76).

<sup>67</sup> 'Chapter Ten'. *The Military Balance*, p. 562.

NATO.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, Turkey is among the top 10 countries worldwide in terms of the number of Main Battle Tanks (MBTs) in active service.<sup>69</sup>

An overall assessment of defence industrialization in Turkey, however, demonstrates mixed results. On the positive side of the coin, in 2011, 54% of Turkey's defence needs were met by domestic resources. From 2002 to 2015, arms exports increased from \$247 million dollars to \$1.655 billion.<sup>70</sup> Dependence on Western powers has decreased and, with the ability to diversify its imports to non-Western countries, such as China, Japan, and South Korea, Turkey has gained important leverage vis-à-vis the United States and European suppliers.<sup>71</sup> On the negative side of the coin, however, Turkey is still far away from self-sufficiency in arms production and relies on the United States for advanced weapons systems. In many projects, Turkey partners up with foreign companies and continues to be dependent on other countries for know-how and technology transfer. Similarly, although exports have increased to countries with almost no defence industry (such as Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan and Pakistan), the amount of arms imports still outweigh exports significantly.<sup>72</sup>

#### FIGURE 4 HERE

Concurrent with the military modernization and defence industry programs, Turkey has had high levels of military spending since the end of the Cold War. According to the data of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), there was first an increase in spending from 3.8% of GDP in 1991 to the peak of 4.1% in 1997 as shown in Figure 4. This increase coincided with the fight against the Kurdish insurgency, operations in Iraq, and the “post-modern”

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<sup>68</sup> ‘Total Aircraft Strength by Country’, Global Firepower, accessed 15 August 2015, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/aircraft-total.asp>.

<sup>69</sup> ‘Chapter Ten’, *Military Balance*, p. 560. This in contrast with Germany which gradually decreased its number of MBTs because of the expectation that there would not be any wars on its territories (see Ina Wiesner’s chapter in this volume). The continued importance given to MBTs in Turkey is parallel to the types of internal and external threats the country is exposed to.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Stratejik Plan’, *Savunma Sanayii Müsteşarlığı*, pp. 36–44.

<sup>71</sup> In 2013, Turkey decided to deploy a long-range air and missile defence system (T-LORAMIDS project) with a Chinese company, but the project was abandoned after US pressure. Currently, there is the discussion of purchasing the S-400 Russian system. Even if, in the end, Turkey decides not to go ahead with its plans, the existence of other alternative countries strengthens Turkey’s hand in striking better deals with Western powers. Bağcı and Kurç, ‘Turkey’s Strategic Choice’, p. 47; Çağlar Kurç, ‘Between Defence Autarky and Dependency: The Dynamics of Turkish Defence Industrialization’, *Defence Studies* 17, no. 3 (2017): pp. 260–281 at 274–275; Arda Mevlutoglu, ‘Commentary on Assessing the Turkish Defence Industry: Structural Issues and Major Challenges’, *Defence Studies* 17, no. 3 (2017), 282–294 at 286–287.

<sup>72</sup> According to WMEAT data, for the years between 2004 and 2014, Turkey’s mean arms exports to imports ratio was 0.055. ‘WMEAT 2016 Tables II–IV – Arms Transfer Deliveries, 2004–2014’. World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 2016, U.S. Department of State, accessed 15 August 2017, <https://www.state.gov/t/avc/rls/rpt/wmeat/2016/index.htm>.

coup. Military expenditure then shows a significant and continuous decline from 3.9% in 2002 to 2% in 2016. Although this drop can be explained by the increasing civilian control over the military, the data on military spending as a percentage of GDP must be read with caution for three reasons. Firstly, although military expenditures declined, Gulden Ayman and Gulay Gunluk-Senesen show that spending on the police and coast guard increased by 150% and on the gendarmerie increased by 50% between 2000 and 2014. In other words, costs of internal security compensated for the decrease in external security in line with Turkey's security priorities. Second, the off-budget funds are not transparent enough, making it difficult to calculate military expenditures fully. Finally, decreases in terms of percentage of GDP are due also to the growing Turkish economy.<sup>73</sup>

