



Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations

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Summary

Several Turkish domestic and foreign policy issues have significant relevance for U.S. interests, and Congress plays an active role in shaping and overseeing U.S. relations with Turkey. This report provides background information on Turkey and discusses possible policy options for Members of Congress and the Obama Administration. U.S. relations with Turkey—a longtime North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally—have evolved over time. Turkey’s economic dynamism and geopolitical importance—it straddles Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia and now has the world’s 17th-largest economy—have increased its influence regionally and globally. Although Turkey still depends on the United States and other NATO allies for political and strategic support, its growing economic diversification and military self-reliance allows Turkey to exercise greater leverage with the West. These trends have helped fuel continuing Turkish political transformation led in the past decade by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Justice and Development Party (AKP), which has Islamist roots.

Tens of thousands of mostly middle-class Turks joined protests in June 2013 to express dismay at what they assert to be an increasingly authoritarian leadership style from Erdogan. The protests and the government’s response have raised questions for U.S. policymakers about Turkey’s domestic political trajectory and economic stability. It has also raised questions about the extent and nature of Turkey’s regional influence. Future domestic political developments may determine the extent to which Turkey reconciles majoritarian views favoring Turkish nationalism and Sunni Muslim values with protection of individual freedoms, minority rights (including those of Turkey’s ethnic Kurdish population), rule of law, and the principle of secular governance.

In addition to the attention it is paying to domestic discontent in Turkey, Congress has shown considerable interest in the following issues:

- Working with Turkey in the Middle East to influence political outcomes in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere; counter Iranian influence; and preserve stability;
- Past deterioration and possible improvement in Turkey-Israel relations and how that might affect U.S.-Turkey relations; and
- A potential congressional resolution or presidential statement on the possible genocide of Armenians by the Ottoman Empire (Turkey’s predecessor state) during World War I.

Many U.S. policymakers also are interested in the rights of minority Christian communities within Turkey; the currently stalemated prospects of Turkish accession to the European Union (EU); promoting increased trade with Turkey; and Turkey’s role in the Cyprus dispute. Congress appropriates approximately \$5 million annually in military and security assistance for Turkey. The EU currently provides over \$1 billion to Turkey annually in pre-accession financial and technical assistance.

Since 2011, U.S.-Turkey cooperation on issues affecting the Middle East has become closer, as Turkey agreed to host a U.S. radar as part of a NATO missile defense system and the two countries have coordinated efforts in responding to the ongoing conflict in Syria. Nevertheless, developments during the Obama Administration on Syria, Israel, and other issues—including domestic concerns highlighted in June 2013—have led to questions about the extent to which U.S. and Turkish strategic priorities and values converge on both a short- and long-term basis.

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Introduction and Issues for Congress

As global challenges to U.S. interests have changed over time, U.S. relations with Turkey—an important ally since the Cold War era—have evolved. Congress appropriates relatively small amounts of military and security assistance for Turkey compared with past sums, but still plays an active role in shaping and overseeing U.S. relations with Turkey. Several Turkish domestic and foreign policy issues have significant relevance for U.S. interests. U.S. policymakers are closely observing the domestic unrest that began in late May 2013 and spread across Turkey in June to determine how it may impact U.S. interests (see “June 2013 Protests and Their Implications” below).

Gauging how U.S. and Turkish interests coincide has become increasingly complicated and dynamic. U.S.-Turkey closeness on issues affecting the Middle East has increased since 2011 because

- Turkish leaders perceive a need for U.S. help to encourage regional democratic transition while countering actors with the potential to undermine internal Turkish and regional stability—including the Iranian and Syrian regimes and terrorists from Turkey’s own ethnic Kurdish population; and
- The United States may be more dependent on its alliance with Turkey to forward U.S. interests in the region because of the recent end of the U.S. military mission in Iraq and other possible future reductions in its Middle East footprint.

These factors have led to frequent high-level U.S.-Turkey consultation on developments in Syria and the broader region. In addition, U.S. officials reportedly interpreted Turkey’s agreement in September 2011 to host a U.S. early warning radar as part of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) missile defense system for Europe¹ as a critical sign of Turkey’s interest in continued strategic cooperation with Washington. During the previous year (2010), some U.S. and European policymakers and analysts had voiced concern about Turkey’s reliability as a bilateral and NATO ally owing to its active opposition to United Nations sanctions against Iran for its nuclear program and its deteriorating relationship with Israel.²

In addition to Congress’s interest in following the ongoing manifestations of domestic discontent in Turkey, it has considerable interest regarding Turkey with respect to the following issues and questions:

- *Addressing Regional Change in the Greater Middle East:* Will Turkey’s policies and actions be reconcilable with U.S. interests in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Afghanistan with regard to political and material

¹ The proposed elements of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) to missile defense proposed by the Obama Administration and a deployment timeline are described in a September 15, 2011, White House press release available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/09/15/fact-sheet-implementing-missile-defense-europe>. This document explicitly contemplates the EPAA as a means of countering missile threats from Iran. See also CRS Report RL34051, *Long-Range Ballistic Missile Defense in Europe*, by Steven A. Hildreth and Carl Ek.

² This was particularly so in the wake of the May 2010 Gaza flotilla incident, which took place in international waters under disputed circumstances and resulted in the death of eight Turks and an American of Turkish origin, but signs of deterioration predated that event.

- support for populations, opposition movements, and transitional governments; existing and potential future sanctions against autocratic regimes; internationally mandated humanitarian and/or military action that includes or may include the use of Turkish bases or territory; and limiting Iranian influence?
- *Israel and the U.S.-Turkey Relationship*: What are prospects for future Turkey-Israel relations, especially given signs of improvement in early 2013? How might these relations affect U.S. efforts at regional security coordination? If Turkey-Israel tensions persist, should they affect congressional views generally on Turkey's status as a U.S. ally?
 - *Armenian Genocide Resolution*: What are the arguments for and against a potential U.S. congressional resolution or presidential statement characterizing World War I-era deaths of hundreds of thousands of Armenians through actions of Ottoman Empire (Turkey's predecessor state) authorities as genocide? How would such a resolution or statement affect U.S.-Turkey relations and defense cooperation?
 - *Rights of Non-Muslim Minority Religions*: What is Congress's proper role in promoting the rights of established Christian and Jewish communities within Turkey?

Many U.S. policymakers also are interested in the currently stalemated prospects of Turkish accession to the European Union (EU); Turkey's domestic political developments, including its Kurdish issue; promoting increased trade with Turkey; and Turkey's role in the decades-long dispute between ethnic Greek and ethnic Turkish populations regarding the control of Cyprus.

According to the Turkish Coalition of America, a non-governmental organization that promotes positive Turkish-American relations, as of June 2013, there are 128 Members of Congress in the Congressional Caucus on Turkey and Turkish Americans.³

³ See <http://www.tc-america.org/in-congress/caucus.htm>.

Figure I. Turkey and Its Neighbors



Source: CRS Graphics.

June 2013 Protests and Their Implications

Overview of Protests

Outbreak and Context

Nationwide protests broke out in Turkey in early June 2013 in response to a police crackdown on May 31 against people demonstrating at Gezi Park in central Istanbul. The demonstration targeted a government redevelopment project that would involve largely demolishing the park's green spaces.⁴ Despite minimal coverage of the unfolding events by Turkish broadcasters, more than 100,000 Turks informed largely through international media sources and Internet-based social media flocked to Taksim Square (which adjoins Gezi Park) and to other urban gathering spaces throughout the country over the following days. The demonstrations swelled, partly in response to dismissive remarks about the protestors by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan (profiled in **Appendix A**).⁵ Many middle-class Turks joined the protests to express dismay at what they describe as an increasingly authoritarian leadership style from Erdogan and the ruling AKP (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*, or Justice and Development Party) government. Calls for Erdogan's resignation have been a common refrain among protestors, with one former U.S. official asserting that Erdogan's 10 eventful years as Turkey's head of government have given him "political fatigue—even arrogance."⁶ For further context, see "Country Overview" below.

The on-and-off persistence of demonstrations for more than two weeks and the police's use of forceful crowd control measures such as tear gas and water cannon attracted international attention. At least four people, including one police officer, have reportedly died in association with the protests,⁷ more than 5,000 have been injured, and hundreds have been detained or arrested.

The protests and the government's response have raised questions for U.S. policymakers about Turkey's commitment to liberal democracy, its domestic political trajectory, and its economic stability. It has also raised questions about the nature of Turkey's regional profile as it pertains to the ongoing war in neighboring Syria, as well as to Turkey's uncertain prospects for joining the European Union and its possible example for Arab countries in reconciling Islamist-friendly majority opinion with secular democratic mechanisms.

The demonstrations broke out within a larger context of widely held concerns such as, in the words of one analyst, "a majoritarian theory of governing, mistreatment of minorities, crony capitalism, [and] rampant over-development in Istanbul."⁸ Some lawmakers from the opposition-

⁴ The proposed project is a reproduction of an Ottoman army barracks that would house a shopping mall.

⁵ In his initial responses to the growing protests, Erdogan dismissed the demonstrators as *çapulcular* (loosely translated as "marauders," "looters," or "riff-raff"), and said that Twitter was a "menace." Subsequently, some Turks were reportedly arrested (though later released) for using Twitter to coordinate action in Izmir (Turkey's third largest city) during the first week of the protests.

⁶ Graham E. Fuller, "Turkey's Growing Pains," *New York Times*, June 13, 2013.

⁷ "Senior UN officials urge restraint, dialogue to defuse tensions fuelling protests in Turkey," *UN News Centre*, June 18, 2013.

⁸ Michael Koplow, "Turkey's House of Cards Tumbles Down," *ottomansandzionists.com*, June 12, 2013.

leading, largely secularist CHP (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, or Republican People’s Party) participated in the initial Taksim Square protests before withdrawing largely at the behest of protestors, perhaps in part to mitigate perceptions that the demonstrations were fundamentally partisan. Some religious conservatives and self-identified ethnic minorities (Kurds and Armenians) were reportedly counted among the protestors’ ranks. Nevertheless, the protestors’ predominantly youthful and cosmopolitan appearance and expressions of concern regarding Erdogan’s governing agenda have led many observers to speculate that concerns about possible imposition of Islamic norms on secular lifestyles may have motivated the protests to some extent.⁹

Most observers have dismissed comparisons between Turkey’s protests and the unrest that has occurred since late 2010 in some Arab countries. In addition to clear differences between the elected Erdogan and his more dictatorial counterparts who inspired uprisings in “Arab Awakening” countries such as Syria, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, and Bahrain, the level of economic disaffection in Turkey is significantly less than in those Arab countries. Some commentators have argued that, if anything, the AKP is a “victim of its own success,” because Turkey’s recent rapid economic growth has swelled the ranks of a politically aware and technologically savvy urbanized middle class increasingly motivated to demand civil liberties.¹⁰ Others have suggested a variety of alternative comparisons that they assert offer instructive, if inexact, parallels. These include the “Occupy” movement from recent years in various Western countries; large-scale middle-class protests in Israel during the summer of 2011; Iran’s “Green Movement” protests following its controversial 2009 presidential election; and protests that broke out later in June 2013 in Brazil.

Government Response

During the week of June 10, Prime Minister Erdogan and Turkish authorities sought to establish their control over Istanbul’s Gezi Park and Taksim Square after the initial wave of protest had

Timeline of Key Events

- May 28 – Protestors gather to prevent construction work in Istanbul’s Gezi Park
- May 31 – Police raid protestors with tear gas and water cannon; others gather in Taksim Square adjoining Gezi Park to protest the crackdown
- June 1-2 – Police withdraw from Taksim Square temporarily and protests grow exponentially nationwide, largely in response to PM Erdogan’s rhetoric; protestor-police conflicts resume
- June 3-6 – Erdogan travels to North Africa; President Gul and Deputy PM Arinc seek some accommodation with protestors
- June 6 – Erdogan returns to Istanbul amidst crowds of supporters; his remarks do not stem unrest
- June 11 – Following the subsiding of protests elsewhere, police clear Taksim Square
- June 12-14 – Consultations with protest leaders leads to Erdogan offer of plebiscite on future of Gezi Park
- June 13 – European Parliament passes resolution criticizing the government’s response to the protests; triggering negative reactions from Erdogan and FM Davutoglu
- June 15-16 – Police clear Gezi Park and block it and Taksim Square off to protestor access
- Week of June 17 – Striking workers confront police; dozens arrested for “terrorism”; Arinc publicly discloses contingency plan for military intervention; silent “standing” protests begin and subsequently spread

⁹ The protests began days after the Turkish parliament passed a controversial law limiting the advertisement and sale of alcohol in urban areas, which reinvigorated debate over the degree to which Erdogan and the AKP are pursuing an Islamist agenda. Erdogan labeled opponents of the law “alcoholics” and, according to many media sources, hinted that the same label applied to the first two leaders of Turkey’s secular republic—Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and Ismet Inonu.

¹⁰ Soner Cagaptay and James Jeffrey, “Will Protests at Home Affect Turkey’s Foreign Policy?,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy PolicyWatch 2092, June 19, 2013.

largely subsided elsewhere. In the previous week, while Erdogan was on a trip to North Africa, President Abdullah Gul (profiled in **Appendix A**) and Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc had made statements generally validating the protestors' rights to assemble and express grievances. However, Erdogan argued after his return that the urbanite protestors did not reflect majority Turkish opinion—a reference to large electoral mandates the AKP has achieved in the past due in part to substantial support from voters in Turkey's Anatolian heartland. Erdogan and other authorities alternated between attempts to meet with or otherwise engage some protest leaders, and new deployments of riot police (including some reportedly brought in from outlying provinces) to clear Gezi Park and Taksim Square and prevent protestors from re-gathering. Many sources reported that police arbitrarily detained several people, and even sent tear gas into enclosed spaces such as hotels and medical tents housing protestors seeking safe haven.¹¹ Such tactics have led to statements of concern and calls for investigations into alleged police misconduct from United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights Navi Pillay.¹²

In addition, the Turkish authorities' overall approach has attracted domestic and international criticism (see below), including from some media sources whose viewpoints often align politically with AKP's. The government has publicly differentiated between the original environmental demonstrators and other protestors they characterize as “innocent” or “naïve,” and those they claim are “marginal” or have “terrorist” motives. On June 16, Erdogan, who has made statements discouraging AKP supporters from confronting protestors on the streets, held a rally for tens of thousands of these supporters in the outlying Istanbul neighborhood of Kazlıcesme. A similar rally occurred on June 15 in the outlying Ankara district of Sincan. Though protests appear to have steadily decreased in size, it is unclear whether government responses are likely to intensify them at a future point, channel them into other outlets of expression, or largely snuff out organized shows of discontent. CHP leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu (profiled in **Appendix A**), who called for Erdogan's resignation, said that “The underlying reason for disproportionate force to disperse Gezi Park ahead of [Erdogan's rally] in Istanbul was to show power. This is the mindset of a dictator.”¹³

As the week of June 17 began, a union strike fed contention in Istanbul, Ankara and a few other cities between protestors seeking to gather and police ordered to hinder their efforts. Authorities reportedly arrested dozens of people for being “members of terror organizations who destroyed public property, incited the public and attacked the police.”¹⁴ Deputy Prime Minister Arinc raised the possibility that the gendarmerie and even the regular military could be called upon to guarantee order.¹⁵ The possibility that the AKP government would call upon the military to intervene carries symbolic weight because of the Turkish military's historical role as the self-appointed “guardian of the state.” On multiple occasions, the military had imposed or attempted to impose its views of order on Turkish society—including apparent past attempts to undermine

¹¹ Human Rights Watch, “Turkey: A Weekend of Police Abuse,” June 18, 2013.

¹² *UN News Centre*, op. cit.

¹³ Ayla Jean Yackley and Asli Kandemir, “Turkish opposition leader sees protests as ‘turning point,’” *Reuters*, June 17, 2013.

¹⁴ Kareem Fahim and Sebnem Arsu, “Turkey Arrests Dozens in Crackdown on Protests,” *New York Times*, June 18, 2013.

¹⁵ Kareem Fahim and Sebnem Arsu, “Turkish Official Says Army May Have to End Protests,” *New York Times*, June 17, 2013. Additionally, Turkish Interior Minister Muammer Guler reportedly announced that new regulations on social media would be “aimed at people who use Twitter or Facebook for ‘inciting people or coordinating and directing events that would cause social incidents or endanger material and physical public safety through manipulative, false news.’” *Ibid.*

Erdogan's rule. That Erdogan might consider relying on the military in this situation may speak both to the seriousness of the threat he perceives and to the widely expressed view that changes over the past decade—largely spearheaded by Erdogan's government—have led to a military that is more subservient to civilian control.

Some analysts are skeptical that discontent will abate unless Erdogan broadly accommodates demands by various groups and individuals for more pluralistic participation in Turkey's political process. However, it is possible that Erdogan and other Turkish officials calculate that by quelling and preventing major public demonstrations, and engaging aggrieved individuals and groups separately rather than en masse, they can address lingering political challenges from a more advantageous position. It is unclear whether the idea Erdogan has floated for a possible plebiscite by Istanbul residents to determine the fate of Gezi Park,¹⁶ along with his assurances that police are being monitored and disciplined for incidences of brutality, will ameliorate tensions.

U.S. and European Reactions¹⁷

In its reactions to the ongoing situation in Turkey, the United States appears to be balancing its concerns for Turkey's democratic and human rights credentials with its recognition of the importance of having a stable Turkey as an ally in an increasingly turbulent region.

In a June 13 press briefing, White House press secretary Jay Carney made the following statement, largely echoing parts of previous statements from Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of State John Kerry:

I can simply say that we continue to follow the events in Turkey with concern, and we welcome efforts to resolve this situation through Democratic means. And we remain concerned by any attempts to punish individuals for exercising their right to free speech as well as attempts by any party to provoke violence. We urge calm on all sides.

As we have said, we believe that Turkey's long-term stability, security, and prosperity is best guaranteed by upholding the fundamental freedoms of expression, assembly, association, and a free and independent media. Turkey is a close friend and ally of the United States and we expect the Turkish authorities to uphold these fundamental freedoms.