Indeed, when the same figures are presented in constant dollars, it is clear that there has been no significant decrease in military spending since the Cold War (see Figure 5). It is possible to observe more spending in the 1990s, similar to the previous figure, but spending has been around the same range when averages are taken into account. Based on SIPRI data, Turkish annual military expenditure was around \$14.8 billion on average between 1991 and 2002, \$14.2 billion between 2003 and 2010, and \$15.2 billion between 2011 and 2016. Moreover, as Figure 5 shows, Turkish military expenditures have been constantly higher than the average amount spent among European countries. Worldwide, between 1991 and 2016, Turkey ranked in the top 20 spending countries, ranging somewhere between 11<sup>th</sup> (in 1998 and 1999) and 19<sup>th</sup> (in 2006) in different years.

### **FIGURE 5 HERE**

Aside from high military expenditure, another element of continuity of Turkish defence policies and armed forces has been conscription. While most European countries have abandoned conscription entirely or allowed the option of civil service to replace compulsory draft, there are yet no serious plans to abolish conscription in Turkey.<sup>74</sup> In 1991, Turkey had 18 months of draft for all male citizens, which was briefly reduced to 15 months in the period 1993-1994. In 1995, the service period was increased back to 18 months due to the Kurdish conflict. In 2003, service times were again reduced, and today all Turkish male citizens after the age of 18 are drafted for 15 months, and then function as reserves until the age of 41. Service time is reduced for university graduates, who

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<sup>73</sup> Ayman and Gunluk-Senesen, 'Turkey's Changing Security Perceptions and Expenditures', pp. 40-41. Also see, Karaosmanoğlu and Kibaroglu, 'Defense Reform in Turkey', p. 20.

<sup>74</sup> Birgül Demirtaş, 'Understanding Turkish Perception of Conscription and Reluctance to Reform: A Westphalian Approach in a Post-Westphalian World?' *Iran and the Caucasus* 16 (2012): pp. 355-368 at 363.

can be drafted either for 12 months as reserve officers or for 6 months as privates. Despite the occasional introduction of partial exemptions through payments, the conscription system is essentially the same as the one that was introduced in 1927.<sup>75</sup>

According to the World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers (WMEAT) data, the average number of TAF personnel for the 2004-2014 period was 485,000. Turkey has the 12<sup>th</sup> largest military in the world and second in NATO after the United States. An average of 0.7% of Turkey's population was under arms for the 2004-2014 period, a figure placing Turkey 35<sup>th</sup> worldwide and second in NATO after Greece.<sup>76</sup> Although the worldwide trend is to professionalize the military and hire more skilled personnel to use high-tech equipment, the persistence of conscription has impeded developments in this respect.<sup>77</sup> The main reasons given for this insistence on conscription are the special geographical location of Turkey and the continuing internal threats. Moreover, serving in the military reinforces the militaristic security culture of Turkey.<sup>78</sup>

In sum, Turkey struggles between continuity and change in the sphere of military capabilities as well. It has modernized its armed forces and defence industry to a considerable extent, in tune with its regional power aspirations and security priorities. The Global Firepower index ranks Turkish military strength 8<sup>th</sup> out of 133 countries, based in part on the strength of its forces and manpower.<sup>79</sup> Notwithstanding these achievements, however, domestic circumstances lead to shortcomings. Turkey maintains conscription for internal security reasons and is still dependent on Western powers for weapons supplies.

## Conclusion

This chapter has analysed Turkish defence policy and armed forces by examining three periods and highlighting changes and continuities. After the end of the Cold War, Turkey set out its goals as projecting more power to its surrounding regions and protecting its internal security. Contributing to international missions abroad, carrying out operations across the borders to prevent any threats materializing within the country, and building up the capabilities of the military (through conscription, a domestic defence industry and high military expenditures) were set out as the central

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 355.

<sup>76</sup> WMEAT, Table 1, Military Expenditures and Armed Forces Personnel'.

<sup>77</sup> Although Turkey fits the "post-modern military" model in many respects, conscription is one of the elements that diverges from the pattern. For an overall assessment, see Nil Şatana, 'The Transformation of the Turkish Military and the Path to Democracy', *Armed Forces and Society* 34, no. 3 (April 2008): pp. 357-388.