Some observers note that the Obama Administration has carefully avoided direct criticism of Prime Minister Erdogan. An analyst from a major U.S. think tank has asserted that President Barack Obama may be better positioned than any other actor to influence Erdogan, given the importance of the U.S.-Turkey relationship and the two leaders' history of close consultation.¹⁸

Senator John McCain, who has also cultivated ties with Erdogan and other Turkish leaders, made the following remarks on June 6:

¹⁶ An Istanbul court temporarily suspended the proposed redevelopment project for Gezi Park shortly after the demonstrations began. Erdogan's idea for a plebiscite would only take effect if and when this suspension were to be lifted.

¹⁷ For information on U.S.-Turkey and EU-Turkey relations, respectively, see "U.S.-Turkey Relations" and **Appendix D**.

¹⁸ Julie Pace, citing Bulent Aliriza of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, in "Protest Crackdowns Test Obama Ties With Turkish PM," *Associated Press*, June 11, 2013.

Look, I love Turkey, I think when you look at the economy, when you look at the success of that country, it is magnificent, but I also think that Erdogan was, in the view of many of the Turkish people, becoming more like a dictator than a Prime Minister or President.¹⁹

Leaders from the European Union have also voiced concern, including more direct criticism of Erdogan. On June 12, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton called upon the Turkish government to find a way forward based on “dialogue, tolerance and mutual respect.”²⁰ In a June 13 resolution, the European Parliament raised multiple concerns about the state of civil liberties and pluralism in Turkey, and further stated that the Parliament

Deplores the reactions of the Turkish Government and of Prime Minister Erdoğan, whose unwillingness to take steps towards reconciliation, to apologise or to understand the reactions of a segment of the Turkish population have only contributed to further polarisation.²¹

Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu (profiled in **Appendix A**) took issue with the European Parliament resolution, and was quoted as saying:

On the very same day in which we withdrew our police forces from Taksim Square, similar methods were used to contain a protest in Frankfurt [in Germany]. Upon closer inspection of this announcement, it is evident that it is intending to portray the image that disproportionate efforts and even violent measures were used against non-violent protesters. Turkey and our government will always protect liberties. We will continue to exercise the laws of free demonstration within a state of law. It is in this respect, that we draw a distinct line between the youth and civil society organization representatives that are in Taksim’s Gezi Park and the marginal groups that are trying to exploit the situation.²²

Like Davutoglu, Erdogan has referred to alleged Western double standards, and on June 17 was quoted as saying, “I do not recognize this Parliament of the European Union.”²³ In thinly veiled references to Western countries and media organs and to various domestic and international banks and companies, Erdogan has been cited as accusing “some ‘world powers’ of being partners of ‘internal plotters’ aiming to weaken his government” and to cause economic turmoil for their own ends.²⁴

James Jeffrey, a former U.S. ambassador to Turkey and Iraq, made remarks at a June 13 Washington, DC, event that were summarized as follows:

In fact, certain aspects of the [Turkish] government's response to the unrest are hardly different from that seen in Europe and the United States. Tear gas, riot police, and water cannons are commonplace at IMF and G-8 summits, while countries like Germany have a long tradition of meeting violent demonstrations with muscular police force. Excessive crackdowns are wrong wherever they occur, but Turkey is not alone in this regard.

¹⁹ Transcript of remarks by Senator John McCain, “U.S. Strategy in the Middle East,” Brookings Institution (Washington, DC), June 6, 2013.

²⁰ Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the latest developments in Turkey, European Parliament, Strasbourg, France, June 12, 2013.

²¹ European Parliament Resolution of 13 June 2013 on the Situation in Turkey (2013/2664(RSP)).

²² “We will return the EP ruling right back to them,” *Sabah*, June 14, 2013.

²³ “EU has no respect for democracy, says Turkish PM Erdoğan,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, June 17, 2013.

²⁴ *Ibid.* See also Jonathon Burch, “UPDATE 1-Turkey's Erdogan vows to ‘choke’ financial speculators,” *Reuters*, June 9, 2013.

Of course, Turkey differs from other democracies in the scale and nature of its response to the current protests, with the use of force against peaceful demonstrators in Gezi Park a case in point.²⁵

On June 20, Germany blocked the opening of the regional policy chapter of Turkey's EU accession talks, which had been scheduled to begin on June 26 and would have been the first accession talks in three years.²⁶ The regional policy chapter had been "unblocked" by France in February 2013, following a nearly six-year block of its own. An EU diplomat was quoted as saying that the ongoing protests "obviously had an impact" on Germany's decision, though German officials cited technical reasons. The *Financial Times* reported that some Turkish officials suggest the decision "could lead to an irreparable break with Brussels."²⁷

General Assessment

The protests and their consequences are likely to have lasting effects on Turkey, and could have implications for the future tenor of U.S.-Turkey relations. One result is a potential change in Turkey's political trajectory. Prospects for continued AKP electoral dominance at local and national levels, establishing a new constitution through popular referendum, and Erdogan's election as president in August 2014 are now being questioned. Turkish officials and politicians may be eyeing the local elections scheduled for March 2014 as a test of Erdogan's staying power. Erdogan may hope to prevail with voters before having to consider significant changes to his governance methods.²⁸ Actively using the protests to energize political bases could lead to spirited public debate in advance of elections, but could also fuel fears of destabilization, particularly in light of the ideological unrest that has beset Turkey throughout so much of its republican history.²⁹ A former U.S. official has written that Erdogan has a variety of political enemies who would "love to bring him down."³⁰

Observers speculate over whether Turkey's opposition might gain traction, or whether a political challenge to Erdogan could emerge from Abdullah Gul or other elements from within the AKP who may be concerned at the possible effects of Erdogan-style confrontation on Turkey's political and economic stability. Though a mid-June poll indicated that Erdogan maintains majority support, his approval rating was six percentage points down from April.³¹ Mid-June polling also indicated that although the AKP's support had only fallen slightly since April, the CHP narrowed the gap between the two parties during that time from 21 to 13 points.³² It is unclear to what

²⁵ Cagaptay and Jeffrey, op. cit.

²⁶ For more information on Turkey's relationship with the EU, see **Appendix D**.

²⁷ Daniel Dombey, et al., "Germany blocks Turkey's bid to join EU," *ft.com*, June 20, 2013.

²⁸ Erdogan and other leading AKP officials reportedly conferred on June 8 about possibly calling for early national elections in response to the protests, but decided against doing so.

²⁹ Such unrest was commonplace in the 1960s and 1970s, but occurred as recently as 2007 over issues relating to Turkey's religious-secular and civil-military balance.

³⁰ Fuller, op. cit.: "Some of the old dominant and now displaced Kemalist ruling class would love to bring him down; so would many nationalists who stand against concessions to the large Kurdish minority that would recognize its independent cultural aspirations. The displaced army is miffed. Strong secularists resent his opening of the public sphere to Islam—long a major no-no of the Kemalists."

³¹ Poll from MetroPOLL Strategic and Social Research Center, cited in Tom A. Peter, "Poll shows Erdogan's popularity has taken a hit. Could he lose his mandate?" *Christian Science Monitor*, June 18, 2013.

³² MetroPOLL survey cited in Ece Toksabay, "Poll shows rising support for Turkish opposition amid protests," *Reuters*, June 17, 2013.

extent groups inspired by the protests, such as Taksim Solidarity, might sustain a lasting presence in politics and/or civil society.

As various analysts theorize about what the protests and the government's response mean for Turkey and its place in the world, two somewhat opposed—though not mutually exclusive—narratives have emerged. One narrative posits that Erdogan and the AKP might have undone in a few short weeks much of the considerable progress they had achieved in building their credentials as competent pragmatists and economic stewards with respect for constitutional civilian democracy.³³ It also holds that by presiding over and possibly provoking heightened instability and polarization, Turkey's leaders damaged the international brand they had built up of Turkey as a safe investment and reliable ally—a relatively stable and Western-anchored country with rising influence in a troubled but geopolitically important region.

The second narrative emphasizes the possibility that the protests and their ripple effects have placed or ultimately will place a check on Turkey's leaders and institutions where other possible checks and balances had not done so.³⁴ It acknowledges that pathways toward a more consensual and prosperous democracy remain open for Turkey, even if they are not linear and require additional "course correction,"³⁵ perhaps partly because Turkish citizens of various views, backgrounds, and classes have shared interests in keeping their economy afloat and addressing regional security challenges. However, some purveyors of this narrative caution against overstating the protests' impact. For example, according to the summary of James Jeffrey's June 13 remarks referenced above,

while it is fashionable to support the Gezi protestors, they do not have electoral sway in proportion to their high visibility. As a result, Turkey's large conservative base—which has been mostly absent from the movement—could play a role akin to Nixon's silent majority.³⁶

The extent to which these narratives anticipate Turkey's political trajectory could determine answers to important questions such as: Will Turkey's domestic unrest, when combined with recession in Europe and turmoil in Syria and the region, have a lasting negative impact on the international confidence Turkey's economy needs to guarantee continued inflows of capital and tourists? Or will the short-term shocks experienced by Turkey's markets (the Istanbul stock exchange index was down 20% from May 22 at one point in mid-June) and currency represent a passing blip?³⁷ Will Turkey's AKP leadership opt for authoritarian modes of governance similar to those of the military rulers they previously disempowered, thereby making eventual EU membership a more remote possibility? Or will further developments reveal Turkey's resilient commitment to Western values and relationships? Do Turkey's imperfections irreparably damage its claim to be a model or example for countries in transition in the Arab world? Or will the political system's adjustments to new realities maintain or even increase its relevance for nascent Arab democracies?

³³ See, e.g., Dilip Hiro, "Turkey's Economic Miracle Under Fire," YaleGlobal Online, June 13, 2013; Koplou, *op. cit.*; Stephan Richter, "Why AKP should abandon Erdogan," *cnn.com*, June 13, 2013.

³⁴ See, e.g., Quinn Mechem, "The AKP's accountability problem," *foreignpolicy.com*, June 9, 2013.

³⁵ See, e.g., Fuller, *op. cit.*; Cagaptay and Jeffrey, *op. cit.*

³⁶ Cagaptay and Jeffrey, *op. cit.*

³⁷ "Strong but Vulnerable," *Economist*, June 15, 2013; Hiro, *op. cit.*

U.S. Policy Implications

Turkey's strategic position and regional influence is of interest to Congress and the Obama Administration. Turkey is a key NATO ally with several U.S. and NATO military assets currently deployed to Turkish and NATO bases throughout the country.³⁸ U.S. policymakers have limited means to influence domestic Turkish political outcomes. However, close observation of the dynamics of and constraints facing Turkish leadership, public opinion, civil liberties, and political and economic activity might help the United States understand how domestic developments in Turkey could influence the stability and strength of Turkey as a regional and global partner.

Thus, in addition to U.S. interests in promoting liberal democratic principles worldwide, strategic considerations could affect whether and how U.S. officials and lawmakers address Turkish domestic issues in legislation, oversight, bilateral consultations, and public statements. For example, President Obama previously voiced his support for Prime Minister Erdogan's ongoing attempts to end Turkey's decades-long conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK (*Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan*), as part of Erdogan's larger efforts to accommodate Turkey's Kurds within the constitutional system and society. If the PKK and other Kurdish political actors sense, however, that Erdogan is weakened domestically and will not be able to deliver on expectations he has raised, an unwinding of negotiations and cease-fires could take place at a critically sensitive time for regional security. Additionally, uncertainty stemming from domestic unrest about the viability of Turkish leadership and national defense could undermine Turkey's thus far strong political and territorial support for Syrian opposition groups, and its humanitarian support for Syrian refugees.³⁹ Well before the protests began, polls and other sources indicated that a majority of Turks thought that Turkey should lessen its exposure to risk in Syria,⁴⁰ and domestic tensions over the issue had increased near the Syrian border following the death of at least 52 people in a double car bombing on May 11 in the border town of Reyhanli.

It is unclear whether domestic uncertainty in Turkey is likely to alter the extent of Turkish reliance on U.S. political support and NATO security guarantees, and whether any such changes might affect diplomatic prospects on Syria or on other issues (all discussed below) followed closely within Congress—ranging from recent attempts to improve Turkey-Israel relations, to those involving Cyprus and Armenia.

Country Overview

Recent History

Since the 1980s, Turkey has experienced fundamental internal change—particularly the economic empowerment of a middle class from its Anatolian heartland that emphasizes Sunni Muslim values. This change has helped fuel continuing political transformation led in the past decade by Prime Minister Erdogan, President Gul, and Foreign Minister Davutoglu (all of whom are profiled in **Appendix A**). They all come from the Islamic-leaning AKP, which first came to power

³⁸ For more information, see “Bilateral and NATO Defense Cooperation” and **Figure 3**.

³⁹ Michael Birnbaum, “Turkish protests hit Syria planning,” *Washington Post*, June 21, 2013. See also “Syria” below.

⁴⁰ Cagaptay and Jeffrey, op. cit.

in elections in 2002. For decades, the Turkish republic relied upon its military, judiciary, and other bastions of its Kemalist (a term inspired by Turkey’s republican founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk) “secular elite” to protect it from political and ideological extremes—sacrificing at least some of its democratic vitality in the process. Through a series of elections, popular referenda, court decisions, and other political developments within the existing constitutional order, Turkey has changed into a more civilian-led system that increasingly reflects the new middle class’s dedication to market economics and conservative values.

Turkey’s internal transformation has helped to drive increased engagement and influence within its own region. At the same time, its leaders have tried to maintain Turkey’s traditional alliances and economic partnerships with Western nations in NATO and the EU, routinely asserting that Turkey’s location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and its increasing soft power provides it and its allies with “strategic depth.”⁴¹ Thus, the geopolitical importance of Turkey for the United States is now intertwined with its importance as an ally and symbol—politically, culturally, economically, and religiously. Turkey’s continued regional influence could depend on its maintaining the robust economic growth from its past decade that has led to its having the world’s 17th-largest economy.

Popular discontent with coalition rule stemming from a 1999-2001 economic and financial crisis and perceptions of government corruption and ineffectiveness opened the way for the AKP to achieve single-party rule with its first election victory in 2002. Since the AKP came to power, the military has reportedly become less scrutinizing of its rising officers’ religious backgrounds and views, taxes and regulations on the consumption of alcohol have increased, and the wearing of headscarves by women in universities and other public places has gained legal and social acceptance. In early 2012, an education reform bill enacted by parliament to extend the

Turkey in Brief	
Population:	75,627,384 (2012 est.)
Area:	783,562 sq km (302,535 sq mi., slightly larger than Texas)
Most Populous Cities:	Istanbul 13.85 mil., Ankara 4.97 mil., Izmir 4.01 mil., Bursa 2.69 mil., Adana 2.13 mil. (2012 est.)
Ethnic Groups:	Turks 70%-75%; Kurds 18%; Other minorities 7%-12% (2008 est.)
Religion:	Muslim 99.8% (Sunni 75%-88%, Alevi 12%-25%), Others (mainly Christian and Jewish) 0.2%
Literacy:	87% (male 95%, female 80%) (2004 est.)
% of Population 14 or Younger:	24.9% (2012 est.)
GDP Per Capita:	\$10,504 (\$15,066 at purchasing power parity) (2012 est.)
Real GDP Growth:	2.2% (2012 est.)
Inflation:	7.3% (March 2013 est.)
Unemployment:	10.1% (December 2012 est.)
Budget Deficit:	2.0% (2012 est.)
External Debt as % of GDP:	36.8% (2012 est.)
Current Account (Trade) Deficit as % of GDP:	8.2% (2012 est.)
Sources: Turkish Statistical Institute; Economist Intelligence Unit; Central Intelligence Agency, <i>The World Factbook</i> .	

⁴¹ See Ahmet Davutoglu, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy and Regional Political Structuring,” International Policy and Leadership Institute and Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV), Turkey Policy Brief Series, 2012 – Third Edition. See also Gareth Jenkins, “On the edge – The AKP shifts Turkey’s political compass,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, August 2, 2010.

length of compulsory education also reportedly reversed constraints that were placed on *imam hatip* schools following the 1997 military intervention and increased the emphasis on Islamic education in the state's general curriculum.⁴² Such developments, among others, prompted this observation in the 2012 Albright-Hadley report:

To ensure social stability and a democratic trajectory, it is thus incumbent on the new establishment to reassure secular-minded Turks that their way of life has a place in Turkish society, even if secularists failed to do the same for observant Muslims during their long period of ascendancy.⁴³

For additional background on Turkey and information about the Fethullah Gulen movement⁴⁴ and religious minorities, see **Appendix C**.

Domestic Politics

Domestic Turkish political developments affect the country's civil-military balance, its debate on religion in public life, the status of its Kurdish and other ethnic and religious minorities, and heightened concerns about press and civil society freedoms. Developments on these issues are in turn likely to help determine and influence who shapes Turkey's foreign policy and how they conduct it. Before the nationwide protests in June 2013, the media speculated about the possibility that Prime Minister Erdogan would seek approval in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament) for a popular referendum sometime in 2013 on a new constitution investing greater power in Turkey's presidency.⁴⁵ Erdogan may seek the presidency in Turkey's first direct presidential elections⁴⁶—scheduled for August 2014. Local elections, which are often used to gauge shifts in nationwide public opinion, are scheduled for March 2014—preceding the presidential elections. Parliamentary elections are to take place in 2015.

⁴² M. Kemal Kaya and Halil M. Karaveli, "Remolding Compulsory Education, the AKP Erases a Secularist Legacy—and Seeks to Check the Gulen Brotherhood," *Turkey Analyst*, vol. 5, no. 7, April 2, 2012.

⁴³ Council on Foreign Relations, *U.S.-Turkey Relations: A New Partnership*, Independent Task Force Report No. 69, 2012, p. 17.

⁴⁴ The Gulen movement is a multifaceted array of individuals and organizations in Turkey and other countries around the world. These individuals and organizations subscribe to or sympathize with the teachings of a former Turkish state imam who currently resides in the United States.

⁴⁵ The AKP needs support from outside the party to obtain the 60% parliamentary supermajority necessary to bring about a referendum. The constitutional commission comprised of the four parties in Turkey's parliament has so far been unable to reach consensus on a draft constitution.

⁴⁶ Previously, the Turkish parliament elected the president by secret ballot.