<sup>78</sup> Demirtaş, 'Understanding Turkish Perception of Conscription and Reluctance to Reform', p. 367.

<sup>79</sup> '2017 Turkey Military Strength', *Global Firepower*, accessed 15 August 2017, [http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country\\_id=turkey](http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=turkey).

elements of defence policy. These goals did not change; however, domestic circumstances and the regional security environment did, creating a discrepancy between Turkey's aspirations and what it can truly achieve.

In the period of 1991-2002, the military had guardian roles and supervised domestic and defence policies. Moreover, TAF fought against the Kurdish insurgency in the southeast and carried out operations in Northern Iraq. At the end of the 1990s, TAF had been successful in putting down PKK terrorism and Turkey entered a period of high prospects. In the period of 2003-2010, under the leadership of the first two JDP governments, the EU membership process gained pace and along with a series of reforms, a more balanced relationship between the civilian power holders and the military was established. Turkey had peaceful relations with its neighbours and was seen as the model Muslim democracy in the Middle East by the Western alliance.

Things changed yet again after 2011. Turbulence in the Middle East and strengthening of the PKK at home and its affiliates in Northern Syria and Iraq, as well as the new threat of ISIS, forced Turkey to abandon its peaceful relations with neighbours and deploy troops across the border. In domestic politics, the JDP governments' alliance with the Gülen movement fractured, leading to the 2016 coup attempt. These developments are also putting Turkey's alliance with the United States and European powers to a tough test. Time will tell if these circumstances would also lead to further shifts in Turkey's defence policies and the capabilities of its armed forces.

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Figure 1

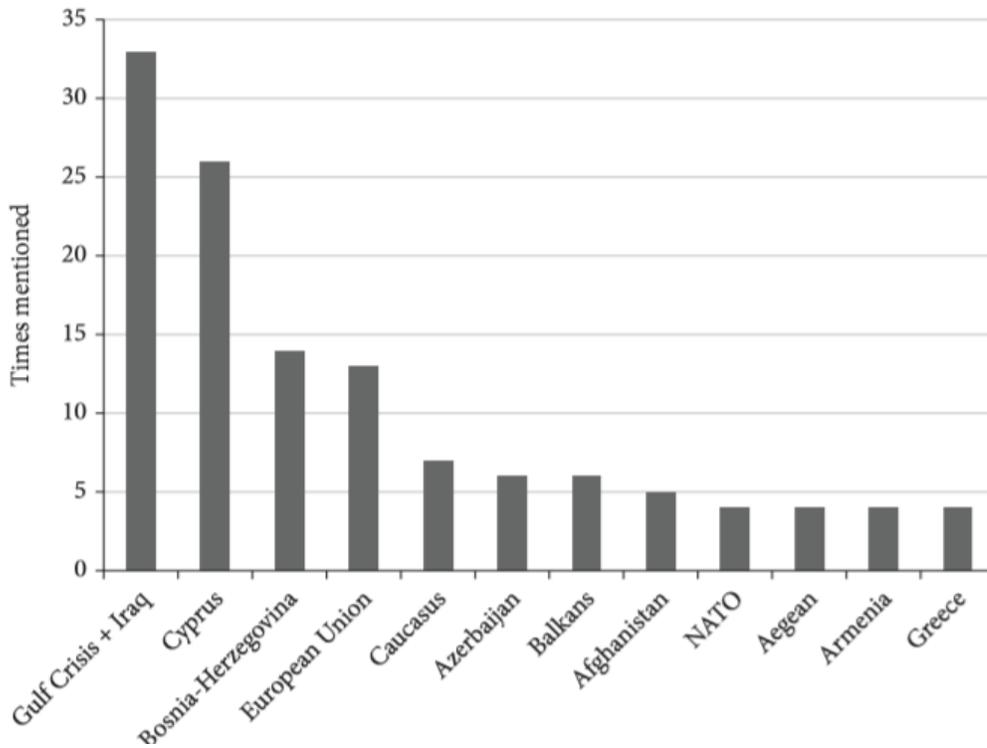


Figure 2

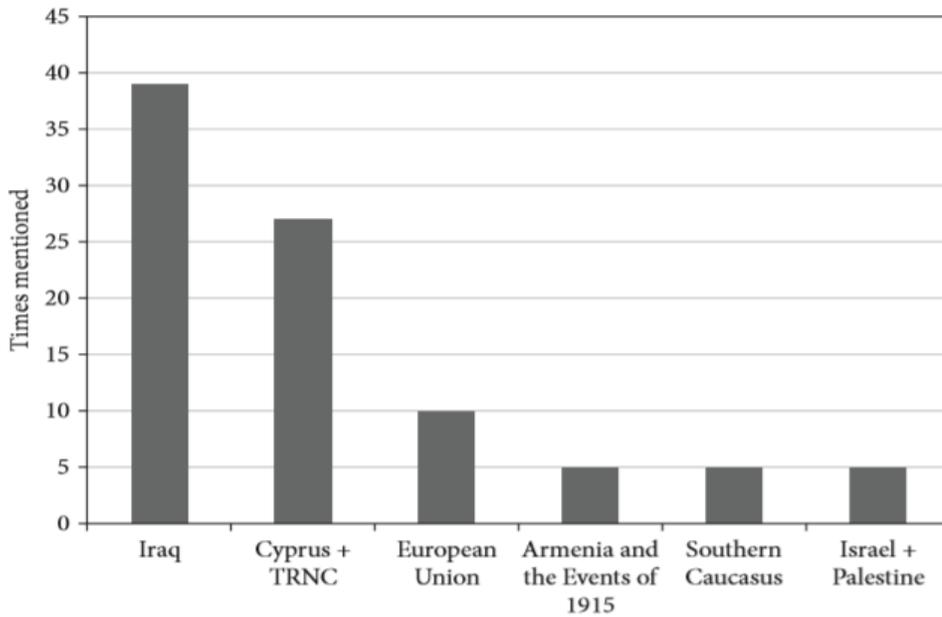
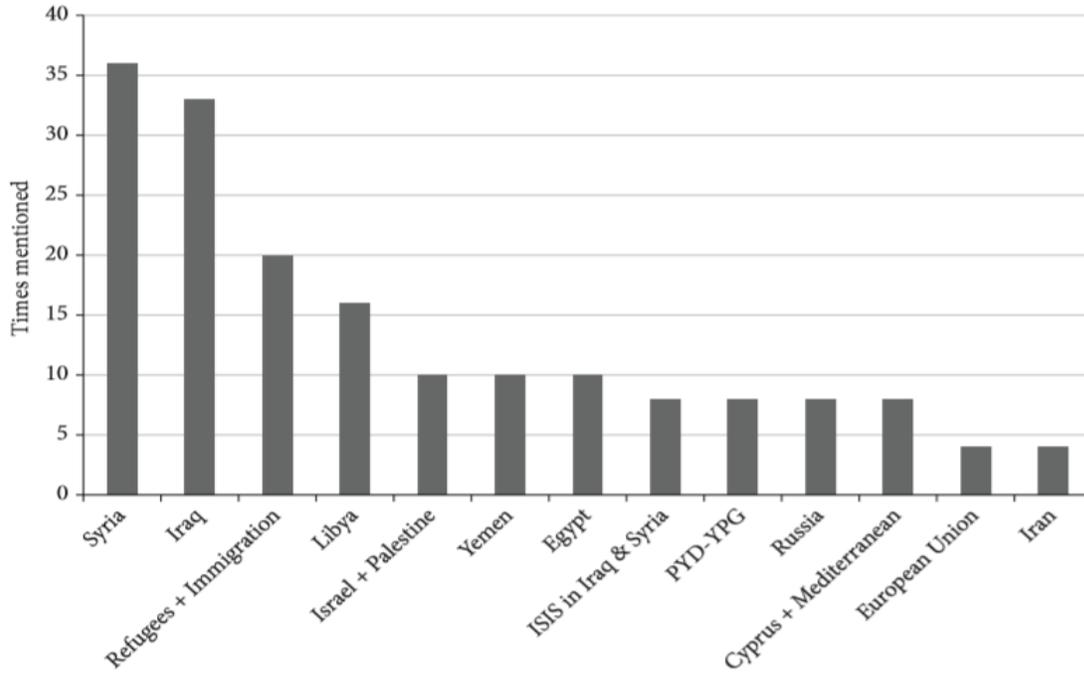


FIGURE 8.2. The frequency of foreign policy topics in the NSC press briefings, (2003–2011).