Table I. Parties in Turkey's Parliament
(Based on national elections held in June 2011)

Party	June 2011 Vote	Members of Parliament	General Orientation
Justice and Development Party (AKP) Leader: Recep Tayyip Erdogan	49.8%	327	Economic liberalism, social conservatism
Republican People's Party (CHP) Leader: Kemal Kilicdaroglu	26.0%	134	Social democracy, secularist interests
Nationalist Action Party (MHP) Leader: Devlet Bahceli	13.0%	53 ^a	Turkish nationalist interests
Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) Leader: Selahattin Demirtas	6.6% ^b	34 ^c	Ethnic Kurdish interests, social democracy

Sources: Turkish Grand National Assembly website; Ali Carkoglu, "Turkey's 2011 General Elections: Towards a Dominant Party System?" *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 3, summer 2011, pp. 43-62.

- a. One MHP member was expelled from the party just prior to the June 2011 elections but remained on the electoral list and currently sits in parliament as an independent.
- b. This is the percentage vote figure for the 61 BDP members or affiliated independents who ran in the election as independents for individual geographic constituencies, as described in footnote 67.
- c. This figure includes six independents with ties to the BDP.

Even before the June 2013 protests, domestic and international observers had raised concerns about Erdogan's and the AKP government's level of respect for civil liberties.⁴⁷ Although infringement upon press freedom is of routine concern in Turkey, measures taken by authorities in recent years have been widely criticized as unusually severe and ideologically driven.⁴⁸ These measures include intimidation and multiple arrests of journalists,⁴⁹ Kurdish public figures, and active and former military officers, often under a law on terrorism that many human rights organizations and international observers criticize for being vague and overly broad.

Before the protests, concerns about media and political association freedoms were in large part connected with two national issues: tensions involving Turkey's Kurdish population (see "The Kurdish Issue" below), and criminal investigations into the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer (or

⁴⁷ Council on Foreign Relations, op. cit., p. 23: "In some areas, the AKP-led government has used the same nondemocratic tools as its predecessor, making it appear no more liberal than previous Turkish governments." See also the U.S. State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2012. According to Reporters Without Borders's 2013 World Press Freedom Index, Turkey is the 154th "freest" country out of 179 evaluated.

⁴⁸ In February 5, 2013, remarks transcribed on the website of the U.S. embassy in Ankara from a press conference held there addressing the February 1 bombing of a U.S. embassy security checkpoint and several other issues of mutual U.S.-Turkey interest, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Francis Ricciardone said, "The Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament, the President of Turkey in recent days have spoken to the outcomes from your judicial system that do not seem right to them. You have members of Parliament who have been behind bars for a long time, sometimes on unclear charges. You have your military leaders, who were entrusted with the protection of this country, behind bars as if they were terrorists. You have professors. You have the former head of YOK [Turkey's Council of Higher Education] who is behind bars on unclear charges evidently relating to him upholding the law when he was a government official sixteen years ago. You have non-violent student protesters protesting tuition hikes behind bars. When a legal system produces such results and confuses people like that for terrorists, it makes it hard for American and European courts to match up. We are working to reconcile our legal processes in both countries."

⁴⁹ "Not so free," *Economist*, April 6, 2013, stating, "Turkey is now the world's leading jailer of journalists. Estimates vary, but at least 49 are behind bars."

Balyoz) cases. Ergenekon and Sledgehammer concern alleged plots to undermine or overthrow the AKP government in the early 2000s.⁵⁰ In September 2012, a civilian trial court convicted more than 300 active and former military officers in the Sledgehammer verdicts. Appeals to higher Turkish courts are ongoing, and could possibly reach the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).⁵¹ Many in the media claim that even if some of the anti-government plots were real, authorities with pro-AKP leanings or sympathies for the Fethullah Gulen movement⁵² have used the allegations to silence or weaken political and ideological opponents. Concerns about AKP overreach likely reflect anxieties among some Turks. They apparently feel unsure to what extent effective checks and balances exist on Erdogan's charismatic and Islamic-friendly single-party rule given the weakening of the military and other guardians of the Kemalist order.

Economy, Trade, and Energy⁵³

The AKP's political successes have been aided considerably by robust Turkish economic growth that was set back only briefly as a result of the 2008-2009 global economic crisis. Gross domestic product more than tripled from the time of the AKP's first electoral victory in 2002 to 2010. Growth rates, fueled by diversified Turkish conglomerates such as Sabanci and Koc as well as "Anatolian tigers" (small- to medium-sized, export-oriented businesses concentrated in central and southern Turkey), have been comparable in the past decade to those of China, India, and other major developing economies. The dependence of Turkey's economy on foreign investment and exports has led to challenges stemming from the economic slowdown in the European Union—Turkey's main trading partner. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, growth slowed from 8.8% in 2011 to 2.2% in 2012. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, however, growth is expected to be 3.5% in 2013 and around 5% for the subsequent four years—partly owing to a "moderate improvement in global financial and economic conditions", and partly owing to increased Turkish consumer demand aided by "cautious monetary loosening" from Turkey's central bank.⁵⁴ It is unclear to what extent the nationwide June 2013 protests and their possible effect on Turkish and international markets and trade might change these forecasts.

Structural economic goals for Turkey include incentivizing greater research and development to encourage Turkish technological innovation and global competitiveness, harmonizing the

⁵⁰ The existence and validity of evidence for these purported plots is vigorously disputed in domestic and international circles. Gareth Jenkins, "Ergenekon, Sledgehammer, and the Politics of Turkish Justice: Conspiracies and Coincidences," *MERIA Journal*, vol. 15, no. 2, June 2011; Sedat Ergin, "The Balyoz case is actually starting now," *hurriyetdailynews.com*, September 28, 2012; Yildiray Ogur, "Listen, Balyoz is speaking," *todayzaman.org*, September 24, 2012.

⁵¹ As a member of the Council of Europe since 1949, Turkey is subject to the ECHR's jurisdiction.

⁵² For a description of the Gulen movement, see **Appendix C**. Many of the movement's members and sympathizers are among the most vocal supporters of the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer prosecutions, probably at least partly owing to concerns about societal power dynamics and Gulenist perceptions of vulnerability, justice, and/or retribution involving the military and other guardians of Turkey's secular elite. These concerns probably largely stem from the past prosecution of Fethullah Gulen, the movement's spiritual leader, under military-guided governments. A series of events since 2012, public comments by Erdogan regarding the need for closure on the court cases involving the military, and the reshuffling of prosecutorial and other civil service portfolios reportedly involving Gulen movement members or sympathizers, possibly signify a rift between the movement and the AKP that could have future political repercussions. See, e.g., M. Kemal Kaya and Svante E. Cornell, "The Big Split: The Differences That Led Erdogan and the Gulen Movement to Part Ways," *Turkey Analyst*, vol. 5, no. 5, March 5, 2012.

⁵³ Michael Ratner, Specialist in Energy Policy, contributed to the portions of this section concerning energy issues.

⁵⁴ Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report: Turkey*, generated April 19, 2013.

educational system with future workforce needs, and increasing and diversifying energy supplies to meet ever-growing consumption demands. Through monetary and fiscal policy and various regulatory practices, Turkish policymakers may seek to attract more equity and foreign direct investment inflows and fewer short-term loans and portfolio inflows. The former generally are accompanied by skill and technology transfers, while the latter are more prone to sudden reversal.⁵⁵

The European Union is Turkey's main trading partner by far, while the United States is Turkey's fourth-largest trading partner (behind the EU, Russia, and China). Turkey is the United States's 35th-largest trading partner.⁵⁶ Though Turkish pursuit of new markets since 1991 has reduced trade with the EU (from nearly 50% to just over 40%) and with the United States (from over 9% to around 5%) as a percentage of Turkey's total trade, overall trade volume with both is generally trending upward.

Table 2. U.S. Merchandise Trade with Turkey

(\$ in millions)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Exports	6,500	9,960	7,090	10,550	14,660	12,580
Imports	4,600	4,640	3,660	4,200	5,220	6,230
Total Volume	11,100	14,600	10,750	14,750	19,880	18,810

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census Bureau.

Despite concerns by U.S. senior business executives regarding Turkey's legal and regulatory system and other issues according to a 2011 survey, 65% of these businesspeople would be willing to invest further in Turkey. Additionally, 88% advocate more U.S. government engagement with Turkey's government to "improve the investment, market access, and operating climate for US companies in Turkey."⁵⁷

Turkey's importance as a regional energy transport hub elevates its increasing relevance for world energy markets while also providing Turkey with opportunities to satisfy its own growing domestic energy needs.⁵⁸ Turkey's location has made it a key country in the U.S. and European effort to establish a southern corridor for natural gas transit from diverse sources.⁵⁹ However, as one analyst writes, "Turkey's ability to effectively play the energy card to further its foreign policy goals is limited by the extent to which the Turkish economy itself is dependent on energy

⁵⁵ See, e.g., *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Surveys: Turkey*, July 2012.

⁵⁶ Statistics on Turkey's status relative to other U.S. trading partners compiled by U.S. International Trade Commission, available at http://dataweb.usitc.gov/SCRIPTS/cy_m3_run.asp.

⁵⁷ American Business Forum in Turkey, *Business and Investment Climate in Turkey 2011*, October 2011.

⁵⁸ Transatlantic Academy, *Getting to Zero: Turkey, Its Neighbors, and the West*, June 2010, citing Turkish government statistics.

⁵⁹ The U.S. energy strategy in Europe is designed to work together with European nations and the European Union to seek ways to diversify Europe's energy supplies. The focus of U.S. efforts has been on establishing a southern corridor route for Caspian and Middle Eastern natural gas supplies to be shipped to Europe, generally through pipelines traversing Turkey. See, e.g., Tolga Demiryol, "Turkey's energy security and foreign policy," *Turkish Review*, January/February 2012; Transatlantic Academy, op. cit.

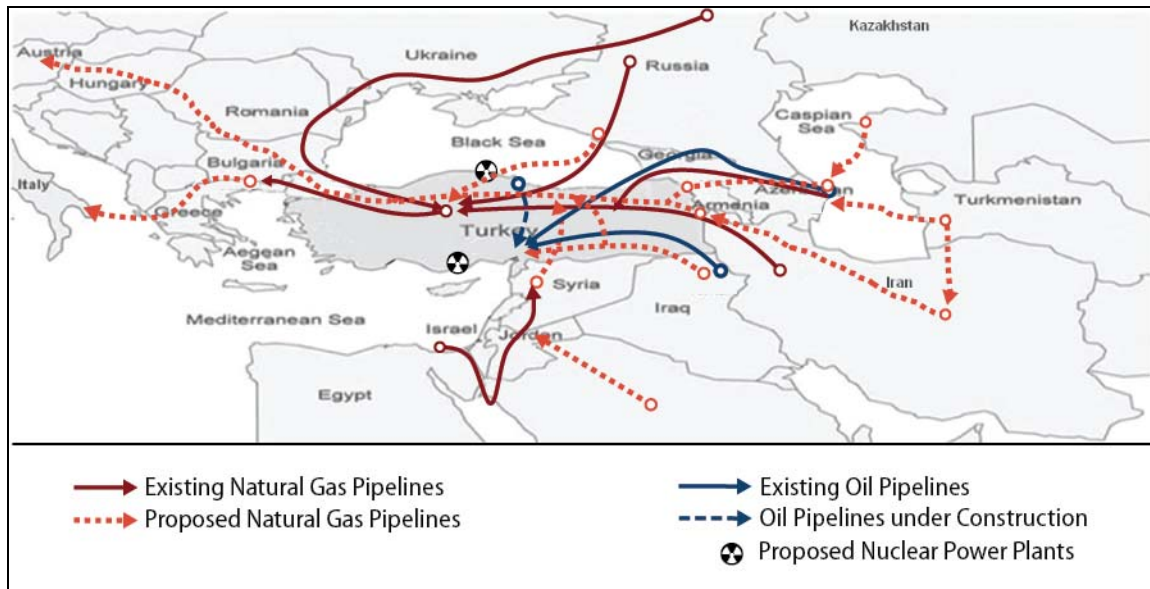
imports, particularly oil and natural gas from Russia and Iran.”⁶⁰ Since 1991, trade with Russia as a percentage of Turkey’s total trade has more than doubled—from 5% to over 11%—largely due to energy imports. Additionally, a subsidiary of Rosatom (Russia’s state-run nuclear company) has entered into an agreement to build and operate what would be Turkey’s first nuclear power plant⁶¹ in Akkuyu near the Mediterranean port of Mersin, with construction projected to begin in 2016. Iran is also a major source of Turkish energy (see “Iran” below).

However, in late 2011, Turkey and Azerbaijan reached deals for the transit of natural gas to and through Turkey⁶² via a proposed Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP), with gas projected to begin to flow by 2018. The deals have attracted attention as a potentially significant precedent for transporting non-Russian, non-Iranian energy to Europe. Turkey has also sought to increase energy imports from Iraq, including through negotiations regarding northern Iraqi oil and gas reserves and pipelines with the Kurdistan Regional Government that have generated friction with Iraq’s central government (see “Iraq” below). Nevertheless, Turkey also agreed in late 2011 to permit Russia’s South Stream pipeline to traverse its Black Sea territorial waters to Bulgaria (from which point the pipeline is proposed to extend through the northern Balkans to Italy), reportedly in exchange for discounts to Turkey on purchases of Russian natural gas.

⁶⁰ Demiryol, *op. cit.*

⁶¹ In June 2008, the United States and Turkey signed a 15-year “123 Agreement” for peaceful nuclear cooperation in line with international nuclear non-proliferation norms. Turkey is also a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has a safeguards agreement and additional protocol in place with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is an observer to—not a full participant in—the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation (IFNEC, formerly known as the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership) founded by the United States, Russia, China, France, and Japan in 2007. IFNEC promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy by helping establish reprocessing centers for nuclear fuel. Turkey is one of the regional countries that analysts routinely mention could decide to pursue its own nuclear weapons program in the event that one or more countries in the region, such as Iran, achieves or declares a nuclear weapons capability. Israel is generally believed by most analysts to have had a nuclear arsenal since the late 1960s, but it maintains a policy of “nuclear opacity” wherein its nuclear weapons status remains officially undeclared. For discussion of Turkey and nuclear weapons, see “Bilateral and NATO Defense Cooperation” and archived CRS Report R41761, *Turkey-U.S. Defense Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges*, by Jim Zanotti.

⁶² The terms of Turkish-Azerbaijani agreement specified that 565 billion-700 billion cubic feet (bcf) of natural gas would transit Turkey, of which 210 bcf would be available for Turkey’s domestic use.

Figure 2. Major Pipelines Traversing Turkey and Possible Nuclear Power Plants

Source: Turkish Economic Ministry, adapted by CRS.

Note: All locations are approximate.

Among other countries, China's share of Turkish trade is also increasing, with volume reportedly rising from \$1 billion per year in 2000 to about \$24 billion per year by 2011.⁶³ Additionally, Turkey has actively pursued economic opportunities with many Arab countries in recent years through free trade and no-visa agreements. Continued political upheaval in the region could contribute to future challenges to Turkish economic growth and foreign investment.

The Kurdish Issue

Ethnic Kurds constitute 15 to 20% of Turkey's population. They are largely concentrated in urban areas and the relatively impoverished southeastern region of the country, but pockets exist throughout the country. Kurdish reluctance to recognize Turkish state authority—a dynamic that also exists between Kurds and national governments in Iraq, Iran, and Syria—and harsh Turkish measures to quell Kurdish identity- and rights-based claims and demands have fed tensions that have periodically worsened since the foundation of the republic in 1923. Since 1984, the Turkish military has waged an on-and-off struggle to put down a separatist insurgency and urban terrorism campaign by the PKK (whose founder, Abdullah Ocalan, is profiled in **Appendix A**).⁶⁴ The initially secessionist demands of the PKK have since evolved to a less ambitious goal of greater cultural and political autonomy.

⁶³ Gokhan Bacik, "Envisioning the Asia-Pacific Century: Turkey between the United States and China," *On Turkey*, German Marshall Fund of the United States, December 8, 2011.

⁶⁴ In footnote 2 of a September 2011 report, the International Crisis Group stated that Turkish government figures estimate that 11,700 Turks have been killed since fighting began in the early 1980s. This figure includes Turkish security personnel of various types and Turkish civilians (including Turkish Kurds who are judged not to have been PKK combatants). The same report states that Turkish estimates of PKK dead during the same time period run from 30,000 to 40,000. International Crisis Group, *Turkey: Ending the PKK Insurgency*, Europe Report No. 213, September 20, 2011.

The struggle between Turkish authorities and the PKK was most intense during the 1990s, but resumed in 2003 after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, following an intervening lull. According to the U.S. government, the PKK partially finances its activities through criminal activities, including its operation of a Europe-wide drug trafficking network.⁶⁵ The PKK has used safe havens in northern Iraq to coordinate and launch attacks at various points since the end of the 1991 Gulf War. Amid internal conflict in Syria since 2011, the PKK’s Syrian sister organization, the Democratic Union of Syria (PYD), has gained a measure of control over a swath of Kurdish-populated territory near Syria’s border with Turkey. This raises questions for Turkey about the possibility of another base of support for PKK training, leadership, and operations.⁶⁶

Turkey’s AKP government has acknowledged that the integration of Kurds into Turkish society will require political, cultural, and economic development approaches in addition to the more traditional security-based approach. The Turkish military’s approach to neutralizing the PKK has been routinely criticized by Western governments and human rights organizations for being overly hard on ethnic Kurds—thousands have been imprisoned for PKK involvement or sympathies and hundreds of thousands have been displaced.

Designation	Year
Foreign Terrorist Organization	1997
Specially Designated Global Terrorist	2001
Significant Foreign Narcotics Trafficker	2008

The AKP has a sizeable constituency in rural Kurdish areas because of its appeal to traditional values. By appealing to common Islamic identity, Erdogan and other government ministers have moved away from the state’s past unwillingness to acknowledge the multiethnic nature of Turkey’s citizenry. The government has adopted some measures allowing greater use of Kurdish languages in education, election campaigns, and the media.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, government statements or efforts until late 2012 that were aimed at giving greater rights to Kurds and greater normalized status to Kurdish nationalist leaders and former militants were politically undermined by upswings in violence and public manifestations of nationalist pride among ethnic Turks and

⁶⁵ U.S. Treasury Department Press Release, “Five PKK Leaders Designated Narcotics Traffickers,” April 20, 2011.

⁶⁶ However, northern Syria’s more open terrain and comparably small and dispersed Kurdish population may make it a less plausible base of operations than Iraq. Some observers have speculated that the Asad regime and Iran entered into an informal partnership of convenience with the PKK in retaliation for Turkey’s support for the Syrian opposition. Heiko Wimmen and Muzehher Selcuk, “The Rise of Syria’s Kurds,” Carnegie Endowment of International Peace, February 5, 2013. Syria hosted the PKK’s leadership until 1998, and historical and personal links persist among Syrian Kurds and the PKK.

Media reports in early 2013, however, indicate that the PYD is cooperating with various Syrian opposition groups in de facto arrangements regarding control over the country’s northern areas, perhaps partly because of a calculation that the Asad regime has little or no remaining control there. See, e.g., Matthieu Aikins, “The Kurdish Factor,” *latitude.blogs.nytimes.com*, April 1, 2013.

⁶⁷ Kurdish nationalist leaders demand that any future changes to Turkey’s 1982 constitution not suppress Kurdish ethnic and linguistic identity. The first clause of Article 3 of the constitution reads, “The Turkish state, with its territory and nation, is an indivisible entity. Its language is Turkish.” Because the constitution states that its first three articles are unamendable, even proposing a change could face judicial obstacles. Kurds in Turkey also seek to modify the electoral law to allow for greater Kurdish nationalist participation in Turkish politics by lowering the percentage-vote threshold (currently 10%) for political parties in parliament. In the 2011 election, 61 members of the Kurdish nationalist Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) or affiliated independents ran as independents for individual geographic constituencies because of a calculation that the party would not reach the 10% threshold. These independents won 35 of the constituencies and 6% of the national vote. One has since died.

ethnic Kurds. Many observers discerned a trend leading Turkish authorities and the PKK toward a period of indefinite violent conflict, for various reasons. These included (1) continuing upticks in violence; (2) waves of arrests of Kurdish public figures; (3) ongoing political stalemate on measures to provide Kurds with greater rights and local autonomy; (4) and political timelines potentially favoring a nationalistic, security-centric response by Turkish leaders.⁶⁸

Despite these negative signs, Prime Minister Erdogan publicly revealed in late December 2012 that Turkish intelligence has been conducting negotiations with imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in an attempt to get the PKK to disarm. In late March 2013, Ocalan and other PKK leaders declared a cease-fire, although its durability may depend on the government's ability to persuade the PKK and other Kurds that it sincerely seeks to address the issues of key importance to them. As discussed above, this could be complicated by the political turmoil that has resulted from the nationwide June 2013 protests. Some commentators theorize that Erdogan had authorized the PKK talks to bolster prospects for his election to the Turkish presidency and for a yes-vote in the constitutional referendum that may precede it. Other theories suggested that Erdogan was trying to defuse potential PKK threats from Syria, or to take advantage of intra-Kurdish divisions and Ocalan's personal desire for freedom.

Observers express a range of opinions regarding the advisability and prospects of negotiations, as well as the extent to which Ocalan and the PKK represent Turkey's Kurds. Yet, most observers agree that Erdogan's public acknowledgment of the talks was a bold step that could mobilize broad public support for a deal, but also could greatly exacerbate the conflict if negotiations fail.⁶⁹ In a February 2013 interview with a Turkish journalist, President Obama was quoted as saying, "I applaud Prime Minister Erdogan's efforts to seek a peaceful resolution to a struggle that has caused so much pain and sorrow for the people of Turkey for more than 30 years."⁷⁰

U.S.-Turkey Relations

Overview

The United States and Turkey have enjoyed a decades-long alliance. The calculations that led the United States to invest heavily in Turkey's defense and its military and economic development during the Cold War have evolved as the dynamics within both countries and the regional and global environments have changed. Another change has been Turkey's decreased dependence on U.S. material support and its increased assertiveness as a foreign policy actor.

At the outset of the Obama Administration, U.S. officials made clear their intent to emphasize the importance of a multifaceted strategic relationship with Turkey. In April 2009, President Obama, speaking of a "model partnership," visited Turkey during his first presidential trip abroad and

⁶⁸ The International Crisis Group stated that the time period from the summer of 2011 until mid-August 2012 featured the worst fighting between the PKK and Turkish authorities since 1999, reporting that 711 people had been killed in that time—"222 soldiers, police and village guard militia, 405 PKK fighters and 84 civilians". International Crisis Group, *Turkey: The PKK and a Kurdish Settlement*, Europe Report No. 219, September 11, 2012.

⁶⁹ See, e.g., "The war may be over," *Economist*, March 30, 2013.

⁷⁰ Interview of President Barack Obama by Pinar Ersoy of *Milliyet*, quoted in "Obama 'applauds' Turkey's effort to find peaceful solution to Kurdish problem," *hurriyetdailynews.com*, February 10, 2013.

addressed the Parliament in Ankara. He said that “Turkey is a critical ally.... And Turkey and the United States must stand together—and work together—to overcome the challenges of our time.”

However, subsequent Turkish and U.S. actions and statements on issues relating to Armenia, Iran, and Israel revealed possible tensions between the United States and Turkey on values and priorities. A vote in March 2010 by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs to report a proposed resolution (H.Res. 252) for consideration by the full House on the question of a possible Armenian genocide led Turkey to temporarily recall its ambassador. A number of events that followed—especially the Gaza flotilla incident and a U.N. Security Council sanctions vote on Iran—led some Members of Congress and Administration officials to openly question Turkey’s orientation as a U.S. and Western ally.⁷¹ They expressed concerns that Turkish leaders’ rhetoric and actions were (1) undermining a top U.S. priority in the Iranian nuclear issue and (2) at odds with the U.S. characterization of Israel as an ally and Iran as a threat.

Turkey’s agreement in 2011 to host the U.S./NATO missile defense radar appears to have significantly allayed bilateral tensions stemming from earlier foreign policy disputes. The United States and Turkey also began cooperating closely in the Middle East—particularly in Syria—to promote democratic transition and prevent Iran and other actors from exacerbating regional sectarian tensions and security dilemmas. U.S. and Turkish approaches and apparent senses of urgency have diverged at times, perhaps partly due to Turkey’s greater geographic proximity to conflict areas and seemingly greater willingness to work with other actors espousing an overtly Sunni Muslim perspective. Additionally, according to a 2012 Council on Foreign Relations task force report chaired by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and former National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley (the “Albright-Hadley report”), “public opinion polls in Turkey consistently reveal unfavorable impressions of the United States among the Turkish public.... This is a problem that can damage the bilateral relations, especially now that public opinion matters more than ever before in Turkish foreign policy.”⁷² Such unfavorable impressions, to the extent they exist, do so within a context of Turks’ generally low favorability ratings for foreign countries.

Many U.S. observers have criticized Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Davutoglu for perceived double standards. Erdogan has adamantly denounced Israel’s treatment of Palestinians, especially in the Gaza Strip—sometimes referring to it as “state terrorism”—and has suggested that international sanctions against Israel could help end the stalemate in the Arab-Israeli peace process. Yet, he has met with Hamas leaders in Turkey and has dubbed its members “resistance fighters” instead of terrorists. He was one of the first world leaders to congratulate Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on his disputed reelection in June 2009. Erdogan also has said in defending Sudanese President Omar al Bashir regarding allegations from Darfur and elsewhere that it is “not possible for those who belong to the Muslim faith to carry out genocide.” Even as regional upheaval since late 2010 has led Turkey to coordinate more closely with its U.S. and other NATO allies, Erdogan has periodically questioned their positions and/or motivations.⁷³ Erdogan publicly supports a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while routinely criticizing the U.S.-led approach to the peace process in the international media.

⁷¹ “US official: Turkey must demonstrate commitment to West,” *Today’s Zaman*, June 28, 2010.

⁷² Council on Foreign Relations, op. cit., p. 7.

⁷³ For example, during a September 2011 trip to Libya, Erdogan criticized what he perceived to be Britain’s and France’s overly commercial interests in the country—despite Turkey’s own well-documented commercial interests in Libya and participation in and support for the 2011 NATO operation there.

Bilateral and NATO Defense Cooperation⁷⁴

The U.S.-Turkey alliance has long centered on the defense relationship, both bilaterally and within NATO. With several challenges to U.S. national security emanating from the greater Middle East, Turkey is arguably a more significant ally for the United States at present than during the Cold War. Turkey's location near several global hotspots makes the continuing availability of its territory for the stationing and transport of arms, cargo, and personnel valuable for the United States and NATO. Turkey's hosting of a U.S./NATO early warning missile defense radar and the transformation of a NATO air command unit in Izmir into a ground forces command appear to have reinforced Turkey's strategic importance for the alliance. For information on NATO's role in supporting Turkey's defense in light of ongoing conflict in Syria, see "Syria" below.

Although the Turkish military remains a trusted national institution, its decline in influence in the last decade has led many observers to conclude that the military's traditional role as the primary interlocutor for the United States and other NATO allies is in jeopardy, if not already obsolete. Changes in the Turkish civil-military power structure present a challenge for U.S. officials in adjusting future modes of bilateral interaction. It might lead to an approach that is more multidimensional than the well-established pattern some observers see in which the State Department and other U.S. officials rely on the "Pentagon to wield its influence."⁷⁵

The largest U.S. military presence in Turkey is at Incirlik (pronounced in-jur-lick) air base near the southern city of Adana, with approximately 1,500 U.S. personnel (plus approximately 3,500 Turkish contractors). Since the end of the Cold War, Incirlik has been used to support U.S. and NATO operations in Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. According to *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Incirlik also is the reported home of vaults holding approximately 60-70 U.S. tactical, aircraft-deliverable B61 nuclear gravity bombs under NATO auspices.⁷⁶ Turkey maintains the right to cancel U.S. access to Incirlik with three days' notice.

⁷⁴ For detailed information on this subject, see archived CRS Report R41761, *Turkey-U.S. Defense Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges*, by Jim Zanotti.

⁷⁵ Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey's New Global Role," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, November 17, 2010. The challenge for U.S. officials to manage cooperation with Turkey could be magnified by the way the U.S. government is structured to work with Turkey. Former U.S. ambassador to Turkey Mark Parris has written, "For reasons of self-definition and Cold War logic, Turkey is considered a European nation. It is therefore assigned, for purposes of policy development and implementation, to the subdivisions responsible for Europe: the European Bureau (EUR) at the State Department; the European Command (EUCOM) at the Pentagon; the Directorate for Europe at the [National Security Council (NSC)], etc. Since the end of the Cold War, however, and progressively since the 1990-91 Gulf War and 9/11, the most serious issues in U.S.-Turkish relations – and virtually all of the controversial ones – have arisen in areas outside "Europe." The majority, in fact, stem from developments in areas which in Washington are the responsibility of offices dealing with the Middle East: the Bureau for Near East Affairs (NEA) at State; Central Command (CENTCOM) at the Pentagon; the Near East and South Asia Directorate at NSC." Omer Taspinar, "The Rise of Turkish Gaullism: Getting Turkish-American Relations Right," *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 1, winter 2011, quoting an unpublished 2008 paper by Mark Parris.

⁷⁶ Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, 2011," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 67, no. 1, January/February 2011. Reportedly, the U.S. has approximately 150-200 B61 bombs in Turkey, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands left over from their deployment during the Cold War. This amount is a very small fraction of the over 7,000 U.S. tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe during the 1970s. Ibid.

Figure 3. Map of U.S. and NATO Military Presence in Turkey



Sources: Department of Defense, NATO, *Hurriyet Daily News*; adapted by CRS.

Notes: All locations are approximate. The Incirlik and Kurecik bases are Turkish bases, parts of which are used for limited purposes by the U.S. military and NATO. Additional information on the U.S./NATO military presence in Turkey is available in archived CRS Report R41761, *Turkey-U.S. Defense Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges*, by Jim Zanotti.

Since 1948, the United States has provided Turkey with approximately \$13.8 billion in overall military assistance (nearly \$8.2 billion in grants and \$5.6 billion in loans). Current annual military and security grant assistance, however, is limited to approximately \$5 million annually in International Military Education and Training (IMET); International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE); and Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) funds.

Table 3. Recent U.S. Foreign Assistance to Turkey

(\$ in millions)

Account	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013 Request ^a	FY 2014 Request
International Military Education and Training (IMET)	5.0	4.0	4.0	3.6	3.3
International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE)	—	0.5	0.5	—	—
Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR)	3.0	1.4	1.1	0.9	0.8
Total	8.0	5.9	5.6	4.7	4.2

Source: U.S. Department of State.

Note: All amounts are approximate.

- a. Actual amounts of U.S. assistance to Turkey for FY2013 cannot be provided with precision. Any FY2013 assistance is subject to continuing resolution authority and budget sequestration as set forth in the following legal authorities (and regulations and guidelines promulgated thereunder): The Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25), as amended by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-240/H.R. 8); and the Department of Defense, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (P.L. 113-6/H.R. 933).

Key Foreign Policy Issues of Interest

For information and analysis of foreign policy issues other than the ones below (including Turkey's regional stance, Cyprus, Armenia, Afghanistan, European Union, and others), see **Appendix D**.

Israel

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Turkey and Israel enjoyed close military ties that fostered cooperation in other areas, including a free trade agreement signed in 2000. In recent years, however, Turkey-Israel relations have worsened. This downturn can be attributed to a number of factors, ranging from Turkish domestic political changes to specific incidents that increased tensions. In terms of change within Turkey, the slide in Turkey-Israel relations reflected the military's declining role in Turkish society, and the greater empowerment of Prime Minister Erdogan and other AKP and national leaders. These leaders seem to view criticism of Israel as both merited and popular domestically and regionally. They often characterize Israeli security measures in the West Bank and especially the Gaza Strip as institutionalized mistreatment of Palestinians. Turkish leaders also have argued that Israel relies too heavily on military capabilities and deterrence (including its undeclared but universally acknowledged nuclear weapons arsenal) in addressing regional problems.

One of the key events that marked the decline in relations was the May 2010 Gaza flotilla incident (mentioned above). Partly to register dissatisfaction with the September 2011 report issued by a U.N. Secretary-General panel of inquiry on the flotilla incident,⁷⁷ Turkey downgraded diplomatic relations with Israel to the second secretary level.⁷⁸ Turkey's demand for an apology from Israel in connection with the incident was met in March 2013, in a U.S.-facilitated exchange (discussed further below) that was intended to repair the Turkey-Israel rift. Before this, Erdogan prominently registered his disapproval of Israel's military operations in Gaza in December 2008-January 2009, reportedly angry that then Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert did not inform him of Israel's military plans during Olmert's visit to Ankara shortly before the conflict.

⁷⁷ The report is available at <http://go.ynet.co.il/pic/news/Palmer-Committee-Final-report.pdf>. The panel was chaired by former New Zealand Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Palmer, and included former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe and one participant each from Turkey and Israel. The report expressly provided that its findings were not intended to decide legal questions. Upon the report's leak, Turkish officials disputed the report's finding that Israel's naval blockade of the Gaza Strip was legal, notwithstanding the report's criticism of Israel's handling of the incident itself.

⁷⁸ Turkey similarly downgraded diplomatic relations with Israel in 1980 following Israel's enactment of a law on the status of Jerusalem that was deemed a violation of international law by U.N. Security Council Resolution 478. Resolution 478 passed on August 20, 1980 by a vote of 14-0, with the United States as the lone abstention. Turkey reinstated Israel's ambassador in 1992 following the 1991 Madrid Conference that signaled the beginning of the Middle East peace process. Linda Gradstein, "No end in sight for downward spiral in Turkish-Israeli ties," *JTA*, September 6, 2011.

Turkey's deteriorated relationship with Israel has presented problems for the United States because of the U.S. desire to coordinate its regional policies with two of its closest allies. U.S. officials seem to have concerns about the repercussions Turkey-Israel tensions could have for regional order and the alignment of U.S. and Turkish interests. This risk could be especially high if Turkey-Israel disagreements on Palestinian issues result in future high-profile incidents. Though Turkey publicly supports a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it backs Palestinian pursuit of United Nations membership and Fatah-Hamas reconciliation as well. In January 2012, Erdogan introduced Hamas's prime minister in Gaza, Ismail Haniyeh, as the "elected prime minister of Palestine" at a meeting of AKP parliamentarians in Ankara.

Some Members of Congress have shown concern over problematic Turkey-Israel relations. Following the flotilla incident, the Senate passed S.Res. 548 by voice vote on June 24, 2010. The resolution condemned the attack by the "extremists aboard the Mavi Marmara," invoked Israel's right to self-defense, and encouraged "the Government of Turkey to recognize the importance of continued strong relations with Israel and the necessity of closely scrutinizing organizations with potential ties to terrorist groups" (a reference to the Turkish Islamist non-governmental organization IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, the main organizer of the flotilla).⁷⁹ In early 2011, a *New York Times Magazine* article quoted a Turkish diplomat responsible for U.S. relations as saying, "We're getting a lot of flak from the Hill. We used to get hit by the Greek lobby and the Armenian lobby, but we were protected by the Jewish lobby. Now the Jewish lobby is coming after us as well."⁸⁰ A U.S.-based analyst who focuses specifically on Israel and Turkey commented in March 2013 that "with the establishment of an Israel-Hellenic caucus in Congress and arms deals with Turkey either being held up or not being introduced into committee at all, there is no doubt in my mind that Turkey's feud with Israel is adversely impacting its interests in the U.S."⁸¹

Such adverse effects could potentially be softened following recent developments that might be early signals of rapprochement between Turkey and Israel. During President Obama's trip to Israel in March 2013, he and Secretary of State John Kerry facilitated a telephone conversation between Erdogan and Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu apologized to Erdogan for any operational mistakes by Israel during the flotilla incident "that might have led to the loss of life or injury" and pledged to conclude an agreement on "compensation/nonliability."⁸² The apology, on top of other signs that Turkey-Israel relations were slightly improving,⁸³ has led

⁷⁹ In the House, Representative Dina Titus sponsored H.Res. 1532, which was not passed but garnered 23 co-sponsors. H.Res. 1532 would have called upon the Secretary of State to investigate the "role of any foreign governments, including the Republic of Turkey, which may have aided and abetted the organizers of the recent Gaza Flotilla mission to breach Israeli coastal security and assault the naval defense forces of the State of Israel."