**Figure 3**



**FIGURE 8.3.** The frequency of foreign policy topics in the NSC press briefings, (2012–2017).

**Figure 4**



**FIGURE 8.4.** Military expenditure of Turkey, 1991–2016.

Figure 5

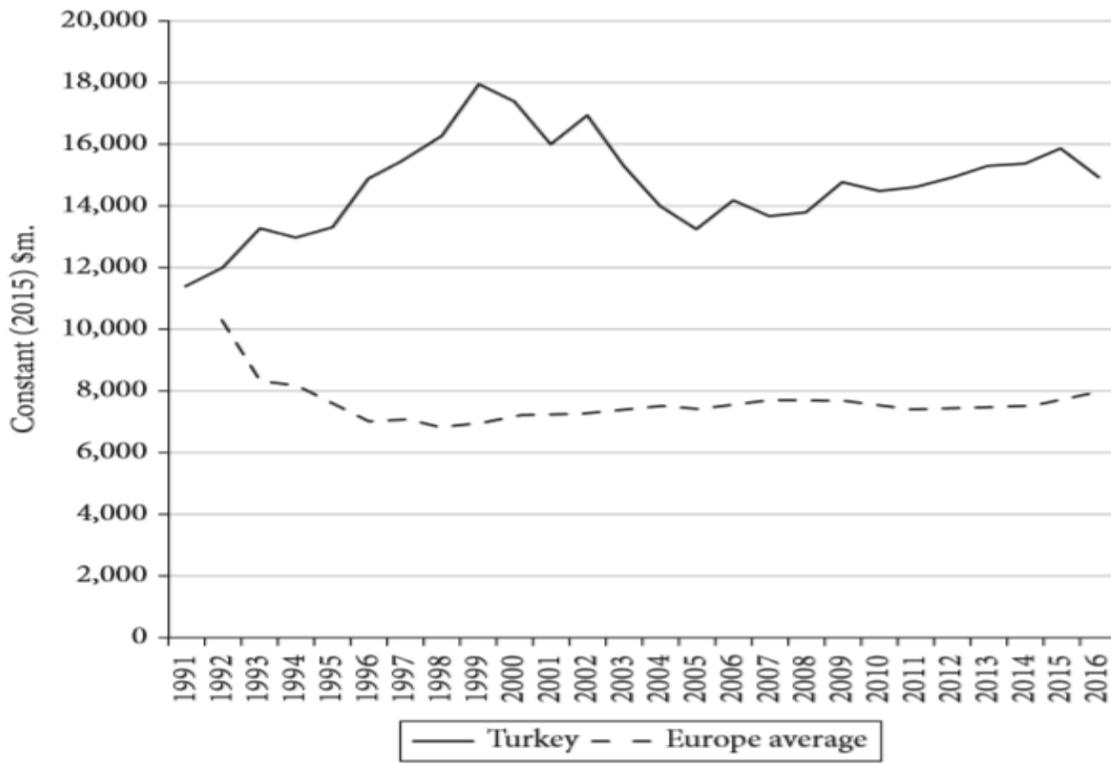


FIGURE 8.5. Military expenditure by country, 1991–2016.

Appendix –Foreign Deployments of Turkey as Part of International Operations<sup>80</sup>

AREA	YEARS	OPERATION NAME	FRAMEWORK	CONTRIBUTION & DEPLOYMENT
<b>Afghanistan</b>	since 2002	*ISAF *Operation Resolute Support (since 2015)	NATO	*on average 922 personnel each year *1 infantry brigade HQ (in 2011 - 2014) * 2 infantry battalions (in 2011 - 2014) *led the ISAF operation from June 2002 to February 2003 and in February-August 2005. *commanded the Kabul Regional Command Capital (RCC) in April-December 2007 and in November 2009-November 2012 *responsible for the Kabul International Airport in February-August 2005 *gave \$1.5 million to the Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund and \$2 million to the Helicopter Initiative *trained more than 14,000 ANA members in Afghanistan and in Turkey