⁸⁰ James Traub, "Turkey's Rules," *New York Times Magazine*, January 20, 2011.

⁸¹ Michael Koplow, "O&Z Goes to Turkey," *ottomansandzionists.com*, March 4, 2013.

⁸² Summary of conversation between Netanyahu and Erdogan from Israeli Prime Minister's Office website, March 22, 2013.

⁸³ In December 2012, reports cited a Turkish official as saying that Turkey had withdrawn previous objections to Israel's non-military participation in NATO activities. Gulsen Solaker and Jonathon Burch, "Turkey lifts objection to NATO cooperation with Israel," *Reuters*, December 24, 2012. Israel is part of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, along with Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Mauritania, and Tunisia. In addition, trade between the two countries has remained on an upward trajectory since the flotilla incident, and by February 2013, Israel had reportedly unblocked the delivery of electronic support measures systems—pursuant to a pre-existing contract—for early warning aircraft that Turkey is purchasing from U.S.-based Boeing. Burak Bekdil, "Israel abandons block on sales to Turkish AWACS," *Hurriyet Daily News*, February 22, 2013.

to widespread speculation regarding how much and how fast the two countries' former closeness on military, intelligence, and political matters might be restored.⁸⁴ Potential sticking points remain, including ongoing Israeli restrictions and limitations on the passage of people and goods to and from Gaza's sea coast and its land borders with Israel.⁸⁵

Media reports focus on new prospects for Turkey-Israel coordination with respect to Syria and possible Turkish consumption and transport of natural gas from Israel's new offshore discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean, while voicing caution that a return to 1990s-era closeness is unlikely.⁸⁶ Some reports also foresee a more visible Turkish mediating role between Israelis and Palestinians.⁸⁷ Erdogan reportedly consulted with Fatah and Hamas (the two main Palestinian factions) before agreeing to the U.S.-arranged phone call with Netanyahu, and reportedly plans to visit the West Bank and Gaza later in 2013, even though Secretary Kerry has reportedly objected to the planned Gaza trip.

U.S. leaders may have felt compelled to broker some sort of improvement in Turkey-Israel relations following remarks Erdogan made in late February 2013 at the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in Vienna, Austria that appeared to equate Zionism with fascism.⁸⁸ That comparison drew heavy criticism from Israel, the White House, Secretary Kerry, and some Members of Congress. In a March 12 letter to Erdogan, 89 Members of Congress (including 23 Senators) called on him to retract what they termed his "appalling comment" about Zionism in Vienna, while also stating that they know that Turkey's government "shares a commitment to meaningful international involvement to advance security and peace", and expressing hope for the restoration of good relations between Turkey and Israel.⁸⁹ It is unclear whether Netanyahu's apology to Erdogan in the immediate aftermath of Erdogan's controversial comments might lead Turkish leaders to calculate that future provocative remarks could elicit additional concessions from Israel or the United States.

⁸⁴ See, e.g., Oded Eran, "Israel-Turkey Reconciliation Still Remote," *nationalinterest.org*, April 18, 2013; Uzi Mahnaimi, "Israel to corral Iran with Turkish airbase," *Sunday Times* (UK), April 21, 2013.

⁸⁵ State Department transcript of remarks by Secretary of State John Kerry and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, Ciragan Palace, Istanbul, Turkey, April 7, 2013.

⁸⁶ See, e.g., "A useful first step," *Economist*, March 30-April 5, 2013.

⁸⁷ See, e.g., Semih Idiz, "Israeli Apology May Restore Turkey's Regional Influence," *Al-Monitor Turkey Pulse*, March 26, 2013.

⁸⁸ According to media sources, the following represents an accurate English translation of Erdogan's remarks, which were delivered as part of an address that primarily concerned Western countries' treatment of Muslim communities and diasporas: "We should be striving to better understand the beliefs of others but instead we see that people act based on prejudice and exclude others and despise them. And that is why it is necessary that we must consider—just like Zionism or anti-Semitism or fascism—Islamophobia as a crime against humanity." Video and partial transcript of remarks and translation available at <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/28/video-of-turkish-premier-comparing-zionism-to-anti-semitism-and-fascism/?smid=tw-thelede&seid=auto>.

⁸⁹ Text of letter available at <http://israel.house.gov/images/PDF/erdoganletteronzionismcomment.pdf>. In a March 19 interview with a prominent Danish news source, although Erdogan did not explicitly retract his Vienna remarks, he was quoted as saying that his criticisms "are directed at Israeli policies" and that "My several statements openly condemning anti-semitism clearly display my position on this issue." "Exclusive Erdogan-interview: 'We see a human tragedy before our eyes,'" *Politiken* (Denmark), March 19, 2013.

Syria⁹⁰

Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Davutoglu initially tried to use their then-good relations with Bashar al Asad to help broker a peaceful end to the budding Syrian insurgency in 2011. When that failed to moderate Asad's approach to the opposition, they changed tack and adopted a strong stance against the Syrian regime. According to one Turkish journalist:

In the summer of 2011, Turkey decided to bring down the Baath regime in Damascus and sought ways to implement its decision as much as its capacity allowed. Turkey did everything it could with the exception of direct military intervention in Syria. It is not a secret that Turkey sponsored the initial organization and coordination of the Syrian opposition, opened its territory to the use of the opposition military forces and provided logistical support to them.⁹¹

Turkey has coordinated its efforts closely with other countries—including the United States, other NATO allies, and Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar—that also provide political, financial, and/or material support to the opposition. The United States and other key Western countries have reportedly refused or been more reluctant than Turkey and other Sunni-majority countries to provide advanced weaponry such as anti-aircraft missiles to the rebels because of concerns about potentially empowering extremist elements and worsening regional sectarianism. Some reports assert that Turkey's intelligence service has been supporting the Free Syrian Army and—like some Arab states' intelligence services—is cultivating ties with other Sunni Islamist militias.⁹²

Tensions between Turkey and Arab Gulf states on one side, and Iran on the other, have reportedly deepened considerably over developments in both Syria and Iraq that have stirred Sunni-Shia/Alawite sectarian undercurrents. Some reports speculate about possible links from the May 2013 double-bombing in Reyhanli mentioned above—as well as from deadly February bombings at a Syria-Turkey border checkpoint and a U.S. embassy security checkpoint in Ankara⁹³—to various elements within the Asad regime.

Absent a clear endgame in Syria, Turkey has focused increasingly on minimizing the spillover effects of the ongoing civil war. In June 2012, the Syrian regime shot down a Turkish F-4 warplane that may have at one point been in Syrian airspace. This was followed in October 2012 by cross-border artillery fire that killed two women and three children in the Turkish town of Akcakale. In response to the October incident, Turkey returned fire, leading to several days of

⁹⁰ For background information on Syria, see CRS Report RL33487, *Armed Conflict in Syria: U.S. and International Response*, by Jeremy M. Sharp and Christopher M. Blanchard. Rhoda Margesson, Specialist in International Humanitarian Policy, contributed to the portions of this section on Syrian refugees.

⁹¹ Kadri Gursel, "NATO Patriot Missiles Show Turkey's Military Weakness," *Al-Monitor Turkey Pulse*, December 28, 2012.

⁹² One report claims that Turkish intelligence has contacts with a Turkish group and a Turkish-speaking Chechen group that are in Syria in opposition to the Asad regime. "GID and MIT back jihadists," *Intelligence Online*, No. 684, March 13, 2013.

⁹³ The Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C, sometimes known as "Dev Sol") claimed responsibility for the embassy bombing, which killed a Turkish security guard. The DHKP/C is a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization with a Marxist-Leninist ideology, a long track record of anti-U.S. and anti-NATO militancy, and some historical links with the Asad regime.

cross-border artillery exchanges. Turkey also convened consultations with its allies under Article 4 of NATO's North Atlantic Treaty.⁹⁴

Although a majority of NATO member states appear to oppose a possible NATO military intervention in Syria, allied leaders gave approval in December 2012 for the deployment of six Patriot missile batteries to areas near Turkey's southeastern border with Syria. NATO and allied leaders have asserted that the batteries are being deployed for defensive purposes only. On April 11, 2013, Air Force General Philip Breedlove addressed the potential for other uses of NATO's Patriot missile presence in a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing regarding his possible confirmation as U.S. European Command Commander and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (he was eventually confirmed by the Senate on April 20). In his testimony, General Breedlove stated that the two batteries representing the U.S. contribution "could be used in a role to project into Syria. They have the capability to do it.... if Turkey and the U.S. were looking to do this in a bilateral fashion, or if we could convince our NATO partners to come alongside of us, to also be a part of that".

NATO's Patriot deployment presumably defends against potential Syrian Scud missile and/or chemical weapons attacks, as Turkey does not have a missile defense capability of its own.⁹⁵ In addition to the two batteries and operational teams contributed by the United States in or near the city of Gaziantep, Germany and the Netherlands have each contributed two Patriot batteries and operational teams to the population centers of Karamanmaras and Adana, respectively. The batteries reportedly became operational, under NATO command and control, in late January and early February 2013.⁹⁶

Syrian refugees present an ongoing and increasing dilemma for Turkey. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of late June 2013, the Turkish government was operating at least 20 government-run refugee camps. Between refugees residing in the camps and those in urban areas outside the camps, the total registered or soon-to-be registered Syrian refugee population in Turkey is now estimated to be close to 390,000 and is projected to increase.⁹⁷ The Regional Response Plan, a U.N. appeal, includes assistance to meet immediate Syrian refugee needs in Turkey.⁹⁸ Registration of refugees and camp management are coordinated by the Turkish government's Disaster Relief Agency (AFAD), with operational support from the Turkish Red Crescent and other agencies. UNHCR provides technical advice and assistance. Various reports reflect a widely held assessment among observers that Turkey has managed to avoid systemic economic difficulties from the refugee flows, though its government had reportedly spent \$750 million on the refugees as of late April 2013.⁹⁹ Additionally, social and

⁹⁴ Article 4 reads: "The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened."

⁹⁵ Turkey has announced plans to purchase a ballistic defense missile system, but has repeatedly delayed a procurement decision. It has reportedly entertained offers from the United States (Patriots from Raytheon Co.), the European consortium Eurosam, Russia, and China, and it is unclear whether NATO's deployment of Patriot batteries might affect the decision.

⁹⁶ NATO press release, "All NATO Patriot batteries in Turkey operational," February 16, 2013.

⁹⁷ The Turkish government estimates that there are a total of 490,000 Syrians in Turkey, when those not registered or soon-to-be registered as refugees are counted. UNHCR Turkey Syrian Refugee Daily Sitrep, June 21, 2013.

⁹⁸ UNHCR Turkey Syrian Refugee Daily Sitrep, February 28, 2013; UNHCR, "Turkey: High Commissioner for Refugees in Syria region, Turkey refugee numbers revised upwards," March 12, 2013.

⁹⁹ International Crisis Group, *Blurring the Borders: Syrian Spillover Risks for Turkey*, Europe Report No. 225, April 30, 2013.

political costs are reportedly emerging—especially tensions between Sunni refugees and Turkish citizens of Arab Alawite descent in the border province of Hatay.¹⁰⁰

Iran

Turkey seems to be seeking a balance between helping the United States contain Iranian regional influence and maintaining relatively normal political and economic ties with Iran. Differing Iranian and Turkish interests in the region, particularly with regard to Syria and Iraq, have led to increased competition for influence. Turkey and Iran also compete for the admiration of Arab populations on issues such as championing the Palestinian cause. Turkey's renewed closeness with the United States has further fueled Turkey-Iran tensions at a time when the Obama Administration is continuing its efforts to isolate Iran because of Iran's nuclear program, backing of the Assad regime, and support for militant and terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah.

Within this context, Turkey agreed in September 2011 to host a U.S. forward-deployed early warning radar at the Kurecik base near the eastern Turkish city of Malatya as part of a NATO-approved missile defense system. Most analysts interpret this system as an attempt to counter potential ballistic missile threats to Europe from Iran.¹⁰¹ An unnamed senior U.S. Administration official was quoted as calling this agreement “probably the biggest strategic decision between the United States and Turkey in the past 15 or 20 years.”¹⁰²

Some Iranian officials, after initially expressing displeasure with Turkey's decision, have stated that Iran would target the radar in Turkey in the event of a U.S. or Israeli airstrike on Iran. During their visit to Tehran in late March 2012, Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Davutoglu reportedly said on Iranian television that Turkey could have the radar dismantled within six months if “conditions Turkey had put forward to host the radar are not respected”¹⁰³—a likely reference to Turkish leaders' public insistence that data collected from the radar are not to be shared with Israel.¹⁰⁴

Despite these sources of tension, there is Turkish interest in maintaining stability in the bilateral relationship, largely due to Turkey's energy needs as described below. Turkey may also be trying to keep open the possibility of mediating the international impasse on Iran's nuclear program.

¹⁰⁰ According to one Turkish journalist, “Hatay [also known as Antakya or Antioch] is becoming a city of war because of Erdogan's policies.” Birnbaum, op. cit., quoting journalist Akin Bodur.

¹⁰¹ See footnote 1. The radar was activated in late December 2011. “Part of NATO missile defense system goes live in Turkey,” *CNN*, January 16, 2012. It is reportedly operated by U.S. personnel from a command center in Diyarbakir, with a Turkish general and his team stationed in Germany to monitor the command and control mechanisms headquartered there for the entire missile defense system. “Malatya radar system to be commanded from Ramstein,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, February 4, 2012.

¹⁰² Thom Shanker, “U.S. Hails Deal with Turkey on Missile Shield,” *New York Times*, September 15, 2011.

¹⁰³ “Erdogan, in Iran, says NATO radar could be dismantled if needed,” *Today's Zaman*, March 30, 2012.

¹⁰⁴ According to U.S. officials, despite this Turkish insistence, information collected from the radar is coordinated as necessary with the U.S. missile defense radar deployed in Israel. One senior Administration official has been quoted as saying, “Data from all U.S. missile defense assets worldwide, including not only from radars in Turkey and Israel, but from other sensors as well, is fused to maximize the effectiveness of our missile defenses worldwide; this data can be shared with our allies and partners in this effort.” Josh Rogin, “Amid tensions, U.S. and Turkey move forward on missile defense,” *thecable.foreignpolicy.com*, September 19, 2011. Some Members of Congress had insisted that sharing information for Israel's potential defense be a condition of the radar's placement in Turkey. The text of a September 19, 2011, letter to President Barack Obama from six Senators on this subject is available at http://kirk.senate.gov/?p=press_release&id=299.

Following some reports that Iran might be assisting the PKK, Iran and Turkey publicly committed in October 2011 to cooperating against the PKK and the Iranian Kurdish separatist organization Party of Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK) that also maintains safe havens in northern Iraq.

According to a November 2012 *Wall Street Journal* article, Iran provides 51% of Turkey's oil and 18% of its natural gas.¹⁰⁵ Turkey's announcement in the spring of 2012 that it would reduce Iranian oil imports by 20% helped it gain an exemption from the U.S. sanctions that took effect in June 2012.¹⁰⁶ Media and official attention in late 2012 and early 2013 focused on a "gold-for-energy" trading practice between Turkey and Iran that was characterized by many as helping Iran circumvent newly instituted international restrictions on access to the global financial system. However, a new U.S. law is set to take effect in July 2013 specifically sanctioning the provision of precious metals to Iran (Section 1245 of P.L. 112-239, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, enacted January 2, 2013).¹⁰⁷ Perhaps as a consequence, reports indicate that Turkey may be reducing or preparing to reduce gold-for-energy trades with Iran.¹⁰⁸ Additional U.S. and international concerns about Iran's possible use of Turkish companies or institutions to finance and supply its nuclear program and avoid the impact of sanctions largely focus on Turkey's legal standards¹⁰⁹ and on the reported recent profusion of Iranian-financed firms in Turkey.¹¹⁰

Iraq

Turkey cooperated with the United States in the 1991 Gulf War and following the U.S.-led 2003 Iraq invasion, but the Turkish parliamentary decision in 2003 not to allow U.S. forces to use its territory to open a northern front significantly affected U.S.-Turkey relations at that time. The decision showed the United States that in its strategic relationship with Turkey, it could no longer rely solely on past legacies of cooperation and its close ties with the Turkish military.¹¹¹ Starting in late 2007, U.S. willingness to provide greater counterterrorism support to Turkey in its struggle against the PKK helped move U.S.-Turkey priorities in Iraq toward greater alignment.

For Turkey, strong governance and stability in Iraq is important particularly due to Turkish interests in denying the PKK use of Iraqi territory for its safe havens; discouraging the cross-border spread of Kurdish separatist sentiment; countering Iranian influence; and accessing Iraq's potentially lucrative export markets and ample energy resources (which could eventually lessen Turkey's dependence on Iranian and Russian energy imports). U.S. officials have repeatedly expressed appreciation for Turkey's constructive role in post-conflict Iraq, with which it has growing trade and where it has improved relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG).

¹⁰⁵ Joe Parkinson and Emre Peker, "Turkey Swaps Gold for Iranian Gas," *Wall Street Journal*, November 23, 2012.

¹⁰⁶ This exemption, which requires renewal every 180 days by the Administration, was renewed in December 2012 after Turkey apparently agreed to reduce Iranian oil imports further. Press Statement by then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, "Regarding Significant Reductions of Iranian Crude Oil Purchases," Washington, DC, December 7, 2012.

¹⁰⁷ For more general information on this subject, see CRS Report RS20871, *Iran Sanctions*, by Kenneth Katzman.

¹⁰⁸ Asli Kandemir, "Exclusive: Turkey to Iran gold trade wiped out by new U.S. sanction," *Reuters*, February 15, 2013.

¹⁰⁹ Financial Action Task Force Public Statement, Paris, February 22, 2013; Daniel Dombey, "Turkey's last-minute terror laws: will they be enough?," *blogs.ft.com*, February 8, 2013.

¹¹⁰ "New Iranian firms in Turkey stir front company worries for Ankara," *todayzaman.com*, February 17, 2013.

¹¹¹ For further information, see archived CRS Report R41761, *Turkey-U.S. Defense Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges*, by Jim Zanotti.

Without a U.S. military mission in Iraq, Turkey's influence appears to be more significant. Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki, a Shiite, has accused Turkey of undue interference in Iraqi internal affairs. This is likely due to Turkey's close ties to Sunni Arab and Kurdish leaders in the country, as well as warnings by Prime Minister Erdogan that Turkey would not "remain silent" in the event of renewed sectarian conflict.¹¹²

Observers debate the extent to which Turkish energy dealings with the KRG might enable greater Kurdish autonomy or endanger Iraq's unity.¹¹³ In May 2013, Erdogan announced that Turkey's state-owned oil company and ExxonMobil would engage in oil exploration with the KRG in northern Iraq.¹¹⁴ In June, the KRG announced a reportedly Turkey-approved plan to complete a new pipeline by 2014 that would feed into an existing pipeline controlled by Iraq's central government.¹¹⁵ The Maliki government claims that Turkey-KRG dealings violate Iraq's sovereignty, with disputes ongoing over questions of constitutionality and revenue-sharing. ExxonMobil's involvement in northern Iraqi exploration may complicate reported efforts by U.S. officials to caution Turkey to avoid steps that might stoke tensions with the Maliki government. In addition, both Turkey and the KRG routinely express concern that U.S. policy does not appear to be preventing Maliki from sowing further ethnic and sectarian division within Iraq or encouraging him to build democratically and constitutionally accountable national institutions.

Possible U.S. Policy Options

Although U.S. and Turkish interests and policies intersect in many respects, Turkey's growing regional influence and military and economic self-reliance have decreased its dependence on the United States. Still, the appeal of U.S. and Western power, prestige, values, and military technology might currently outstrip that of potential competitors.¹¹⁶ Over the long term, a significant challenge for U.S. policymakers may be to convince Turkish officials of a continuing imperative to cooperate despite an apparently growing sense of Turkish confidence and independence. The 2012 Albright-Hadley report implied that Turkey's ability to exercise regional influence on its own remains limited:

Still, for all the investment, goodwill, and concomitant influence it has developed over the past decade, Ankara was unable to leverage that prestige to sway the behavior of either Libya's Muammar al-Qaddafi or Syrian president Bashar al-Assad, two leaders the Turks studiously cultivated during the AKP's tenure.¹¹⁷

Members of Congress, through active inquiry into and possible coordination with Obama Administration positions on Turkey, and their own engagement on Turkey-related issues, can consider how various options might serve U.S. interests. One U.S. analyst wrote in December 2011:

¹¹² Jonathon Burch, "Turkey warns Iraqi PM over sectarian conflict," *Reuters*, January 24, 2012.

¹¹³ Denise Natali, "Can Turkey Leverage Kurdish Crude?," *Al-Monitor Turkey Pulse*, April 9, 2013; Daniel Dombey, "Turkey agrees energy deal with Kurdish north Iraq," *Financial Times*, May 13, 2013.

¹¹⁴ "Turkey's state-run TPAO joins with Exxon, Iraqi Kurds in oil exploration," *Reuters*, May 15, 2013.

¹¹⁵ Julia King and Peg Mackey, "UPDATE 1-Iraqi Kurds say new oil pipeline to Turkey to start soon," *Reuters*, June 19, 2013.

¹¹⁶ See "Other International Relationships" in **Appendix D**.

¹¹⁷ Council on Foreign Relations, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

Despite record levels of communication and travel between top leaders in Ankara and Washington, the societal and institutional connections are still in need of revitalization and strengthening.... [C]oordination and policy on Turkey continues to affect vital interests throughout Washington, which ideally must go beyond the administration to the Hill and society at large even if there is short-term turbulence.¹¹⁸

See “June 2013 Protests and Their Implications” above for a discussion of the implications of Turkey’s domestic discontent for U.S. interests.

Influencing Regional Change and Promoting Stability

Turkey is likely to play a key role in affecting the outcomes of ongoing political change and unrest in the broader Middle East. In partnering with Turkey to influence regional change and promote stability, the following options are available for Members of Congress and Obama Administration officials to adopt or continue:

- Determine how to encourage improvement in Turkey’s relations with Israel.
- Determine the proper nature and extent of bilateral and NATO military and intelligence cooperation, including joint use of Turkish bases and territory, as well as information sharing to assist in countering the PKK and in facilitating interdiction of illegal arms shipments from other countries or non-state actors.
- Determine whether and how to encourage Turkish political and financial support for individuals and groups opposing autocratic regimes, and whether and how such backing should be linked to support for political and economic transitions in countries experiencing unrest or leadership changes.
- Determine whether and how to coordinate with Turkey to impose and enforce unilateral, multilateral, or international sanctions (diplomatic, military, and/or economic) that have the potential to effectively weaken or change the behavior of regimes or other actors violating human rights or otherwise contravening international laws and norms. Examples include the Assad regime and possibly other actors in Syria and the Iranian regime for its nuclear program and support of regional terrorist groups.
- Determine whether and how to support Turkish efforts to coordinate regional security and development with other local actors, especially other U.S. allies.

Action on any of these options would take place in a complex regional and strategic environment whose trajectory has probably become more unpredictable since regional unrest and political change began in late 2010.

Arms Sales and Military/Security Assistance

Turkey continues to seek advanced U.S. military equipment (i.e., fighter aircraft, drone aircraft, helicopters, and missile defense systems), and its defense industry participates in joint ventures with the United States (e.g., on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter). However, Turkey’s growing

¹¹⁸ Joshua W. Walker, “U.S.-Turkish Relations: Modesty and Revitalization,” *On Turkey*, German Marshall Fund of the United States, December 15, 2011.

defense industry and its increased willingness to engage in arms import-export transactions or joint military exercises with non-NATO countries, such as China, Russia, Pakistan, and South Korea, indicate Turkey's interest in diversifying its defense relationships and decreasing its dependence on the United States. U.S. military and security assistance programs for Turkey are designed to cultivate closeness in relationships and practices between Turkish military officers and security officials and their U.S. counterparts. These programs also seek to counter terrorist and criminal networks that are active in the region, including those which historically have operated within and across Turkey's borders.¹¹⁹ In April 2013, Turkish police stated that in February they had detained conspirators in potential Al Qaeda-linked terrorist plots against the U.S. embassy in Ankara and two other sites.¹²⁰

Since 2008, Turkey has reportedly been particularly interested in acquiring armed drones from the United States to use against the PKK.¹²¹ Reports have indicated that some Members of Congress have balked at the drone sale.¹²² By redeploying four unarmed U.S. Predator drones from Iraq to Turkey in late 2011,¹²³ the Obama Administration might have bought time for further consultations with Congress on a potential drone sale and with Turkey on potential alternatives. It is unclear how Turkey's ongoing negotiations with the PKK may affect its military procurement plans.

Possible Armenian Genocide

Congress's involvement on Turkey-Armenia issues has the potential to strongly influence U.S.-Turkey relations. In March 2010 during the 111th Congress, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs voted to report H.Res. 252 for consideration by the full House (by a vote of 23-22). H.Res. 252 characterized actions of the Ottoman Empire against Armenians from 1915 to 1917 as genocide. Similar resolutions had been reported multiple times by congressional committees since 1984 (see **Appendix E** for a full list), and President Ronald Reagan referred to a "genocide of the Armenians" during a Holocaust Remembrance Day speech in 1981.

H.Res. 252 did not pass, but in response to the March 2010 committee action, Turkey recalled its ambassador from the United States for one month, and at least one prominent AKP lawmaker reportedly warned that "the relationship would be downgraded on every level" in the event of House passage of the resolution. This warning was commonly interpreted as including a threat to

¹¹⁹ State Department FY2014 Congressional Budget Justification, Foreign Operations, Annex: Regional Perspectives, pp. 404-406.

¹²⁰ Sebnem Arsu, "U.S. Embassy in Turkey Said to Be Targeted," *New York Times*, April 12, 2013.

¹²¹ According to *Jane's*, Turkey has sought to purchase four MQ-1 Predator drones and six MQ-9 Reaper drones (more advanced versions of the Predator). "Procurement, Turkey," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Eastern Mediterranean*, December 16, 2010. Previous potential sales of Reapers to NATO allies such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy were notified to Congress in 2008 and 2009 with the understanding that the drones would be used to support coalition operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

¹²² In October 2011, then Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Alexander Vershbow reportedly said in a speech to the American-Turkish Council, "This topic is influenced by the problems in Turkish-Israeli relations. This is not a secret. But just to repeat it, we do support the sale." Craig Whitlock, "Pentagon agrees to sell three attack helicopters to Turkey," *Washington Post*, November 1, 2011.

¹²³ "US deployed Predators to Incirlik: Davutoglu," *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 13, 2011. According to then Secretary of Defense Panetta, the Iraqi government gave the United States permission to keep flying Predator drones on surveillance missions over northern Iraq. Craig Whitlock, "U.S. drones allowed in Iraqi skies," washingtonpost.com/blogs/checkpoint-washington, December 16, 2011.

curtail, at least partially or temporarily, U.S. access to Turkish bases and territory for transporting non-lethal cargo to missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹²⁴

Representative Robert Dold introduced H.Res. 304—virtually identical to H.Res. 252—in June 2011 during the 112th Congress, and Senator Robert Menendez introduced a similar proposed resolution as S.Res. 399 in March 2012. Neither resolution advanced through committee. In the 113th Congress, on May 20, 2013, Representative David Valadao introduced H.Res. 227: “Calling on the President to work toward equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relations based upon the Republic of Turkey’s full acknowledgment of the facts and ongoing consequences of the Armenian Genocide, and a fair, just, and comprehensive international resolution of this crime against humanity.”¹²⁵ Advocates of recognizing a genocide are to commemorate the event’s 100th anniversary in 2015. At least 20 countries other than Armenia have recognized the Ottoman-era deaths as genocide in some way, including 11 of the 27 EU member states.¹²⁶

Bilateral Trade Promotion

Although successive U.S. Administrations have cited the importance of increased trade with Turkey, and the Obama Administration has reemphasized this in articulating its vision for a multifaceted bilateral strategic relationship,¹²⁷ it is unclear how effective government efforts to promote U.S.-Turkey trade can be. Bilateral trade has expanded in recent years, although the gap (in favor of the United States) has widened since 2009 both in actual terms and in percentage terms.¹²⁸ The U.S. government has designated Turkey as a priority market under the National Export Initiative and the interagency Trade Policy Coordination Committee has developed an Export Enhancement Strategy for Turkey.¹²⁹ On its side, the Turkish Ministry of Economy has identified six U.S. states as the focus of its efforts to increase bilateral trade: California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and Georgia.¹³⁰

Turkish officials have occasionally proposed a U.S.-Turkey free or preferential trade agreement or U.S. legislation establishing qualified industrial zones (QIZs) in Turkey without success.¹³¹

¹²⁴ Robert Tait and Ewen McCaskill, “Turkey threatens ‘serious consequences’ after US vote on Armenian genocide,” *Guardian* (UK), March 5, 2010.

¹²⁵ H.Res. 227, which has at least 26 co-sponsors, has been referred to the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

¹²⁶ The EU states recognizing a genocide are France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Greece, and Cyprus. The European Parliament has also recognized the deaths as genocide.

¹²⁷ The two countries signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty in 1990 and a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement in 1999. Annual meetings for the U.S.-Turkey Framework for Strategic Economic and Commercial Cooperation began in 2010 at the cabinet ministerial level.

¹²⁸ See, e.g., Sidar Global Advisors, *U.S.-Turkish Economic Relations in a New Era: Analysis and Recommendations for a Stronger Strategic Partnership*, Turkish Industry & Business Association (TUSIAD) and U.S. Chamber of Commerce, March 2012.

¹²⁹ For more detailed information on bilateral efforts to promote trade, see U.S. Department of Commerce Fact Sheet: U.S.-Turkey Framework for Strategic Economic and Commercial Cooperation, October 14, 2010.

¹³⁰ Information provided to CRS by Turkish Ministry of Economy, September 2011.

¹³¹ Turkey’s customs union with the EU (see **Appendix D**) apparently would preclude a free trade or preferential agreement between the United States and Turkey absent a similar U.S.-EU agreement. See Turkish Ministry of Economy website at <http://www.economy.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=tradeagreements&bolum=fta®ion=0>. The 2012 Albright-Hadley report encouraged the pursuit of a U.S.-Turkey free or preferential trade agreement or other measures (continued...)

Some policymakers and observers claim that even if past economic conditions may have limited U.S. trade with Turkey, recent growth in Turkish consumer demand, quality of products and services, and global competitiveness and brand recognition have increased Turkey's value as an import source, target market, and place of investment for U.S. companies.¹³²

With U.S. and EU officials planning to launch negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), some analysts and advocates have called for Turkey to be included in whatever discussions may occur.¹³³ Because of its customs union with the EU, analysts conclude that Turkey would—absent an agreement with the United States or EU to the contrary—be required to comply with all the trade obligations of a potential TTIP without gaining any of the direct benefits. Although a parallel trade deal with Turkey would therefore not be necessary for the United States to gain preferential access to Turkey's market, proponents of a U.S.-Turkey trade agreement argue that it would be important in reinforcing overall bilateral relations and in anchoring Turkey's ties with the West.¹³⁴ It is unclear to what extent the technical complexity of a U.S.-EU trade negotiation may raise difficulties for Turkey's participation in the process. During Prime Minister Erdogan's May 2013 visit to Washington, DC, Vice President Joe Biden was quoted as saying at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce meeting that Erdogan and President Obama "had agreed to begin efforts for a Free Trade Agreement."¹³⁵ However, one analyst has written that because of potential obstacles, including probable stances "by the Armenian and Greek lobbies against a free trade agreement with Turkey, one cannot be too sanguine about the chances of passage in Congress of a free trade agreement with Turkey, even with the President's influence."¹³⁶

Conclusion

Turkey's importance to the United States may be increasing relative to previous eras of U.S.-Turkey cooperation because of Turkey's geopolitical importance, growing economy, and greater foreign policy assertiveness. The United States looks to Turkey, which plays a role in a number of hotspots in the region, as a partner for pursuing key interests. The effectiveness of Turkey as a

(...continued)

emphasizing "market access, regulatory compatibility, business facilitation, assistance for small and medium-sized enterprises, and promotion of trade in cutting-edge technologies". Council on Foreign Relations, op. cit., pp. 12-13. Additionally, a March 2012 report jointly sponsored by the Turkish Industry & Business Association (TUSIAD) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce recommended that U.S. and Turkish trade and investment promotion agencies align strategies and use resources efficiently to "achieve certain mutually set benchmarks and goals." See Sidar Global Advisors, op. cit.

¹³² See, e.g., Mark Scott, "In Turkey, Western Companies Find Stability and Growth," *New York Times*, December 23, 2011.

¹³³ See, e.g., Kemal Kirisci, "Don't Forget Free Trade with Turkey," *nationalinterest.org*, April 15, 2013; Bahadır Kaleagasi and Baris Ornarli, Turkish Industry and Business Association (TUSIAD), "Why Turkey belongs to transatlantic economy," *thehill.com/blogs*, March 12, 2013.

¹³⁴ CRS conversation with Kemal Kirisci of the Brookings Institution, May 28, 2013. See also Tyson Barker and Cenk Sidar, "U.S.-EU Trade Talks Risk Damaging Turkey Ties," *Bloomberg View*, May 12, 2013.

¹³⁵ "Biden: US and Turkey to work for FTA," *worldbulletin.net*, May 17, 2013. Biden was also quoted as saying, "We will not only keep Turkey informed of every step of the negotiation with the EU, but we believe that if in fact, we can get by some of the divisions and the differences we have with regard to free trade agreements, that if we can get there before the time we settle the EU new trade agreement, that it will be a great opportunity for Turkey."

¹³⁶ Mark Meiwitz, "A Realistic and Candid Look at Turkish-U.S. Relations," Magazine of American-Turkish Council: 32nd Annual Conference on U.S.-Turkish Relations, June 2-5, 2013.

U.S. partner is likely to be tested in relation to developments in Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Convergence between U.S. and Turkish interests remains subject to fluctuation as events develop, particularly with regard to Turkey's complicated relations with Israel and concerns over strategic preeminence and energy exploration in the Eastern Mediterranean. Domestic developments in Turkey following the outbreak of nationwide protests in June 2013, and U.S. responses to these developments, could also affect the tenor of U.S.-Turkey relations. Congressional action on the ongoing civil conflict in Syria, Turkey's request to purchase U.S. drone aircraft to counter the PKK, or a potential Armenian genocide resolution could have implications for the bilateral alliance, particularly if Members of Congress link their stances on these issues to the state of Turkey-Israel relations.

The positions Members of Congress take on specific issues concerning Turkey—including defense cooperation, trade promotion, and Turkish domestic developments—also will indicate U.S. priorities at a critical time for global and regional stability and for the Turkish republic's political and constitutional evolution. This could influence Turkish leaders' future foreign policy rhetoric, decisions, and alignments, which in turn will likely have implications for regional security and for Turkey's EU accession prospects. Congressional positions could also have some influence on Turkey's commitment to civilian-led, democratic government that enshrines individual, media, and minority rights; rule of law; and due process.

Appendix A. Profiles of Key Figures in Turkey

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Prime Minister Erdogan (pronounced air-doe-wan) was born in Istanbul in 1954 and spent much of his childhood in his family's ancestral hometown of Rize on the Black Sea coast. He and his family returned to Istanbul for his teenage years, and he attended a religious *imam hatip* school. In the 1970s, Erdogan studied business at what is today Marmara University, played soccer semi-professionally, and became politically active with the National Salvation Party, led by the pioneering Turkish Islamist figure (and eventual prime minister) Necmettin Erbakan. After the military banned all political parties in the wake of its 1980 coup, Erdogan became a business consultant and executive. When political life in Turkey resumed, Erdogan became a prominent local leader and organizer for Erbakan's new Welfare Party.

Erdogan was elected mayor of Istanbul in 1994 at the beginning of a wave of Islamist political victories in Turkey in the mid-1990s. He was removed from office, imprisoned for six months, and banned from parliamentary politics for religious incitement after he recited a poem in the southeastern city of Siirt in December 1997 that included the passage (translated from Turkish): "The mosques are our barracks, the domes our helmets, the minarets our bayonets and the faithful our soldiers."