<sup>80</sup> Compiled from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, Vol. 90–117 (1990–2017); ‘Bilgi Notu’, Türk Deniz Kuvvetleri, 19 July 2016, <https://www.dzkk.tsk.tr/guncelduyuru.php?id=681&dil=1>; ‘Peace Support Operations’, Turkish Land Forces, accessed 19 August 2017, <http://www.kkk.tsk.tr/en/BDH/BDH.aspx>; ‘IV. Turkey’s International Security Initiatives and Contributions to NATO and EU Operations’, Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed 19 August 2017, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/iv-european-security-and-defence-identity-policy-esdi\\_p\\_en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/iv-european-security-and-defence-identity-policy-esdi_p_en.mfa).

	since 2013	UNAMA	UN	1 observer
<b>Bosnia- Herzegovina</b>	since 1994	*UNPROFOR *IFOR; SFOR *EUFOR *EUPM	UN NATO EU	*average 1,308 personnel each year in 1994-2004 *average 273 personnel since 2005 *1 infantry brigade group *leads one of the five Regional Coordination Centres
	1996-1997	UNMIBH	UN	26-27 civilian police personnel
	2001			1 observer
	2011-2012		OSCE	1-2 experts
<b>Kosovo</b>	since 1999	KFOR	NATO	*average 647 personnel each year * 1 battalion task force *assigned personnel in HQ *led Kosovo Multinational South Task Force Command in May 2007-May 2008
	since 2008	EULEX	EU	around 91 personnel
	since 2009		OSCE	2-12 experts
	since 2010	UNMIK	UN	1 observer

<b>Croatia</b>	1997	SFOR	NATO	34 personnel
<b>Albania</b>	1997	Operation Alba	Various Contributing Countries	around 700 personnel
<b>FYROM</b>	2001	Essential Harvest	NATO	1 infantry company team
<b>Italy</b>	1993	*Deny Flight *IFOR/SFOR Air Component * Deliberate Forge * EUFOR Air	NATO EU	*170 personnel (in 1995-1997) *4-18 F-16s
<b>Iran/Iraq</b>	1990	UNIMOG	UN	15 observers
<b>Iraq/Kuwait</b>	1991- 2002	UNIKOM	UN	6-7 observers
<b>Iraq</b>	2009- 2012	NTM-I	NATO	*2 experts *donor country to the NTM-I Trust Fund *trains Iraqi officers at the Center for Excellence on Defence Against Terrorism and the Center for Partnership for Peace in Ankara
<b>Libya</b>	2011	Operations Unified Protector	NATO	*at least 1 frigate *1 submarine *2 tanker aircrafts *4 F-16s
<b>Somalia</b>	1993	UNOSOM II	UN	*320 personnel *1 mechanized infantry company
	2017	UNSOM		1 observer

<b>Georgia</b>	1995- 2009	UNOMIG	UN OSCE	*4-5 observers
<b>Democratic Republic of Congo</b>	2007- 2008	EUFOR EUPOL Kinshasa	EU	*17 personnel (in 2007) *1 expert (in 2008)
<b>East Timor</b>	2000- 2004	UNTAET	UN	1-2 observers
<b>Sudan</b>	2005- 2011	UNMIS UNAMID	UN	1-4 experts
<b>Hebron</b>	2007- 2008	TIPH	Various Contributing Countries	3 observers
<b>Ukraine</b>	since 2015		OSCE	6-14 experts
<b>Lebanon</b>	since 2007	*UNIFIL *Maritime Task Force (in 2007- 2009)	UN	*average 321 personnel each year *233 navy personnel in 2007- 2008 *1 engineer instruction company
<b>Baltic countries</b>	2006	Baltic Air Policing	NATO	*led the mission in April-July 2006 * 4 F-16s and support personnel were deployed in Lithuania's Siauliai International Airport
<b>Adriatic</b>	1994- 1996	Sharp Guard	NATO	1 frigate

<b>Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden</b>	since 2009	*Operation Ocean Shield *CTF-151	*NATO *Combined Maritime Forces	1 frigate
<b>Mediterranean Sea</b>	since 2011	*Operation Active Endeavour *SNMG 2 *SNMCMG 2	NATO	*1 frigate *1 mine hunter ocean *took over the command of the forces in July 2015