After Erbakan's government resigned under military pressure in 1997 and the Welfare Party was disbanded, Erdogan became the founding chairman of the AKP in 2001. The AKP won a decisive electoral victory in 2002, securing the single-party rule that it has maintained since. After the election, a legal change allowed Erdogan to run for parliament in a 2003 special election in Siirt, and after he won, Erdogan replaced Abdullah Gul as prime minister.

Erdogan and his personal popularity and charisma have been at the center of much of the domestic and foreign policy change that has occurred in Turkey in the past decade. In January 2009 at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, following the Gaza Strip conflict between Israel and Hamas, he left the panel discussion in which he was participating after perceiving a slight by the moderator (*Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius). Before leaving, he pointedly criticized fellow panelist Shimon Peres, president of Israel. His criticism of Israel and its actions boosted his popularity at home and throughout the Muslim Middle East. Subsequently, Erdogan's stances on unrest and transition in Egypt, Libya, and Syria also attracted significant regional and global attention. Since the outbreak of nationwide protests in June 2013, domestic and international observers have closely scrutinized Erdogan's rhetoric and actions.

Erdogan is married and has two sons and two daughters. His wife Emine and daughters wear the headscarf. He is not fluent in English but his understanding may be improving. Observers have speculated about his health, particularly following a November 2011 surgical procedure to remove stomach polyps. He has said that he does not have cancer.

President Abdullah Gul

President Gul was born in 1950 in Kayseri in central Turkey. He studied economics in Turkey and England, and received his Ph.D. from Istanbul University, becoming a university professor and an economist at the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Gul was first elected to

parliament from Kayseri in 1991 as a member of the Islamist Welfare Party and served as a minister in and spokesman for the coalition government it briefly headed in 1996-1997. After the Welfare Party was disbanded, Gul stayed on in parliament as a reform-minded member of the Islamist Virtue Party. Gul served on parliamentary assemblies of NATO and the Council of Europe. When the AKP was formed in 2001, he became deputy chairman and—briefly—its first prime minister after the successful election of 2002. When Erdogan took over the prime ministry in 2003, Gul became Turkey’s foreign minister and helped accelerate Turkey’s EU accession process.

In 2007, the AKP nominated Gul for the presidency amid substantial secularist opposition, partly owing to statements from his early political career that indicated distaste for the secular nature of Turkey’s republic. Parliament nevertheless elected Gul president. Many observers believe him to be a moderating influence on the Erdogan government, as reflected in his approach to the June 2013 nationwide protests. Observers also speculate about whether President Gul might seek a second presidential term at the expense of Erdogan, make another bid for the prime minister’s role, or

Gul is married with two sons and a daughter. His wife Hayrunissa and daughter wear the headscarf. He speaks fluent English.

Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu

Foreign Minister Davutoglu was born in 1959 in Konya in central Turkey. He attended a German international school in Istanbul and received a Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations from Bosphorus University. He became a university professor, spending time in Malaysia in the early 1990s before establishing himself as a scholar known for applying academic theory to practical matters of Turkish foreign policy and national security strategy. His book *Strategic Depth*, which was published in 2001 and has been translated into other languages but not English, is thought by some to represent a blueprint of sorts for the policies Davutoglu has since helped implement.

Following the AKP’s victory in 2002, Davutoglu was appointed chief foreign policy advisor to the prime minister. Upon his appointment as foreign minister in 2009, he quickly gained renown for articulating and applying his concepts of “zero problems with neighbors” and strategic depth. He advocates for a preeminent role for Turkey in its surrounding region, but disputes the characterization of his policies by some observers as “neo-Ottomanism.” He won an AKP parliamentary seat for the first time in June 2011.

Davutoglu is married with four children. His wife Sare is a medical doctor. He speaks fluent English, as well as German and Arabic.

Opposition Leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu

Kilicdaroglu, the leader of the main opposition CHP, was born in 1948 in Tunceli province in eastern Turkey. After receiving an economics degree from what is now Gazi University in Ankara, Kilicdaroglu had a civil service career—first with the Finance Ministry, then as the director-general of the Social Security Organization. After retiring from the civil service, Kilicdaroglu became politically active with the CHP and was elected to parliament from Istanbul in 2002. He gained national prominence for his efforts to root out corruption among AKP officials

and the AKP-affiliated mayor of Ankara. When CHP leader Deniz Baykal was forced to resign over a videotape sex scandal in May 2010, Kilicdaroglu was elected to replace him. In the first national election with him as party leader in June 2011, the CHP gained 23 seats in parliament—not as many as some observers had expected. His routine criticism of Erdogan has intensified following the outbreak of nationwide protest in June 2013.

Kilicdaroglu is married with a son and two daughters. He is an Alevi and speaks fluent French.

PKK Leader Abdullah Ocalan

Abdullah Ocalan was born in or around 1949 in southeastern Turkey (near Sanliurfa). After attending vocational high school in Ankara, Ocalan served in civil service posts in Diyarbakir and Istanbul until enrolling at Ankara University in 1971. As his interest developed in socialism and Kurdish nationalism, Ocalan was jailed for seven months in 1972 for participating in an illegal student demonstration. His time in prison with other activists helped inspire his political ambitions, and he became increasingly politically active upon his release. Ocalan founded the Marxist-Leninist-influenced PKK in 1978 and launched a separatist militant campaign against Turkish security forces—while also attacking the traditional Kurdish chieftain class—in 1984. He used Syrian territory as a safe haven. Syria forced Ocalan to leave in 1998 after Turkey threatened war for harboring him. After traveling to several different countries, Ocalan was captured in February 1999 in Kenya—possibly with U.S. help—and was turned over to Turkish authorities. The PKK declared a cease-fire shortly thereafter. Ocalan was sentenced to death, in a trial later ruled unfair by the European Court of Human Rights, but when Turkey abolished the death penalty in 2002, the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. He resides in a maximum-security prison on the island of Imrali in the Sea of Marmara, and was in solitary confinement until 2009.

Although acting PKK leader Murat Karayilan and other commanders have exercised direct control over PKK operations during Ocalan's imprisonment, some observers believe that Ocalan still ultimately controls the PKK through proxies. PKK violence resumed in 2003 and has since continued off-and-on until the most recent cease-fire that Ocalan and Karayilan called in March 2013. Ocalan has indicated that the organization is seeking a negotiated resolution that does not require forming a Kurdish state, and is apparently engaging in talks with Turkish intelligence to that end.

Appendix B. List of Selected Turkish-Related Organizations in the United States

American Friends of Turkey (<http://afot.us/>)

American Research Institute in Turkey (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ARIT/>)

American Turkish Society (<http://www.americanturkishsociety.org/>)

American-Turkish Council (<http://www.the-atc.org/>)

Assembly of Turkish American Associations (<http://www.ataa.org/>)—component associations in 18 states and the District of Columbia

Ataturk Society of America (<http://www.ataturksociety.org/>)

Federation of Turkish American Associations

Institute of Turkish Studies (<http://turkishstudies.org/>)

SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (<http://setadc.org>)

Turkic American Alliance (<http://www.turkicamericanalliance.org/>)

- West America Turkic Council (West region)—includes Pacifica Institute
- Turkish American Federation of Midwest (Midwest region)—includes Niagara Foundation
- Turquoise Council of Americans and Eurasians (South region)—includes Institute of Interfaith Dialog
- Turkic American Federation of Southeast (Southeast region)—includes Istanbul Center
- Council of Turkic American Associations (Northeast region)—includes Turkish Cultural Center
- Mid Atlantic Federation of Turkic American Associations (Mid-Atlantic region)—includes Rumi Forum
- Rethink Institute (housed at Turkic American Alliance headquarters in Washington, DC)

Turkish Coalition of America (<http://www.tc-america.org/>)

Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON) (<http://www.tuskonus.org/tuskon.php>)

Turkish Cultural Foundation (<http://www.turkishculturalfoundation.org/>)

Turkish Industry & Business Association (TUSIAD) (<http://www.tusiad.org/>)

Turkey Policy Center (<http://www.turkishpolicycenter.com/>)

Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) (<http://www.tobb.org.tr/>)

Appendix C. General Background Information

Historical Context

Changes to the old Kemalist order did not materialize suddenly with the AKP's rise to power. They reflect long-standing dynamics in Turkish politics and society that continue to evolve within Turkey's existing constitutional framework. Popular desires to allow greater public space for traditional Islamic-oriented lifestyles manifested themselves politically as early as the 1950s during the rule of Turkey's first democratically elected leader, Adnan Menderes. Menderes was eventually overthrown by a military-led coup in 1960 (and subsequently hanged), and the military continued to discourage the overt influence of religion in politics, intervening again in 1971 and 1980 to replace governments that it deemed had lost control of the country or had steered it away from secularism or toward ideological extremes.

The military allowed Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs (later Prime Minister and President) Turgut Ozal to begin liberalizing the traditionally statist Turkish economy following its restoration of internal order in 1980. This helped set in motion a chain of events leading to the economic and political empowerment of millions of Turks hailing from traditional communities removed from Turkey's more secular urban centers. Subsequent social and political developments reflected accommodation of this rising middle class—many of whom migrated to bigger cities—and their values. For example, *imam hatip* religious schools, initially established for young males seeking clerical careers, became widely attended by youth from religiously conservative families. In 1997, the military compelled Turkey's first-ever Islamist-led coalition government to resign, but junior members of the coalition-leading Refah (Welfare) Party went on to form the AKP,¹³⁷ which they characterize as a center-right reformist party without an Islamist agenda.

Fethullah Gulen Movement¹³⁸

The Fethullah Gulen movement (or community) became a nationwide grassroots movement in the 1980s as part of the emergence of the new conservative Turkish middle class. The movement is comprised of adherents of Turkish imam Fethullah Gulen, who is now a permanent U.S. resident.¹³⁹ He preaches a distinctly Turkish brand of Islam that condemns terrorism,¹⁴⁰ promotes interfaith dialogue and cross-cultural understanding, and can function in concert with secular

¹³⁷ AKP members generally use the acronym “AK Party” or “AK,” partly because the Turkish word *ak* means “clean” and “unblemished,” thus presenting an image of incorruptibility.

¹³⁸ For a range of views on the Gulen movement, see M. Hakan Yavuz, *Toward an Islamic Enlightenment: The Gulen Movement*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013; Helen Rose Ebaugh, *The Gulen Movement: A Sociological Analysis of a Civic Movement Rooted in Moderate Islam*, New York: Springer, 2010; “Hank, The Gulen Movement, The Role of a Lifetime,” *60 Minutes*, CBS News, May 13, 2012; Alexander Brock, “What Is the Gulen Movement?”, Council on Foreign Relations, op. cit., Appendix B; Claire Berlinski, “Who Is Fethullah Gülen?”, *City Journal*, vol. 22, no. 4, autumn 2012.

¹³⁹ Gulen lives in seclusion at a retreat center with some of his adherents in Saylorsburg, PA, in the Pocono Mountains. He came to the United States in 1999 for medical treatment for a cardiovascular condition, and elected to stay after an ultimately unsuccessful criminal case was brought against him in Turkey charging that he sought to undermine Turkey's secular government.

¹⁴⁰ Days after the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Gulen took out advertisements in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* condemning the attacks as incompatible with the teachings of Islam.

democratic mechanisms and modern economic and technological modes of living. Gulenist-affiliated schools¹⁴¹ and other organizations¹⁴² are also located in the United States and other regions worldwide.

The movement rose to greater prominence in parallel with the AKP, and Gulen-inspired businesses, media enterprises, schools, charitable organizations, and civil society groups now exercise considerable influence in Turkey.¹⁴³ Additionally, a Council on Foreign Relations analyst has written, “Opponents of both the AKP and the Gulen movement express concern that the party’s influence over the parliament and executive branch provides the Gulenists with unprecedented reach into government institutions, thereby threatening Turkey’s secular political order.”¹⁴⁴

Gulen, however, insists that he is neutral as to political parties and leaders in Turkey.¹⁴⁵ Some developments, especially since 2012, indicate the possibility of a rift between the Erdogan-led AKP and the Gulen movement.¹⁴⁶ In April 2012, the Gulen-inspired Journalists and Writers Foundation issued a lengthy statement asserting both that Hizmet (the Gulen movement’s name for itself—a Turkish word meaning “service”) does not have a hierarchy to direct the actions of individuals who adhere to its teachings, and that the movement’s support for principles of democracy, human rights, and rule of law is not defined in terms of loyalty or opposition to the AKP or any other political party.¹⁴⁷ Whether the movement generally operates more like a hierarchy or more like a loose confederation of philosophically similar groups and individuals is a matter of considerable debate.

¹⁴¹ Gulenist organizations have reportedly founded and operate as many as 135 publicly funded charter schools in 25 U.S. states. Berlinski, op. cit. These schools have generated publicity both for their high academic quality and for questions and possible federal investigations regarding their hiring and business practices. Phyllis Schlafly, “Look What’s Going On in Charter Schools,” *creators.com*, April 10, 2012; Stephanie Saul, “Charter Schools Tied to Turkey Grow in Texas,” *New York Times*, June 6, 2011; Martha Woodall and Claudio Gatti, “U.S. charter-school network with Turkish link draws federal attention,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 20, 2011. In April 2012, Tennessee’s legislature passed a bill limiting the percentage of foreign employees permitted to work in its charter schools. The initiative was reportedly driven in large part by political activists citing various media reports on Gulen-inspired schools. Mark Todd Engler, “Legislature Passes Limits on Foreign Staffers at TN Charter Schools,” *tnreport.com*, April 16, 2012.

¹⁴² Gulenists are involved with Turkish and Turkish-American trade associations and foundations active in the United States—both regionally and in the Washington, DC, area. Such organizations reportedly include the Turkic American Alliance umbrella of organizations and the business confederation TUSKON. Ilhan Tanir, “The Gulen movement plays big in Washington,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, May 14, 2010; Ebaugh, op. cit., p. 49.

¹⁴³ For example, adherents of Gulen’s teachings launched the *Zaman* newspaper in 1986. It is now the most widely circulated newspaper in Turkey, and has an English-language sister publication, *Today’s Zaman*. Gulen also encouraged a group of businessmen to launch the Samanyolu television channel—today a major channel in Turkey with a worldwide reach through satellite and Internet transmission—in 1993.

¹⁴⁴ Alexander Brock, “What Is the Gulen Movement?”, Council on Foreign Relations, op. cit., Appendix B. The criminal case charging Gulen with undermining Turkey’s secular government was largely based on a video in which Gulen apparently stated: “You must move in the arteries of the system without anyone noticing your existence until you reach all the power centers.... You must wait until such time as you have gotten all the state power, until you have brought to your side all the power of the constitutional institution in Turkey.” Berlinski, op. cit. Many of Gulen’s supporters claimed that the video had been doctored.

¹⁴⁵ Gulen asserted in August 2010 that “we are still at an equal distance from every party. We never told anybody to enroll in a specific [party], attend its rallies or act as its supporters.” “Gulen Endorses Reform Package, Appealing for ‘Yes’ on Sept. 12,” *Today’s Zaman*, August 1, 2010. He has backed AKP-proposed constitutional amendments, but distinguished his support for the substance of the initiatives from support for the party or individual leaders that had proposed them. “Gulen Says His Call for Yes Vote Not Linked to Political Motives,” *Today’s Zaman*, August 25, 2010.

¹⁴⁶ See footnote 52.

¹⁴⁷ “GYV: Hizmet a civilian movement, has no political ambitions,” *Today’s Zaman*, April 5, 2012.

Religious Minorities

While U.S. constitutional law prohibits the excessive entanglement of the government with religion, republican Turkey has maintained secularism or “laicism” by controlling or closely overseeing religious activities in the country. This is partly to prevent religion from influencing state actors and institutions, as it did during previous centuries of Ottoman rule. Sunni Muslims, although not monolithic in their views on freedom of worship, have better recourse than other religious adherents to the democratic process for accommodation of their views because of their majority status. Minority Muslim sects (most prominently, the Alevis) and non-Muslim religions largely depend on legal appeals, political advocacy, and support from Western countries to protect their rights in Turkey.

Christians and Jews

U.S. concerns focus on the rights of established Christian and Jewish communities and religious leaderships and their associated foundations and organizations within Turkey to choose leaders, train clergy, own property, and otherwise function independently of the Turkish government.¹⁴⁸ Some Members of Congress routinely express grievances through proposed congressional resolutions and through letters to the President and to Turkish leaders on behalf of the Ecumenical (Greek Orthodox) Patriarchate of Constantinople, the spiritual center of Orthodox Christianity based in Istanbul.¹⁴⁹ On December 13, 2011, for example, the House passed H.Res. 306—“Urging the Republic of Turkey to safeguard its Christian heritage and to return confiscated church properties”—by voice vote.¹⁵⁰

In an April 2012 interview with the *Chicago Tribune*, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was quoted as saying that recent changes in Turkey

have been extremely positive. Years ago, you couldn't have dreamed of the changes. You couldn't have believed it. The prime minister has promised to restore properties confiscated from Christians and Jews years ago. He has promised to reopen the Orthodox seminary at Halki, which has been closed for many years. Of course, we have concerns in some areas,

¹⁴⁸ The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) included Turkey on its watch list from 2009 to 2011, and, in a decision disputed among the commissioners, recommended in 2012 that the State Department list Turkey as a “country of particular concern” (CPC). In USCIRF’s 2013 report, Turkey was not included on either the watch list (now reclassified as “Tier 2”) or the CPC list, but on a separate list of countries being “monitored.” Four of the eight commissioners dissented, saying that Turkey’s 2012 CPC listing was a mistake, but that it should remain on the watch list/Tier 2. For additional information on Turkey’s religious minorities, see the State Department’s International Religious Freedom Report for 2012.

¹⁴⁹ The Patriarchate traces its roots to the Apostle Andrew. The most commonly articulated congressional grievances on behalf of the Patriarchate—whose ecumenicity is not acknowledged by the Turkish government, but also not objected to when acknowledged by others—are the non-operation of the Halki Theological School on Heybeliada Island near Istanbul, the requirement that the Patriarch be a Turkish citizen, and the failure of the Turkish government to return previously confiscated properties.

¹⁵⁰ H.Res. 306 was sponsored by Representative Edward Royce, now Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. An identically worded proposed resolution was introduced in the Senate in March 2012 as S.Res. 392. Proposed resolutions from the 113th Congress include H.Res. 136 (“Urging Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate”), and H.Res. 188 (“Calling upon the Government of Turkey to facilitate the reopening of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s Theological School of Halki without condition or further delay.”).

and there are legal questions remaining, but the Orthodox-Islamic dialogue has been extremely positive. More positive than I ever would have imagined.¹⁵¹

Patriarch Bartholomew, along with various U.S. and European officials, continues to press for the reopening of the Halki Theological School. In March 2013, Erdogan reportedly conditioned Halki's reopening on measures by Greece to accommodate its Muslim community.¹⁵² In January 2013, 190 hectares of forestland surrounding Halki were returned to the Greek Orthodox foundation listed as its owner-of-record, as part of the government's return of properties to religious groups discussed immediately below.¹⁵³

At various times in the Turkish Republic's history, the state has confiscated the properties of religious groups as part of its efforts to control religious life in the country. In late August 2011, Erdogan announced that Turkey would return properties confiscated since the adoption of a 1935 law governing religious foundations, to the extent the properties are still held publicly.¹⁵⁴ Many of these properties were confiscated following a Turkish High Court of Appeals ruling in 1974 that had invalidated religious foundations' abilities to acquire real estate.¹⁵⁵ Properties subject to return include schools, orphanages, cemeteries, commercial properties, and hospitals affiliated with various Christian churches and Turkey's Jewish community. According to one report, "The government's willingness to explore restitution does not yet cover the hundreds, if not thousands, of property seizures from individuals, or the takeovers that occurred before 1936. An even more contentious point is confiscation that occurred prior to the formation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923."¹⁵⁶ Prior to Erdogan's 2011 decree, which followed an earlier 2008 amendment to the law on religious foundations, the European Court of Human Rights made multiple rulings requiring Turkey to pay compensation to various religious-affiliated organizations after earlier attempts by the government to remedy the situation did not satisfy the organizations. According to the 2013 annual report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom:

Between the passage of the 2008 amendment and August 2011, approximately 200 properties were reportedly returned to religious minority foundations of various denominations. Between the August 2011 decree and January 31, 2013, some 300 additional properties (worth an estimated 1.5 billion dollars) have been returned to minority foundations.

¹⁵¹ John Kass, "With faith and hope, Turkey builds a new identity," *Chicago Tribune*, April 11, 2012. Some sources indicate that Prime Minister Erdogan promised at a March 2012 meeting with President Obama in Seoul, South Korea, that he would reopen the Halki seminary. See, e.g., David Ignatius, "Obama's friend in Turkey," *Washington Post*, June 7, 2012.

¹⁵² "PM indicates opening Halki Seminary depends on reciprocal gesture by Greece," *todayzaman.com*, March 30, 2013.

¹⁵³ Fatma Disli Zibak, "Turkey makes largest property return to Greek Orthodox community," *todayzaman.com*, January 11, 2013.

¹⁵⁴ According to reports, the foundations would receive compensation for property since transferred to third parties. See Sebnun Arsu, "Turkish Government to Return Seized Property to Religious Minorities," *New York Times*, August 29, 2011.

¹⁵⁵ The ability for these foundations to acquire real estate has since been restored. The 1974 court ruling came at a time of high Turkish-Greek tensions with the outbreak of conflict in Cyprus.

¹⁵⁶ Dorian Jones, "Turkey: Making Room for Religious Minorities," *EurasiaNet.org*, October 3, 2011.

Alevis

Most Muslims in Turkey are Sunni, but 10 million to 20 million are Alevis (of whom about 20% are ethnic Kurds). The Alevi sect of Islam is an offshoot of Shiism¹⁵⁷ that contains strands from pre-Islamic Anatolian traditions. Alevism has been traditionally influenced by Sufi mysticism that emphasizes believers' individual spiritual paths, but it defies precise description owing to its lack of centralized leadership and reliance on oral traditions historically kept secret from outsiders. According to the State Department's International Religious Freedom Report for 2012, "The government considers Alevism a heterodox Muslim sect and does not financially support religious worship for Alevi Muslims." Alevis have long been among the strongest supporters of Turkey's secular state, which they reportedly perceive as their protector from the Sunni majority.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ For information comparing and contrasting Sunnism and Shiism, see CRS Report RS21745, *Islam: Sunnis and Shiites*, by Christopher M. Blanchard; and CRS Report WVB00001, *Sunni and Shi'a Islam: Video Brief*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

¹⁵⁸ According to a Boston University anthropologist who studies modern Turkish society, "Alevis suffered centuries of oppression under the Ottomans, who accused them of not being truly Muslim and suspected them of colluding with the Shi'i Persians against the empire. Alevi Kurds were victims of the early republic's Turkification policies and were massacred by the thousands in Dersim in 1937-39. In the 1970s, Alevis became associated with socialist and other leftist movements, while the political right was dominated by Sunni Muslims. An explosive mix of sectarian cleavages, class polarization, and political violence led to communal massacres of Alevis in five major cities in 1977 and 1978, setting the stage for the 1980 coup." Jenny White, *Muslim Nationalism and the New Turks*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013, p. 14.

Appendix D. Additional Foreign Policy Issues of U.S. Interest

The “Turkish Model” and Regional Stance

Given the unrest and political change occurring across much of the Arab Middle East since late 2010, Turkey might view the United States as needing more Turkish support in the region. Turkey exercises considerable regional influence given its military, economic, and political power—aided by its status as an established Muslim-majority democracy and its membership in NATO. As discussed above, it is unclear how this might change as a result of the domestic discontent manifested by the June 2013 protests.

Political activists in several countries undergoing leadership transitions—including Tunisia and Egypt—have cited Turkey as a potential model for their own political systems. This has raised questions among leaders and analysts about which aspects of Turkey’s system these activists seek to emulate—whether it is its outwardly secular mechanisms, its historical military guardianship, its economic vitality, its political system in which civilian leaders with Islamist leanings have exerted increasing power, or some combination of these.

Arab interpretations of the “Turkish model” tend to emphasize the recent democratic and economic empowerment of Turkey’s middle class and the connection between this and Turkey’s emergence as a regional power with a foreign policy independent of the West. Some Western views favor some notion of military guardianship of the state from disorder and ideological extremes (a model that many Westerners have historically equated with republican Turkey).¹⁵⁹ While some in both the Arab world and the West suspect that Turkey’s government favors the rise of pro-democracy Islamist movements that emulate the AKP, Prime Minister Erdogan was criticized by North African Islamists during his September 2011 trip to Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya for voicing his support for secular democratic mechanisms. Many analysts and Turkish officials have stated that Turkey might more aptly be characterized as an inspiration than as a model because the historical experiences and characteristics of its people, society, and economic system are distinct from those of Arab countries.¹⁶⁰

Within the context of regional change, Turkey has sought to balance its support for country-specific democratic reforms with its interests in overall stability. Turkish interests appear to reflect three factors: (1) It is the leading Muslim-majority democracy in the region with an interest in promoting its political values, (2) it has a significant economic stake in the region, and (3) it is concerned about the regional balance of power and possible spillover effects for its own security. Turkish leaders are particularly concerned about developments at or near its borders with Syria and Iraq, especially given Turkey’s own on-and-off struggles with Kurdish separatist

¹⁵⁹ For a critique of viewpoints that favor a Turkey-like military-led transition in Egypt, see Steven Cook, “The Turkish Model for Egypt? Beware of False Analogies,” *blogs.cfr.org*, February 4, 2011.

¹⁶⁰ Nathalie Tocci, Omer Taspinar, Henri Barkey, Eduard Soler i Lecha, and Hassan Nafaa, *Turkey and the Arab Spring: Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy from a Transatlantic Perspective*, German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2011; Sinan Ulgen, *From Inspiration to Aspiration: Turkey in the New Middle East*, Carnegie Europe, December 2011.

militants who maintain safe havens in northern Iraq and who could be further strengthened by their fellow ethnic Kurds in Syria, Iraq, and Iran if those states' governments are weakened.

Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean¹⁶¹

Since Cyprus became independent of the United Kingdom in 1960, Turkey has viewed itself and has acted as the protector of the island's ethnic Turkish minority from potential mistreatment by the ethnic Greek majority.¹⁶² Responding to Greek and Cypriot political developments that raised concerns about a possible Greek annexation of Cyprus, Turkey's military intervened in 1974¹⁶³ and established control over the northern third of the island, prompting an almost total ethnic and de facto political division along geographical lines. That division persists today and is the subject of continuing international efforts aimed at reunification.¹⁶⁴ Additionally, according to a *New York Times* article, "after the 1974 invasion, an estimated 150,000 Turkish settlers arrived in the north of Cyprus, many of them poor and agrarian Turks from the mainland, who Greek Cypriots say are illegal immigrants used by Turkey as a demographic weapon."¹⁶⁵ The ethnic Greek-ruled Republic of Cyprus is internationally recognized as having jurisdiction over the entire island, while the de facto Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the northern third has only Turkish recognition. Congress imposed an embargo on military grants and arms sales to Turkey from 1975 to 1978 in response to Turkey's use of U.S.-supplied weapons in the 1974 conflict, and several Members remain interested in Cyprus-related issues.¹⁶⁶

The Republic of Cyprus's accession to the EU in 2004 and Turkey's refusal to normalize political and commercial relations with it are seen as a major obstacle to Turkey's EU membership aspirations. The Cyprus dilemma also hinders effective EU-NATO defense cooperation. Moreover, EU accession may have reduced incentives for Cyprus's Greek population to make

¹⁶¹ For more information on this subject, see CRS Report R41136, *Cyprus: Reunification Proving Elusive*, by Vincent Morelli.

¹⁶² Turkey views its protective role as justified given its status as one of the three guaranteeing powers of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee that was signed at the time Cyprus gained its independence. The United Kingdom and Greece are the other two guarantors.

¹⁶³ Turkish intervention in Cyprus with U.S.-supplied arms prompted Congress to impose an embargo on military assistance and arms sales to Turkey from 1975 to 1978. This Cold War-era disruption in U.S.-Turkey relations is often cited by analysts as a major factor in Turkey's continuing efforts to avoid overdependence on the United States or any other country for military equipment or expertise.

¹⁶⁴ Turkey retains between 30,000 and 40,000 troops on the island (supplemented by approximately 5,000 Turkish Cypriot soldiers and 26,000 reserves). "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Eastern Mediterranean*, October 30, 2009. This is countered by a Greek Cypriot force of approximately 12,000 (including roughly 1,300 Greek officers and soldiers seconded to Cyprus) with reported access to 50,000 reserves. "Cyprus," *Jane's World Armies*, November 3, 2011. The United Nations maintains a peacekeeping mission (UNFICYP) of approximately 900 personnel within a buffer zone headquartered in Cyprus's divided capital of Nicosia (known as Lefkosa in Turkish). Since the mission's inception in 1964, UNFICYP has suffered 179 fatalities. The United Kingdom maintains approximately 3,000 personnel at two sovereign military bases on the southern portion of the island at Akrotiri and Dhekelia.

¹⁶⁵ Dan Bilefsky, "On Cyprus Beach, Stubborn Relic of Conflict," *New York Times*, August 3, 2012. The CIA World Factbook estimates Cyprus's total population to be 1,150,000 (77% Greek, 18% Turkish, 5% other).

¹⁶⁶ See, e.g., from the 112th Congress, H.Res. 676 (To expose and halt the Republic of Turkey's illegal colonization of the Republic of Cyprus with non-Cypriot populations, to support Cyprus in its efforts to control all of its territory, to end Turkey's illegal occupation of northern Cyprus, and to exploit its energy resources without illegal interference by Turkey.); S.Con.Res. 47 (A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress on the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus over all of the territory of the island of Cyprus [sic].); and H.R. 2597 (American-Owned Property in Occupied Cyprus Claims Act).

concessions toward a reunification deal. The Greek Cypriots rejected by referendum a United Nations reunification plan (called the Annan plan after then Secretary-General Kofi Annan) in 2004 that the Turkish Cypriot population accepted. Turkey and Turkish Cypriot leaders claim that the Turkish Cypriot regime's lack of international recognition unfairly denies its people basic economic and political rights, particularly through barriers to trade with and travel to countries other than Turkey.

Turkey and Turkish Cypriots have assertively opposed efforts by the Republic of Cyprus and other Eastern Mediterranean countries—most notably Israel—to agree upon a division of offshore energy drilling rights without a solution to the question of the island's unification.¹⁶⁷ The Republic of Cyprus appears to anticipate considerable future export revenue from drilling in the Aphrodite gas field off Cyprus's southern coast. In the wake of the Republic of Cyprus's early 2013 euro bail-out, and given analyses indicating that the most efficient way for the Republic to export its newfound energy resources would be by constructing a pipeline to Turkey, some observers speculate that the potential financial benefits of unification justify renewed diplomatic efforts to that end.¹⁶⁸ It is unclear how domestic discontent in Turkey might affect the issue.

Armenia¹⁶⁹

In late 2009, Turkey and Armenia, aided by Swiss mediation, agreed to joint protocols that would have normalized relations and opened borders between the two countries. They also would have called for a dialogue and impartial examination of the historical record with respect to “existing problems,” widely believed to refer to the issue of World War I-era deaths of hundreds of thousands of Armenians through the actions of Ottoman Empire authorities. Turkish leaders were unwilling to push for parliamentary ratification of the protocols, however, due to Azerbaijani objections to Turkey-Armenia normalization prior to desired progress on the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh.¹⁷⁰ Azerbaijan influences Turkish policy on this issue because of its close cultural and economic ties with Turkey, particularly as Azerbaijan is a key energy supplier. Another possible cause for Turkish reluctance was a 2010 Armenian constitutional court ruling that indicated inflexibility on the genocide issue. Subsequently, Turkey and Armenia have made little or no progress toward ratifying the protocols or otherwise normalizing their relations, though the protocols remain under consideration in Turkey's parliament.¹⁷¹ The tenor of relations between Turkey and Armenia could be an important factor in a potential congressional debate over a future genocide resolution.

¹⁶⁷ “Gas drilling heightens east Mediterranean tension,” *UPI*, September 16, 2011.

¹⁶⁸ See, e.g., “Divided they fall,” *Economist*, April 27, 2013. Additionally, Greek Cypriots elected Nicos Anastasiades as president of the Republic of Cyprus in February 2013. Anastasiades is one of the few Greek Cypriot leaders to have backed the 2004 Annan Plan for reunification.

¹⁶⁹ For more information, see CRS Report RL33453, *Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests*, by Jim Nichol.

¹⁷⁰ Nagorno-Karabakh is a predominantly ethnic-Armenian-populated enclave within Azerbaijan's international borders. Disputes over its status led to armed conflict in 1991 in parallel with the Soviet Union's dissolution and the independence of both Armenia and Azerbaijan. The conflict ended with a 1994 ceasefire, but Armenian troops still occupy portions of the territory. The Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (co-chaired by the United States, Russia, and France, and including both Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as Turkey and a number of other European countries) has been trying to negotiate a permanent settlement since then.

¹⁷¹ In the meantime, Turkey and Azerbaijan signed a 10-year security and mutual assistance agreement in August 2010.

Afghanistan

Turkey has twice commanded the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and has had troops participating in ISAF since shortly after its inception in December 2001. Turkey's approximately 2,000 troops concentrate on training Afghan military and security forces and providing security in Kabul, where Turkey commands ISAF's Regional Command-Capital, as well as in Wardak (just west of Kabul) and Jawzjan (in northern Afghanistan) provinces. In addition, some Afghan police are trained in Turkey.

As with several other NATO and non-NATO contributors to ISAF, Turkey's troops are not involved in combat. Turkey's history of good relations with both Afghanistan and Pakistan and its status as the Muslim-majority country with the greatest level of involvement in ISAF are thought by some analysts to help legitimize ISAF's presence. These relations could become more important to preparing Afghanistan for stable, self-sufficient rule, with the United States and other ISAF countries scheduled to wind down their military presence in Afghanistan in future years.

European Union¹⁷²

The Turkish government uses its demographic profile to support its bid for EU membership, arguing that the country would bring a young, dynamic population to the aging ranks of Europe and boost EU influence in the Muslim world. Turkey first sought to associate itself with what was then the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1959, and Turkey and the EEC entered into an agreement of association in 1963. Since the end of 1995, Turkey has had a full customs union with the EU, which is viewed by many observers as one of the primary drivers of the competitive surge of Turkey's economy during the 2000s.¹⁷³ Turkey also is a member of the Council of Europe, along with several other non-EU states (including Russia), and is subject to the jurisdiction of the Council's European Court of Human Rights.

EU accession talks, which began in 2005, have been stalled owing to the opposition of key EU states—most notably France and Germany—to Turkey's full membership. Opponents generally give empirical reasons for their positions, but many analysts argue that resistance to Turkish EU accession is rooted in a fear that Turkey's large Muslim population would fundamentally change the cultural character of the EU and dilute the power of the EU's founding Western European states to drive the policy agenda. As mentioned above, Turkey's unwillingness to normalize diplomatic and trade relations with EU member Cyprus presents a major obstacle to its accession prospects.¹⁷⁴ Other EU concerns over Turkey's qualifications for membership center on the treatment of Kurds and religious minorities, media freedoms, women's rights, and the proper and

¹⁷² For more information on this subject, see CRS Report RS22517, *European Union Enlargement: A Status Report on Turkey's Accession Negotiations*, by Vincent Morelli; and CRS Report RS21344, *European Union Enlargement*, by Kristin Archick.

¹⁷³ Council on Foreign Relations, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁷⁴ Turkey's unwillingness to open its ports to Greek Cypriot trade according to the Additional Protocol that it signed at the outset of the accession process in 2005 prompted the EU Council to block eight out of the 35 chapters of the *acquis communautaire* that Turkey would be required to meet to the Council's satisfaction in order to gain EU membership. France blocked five additional chapters in 2007 and the Republic of Cyprus blocked six in 2009. France unblocked one chapter in early 2013, in what some analysts interpreted as a portent for better prospects of Turkey's eventual accession, but this chapter was blocked again on June 20 by Germany and the Netherlands, as described above. Thus far, one of the chapters has been fully negotiated, and 13 others have been opened.

transparent functioning of Turkey's democratic and legal systems.¹⁷⁵ One U.S.-based European analyst writes, "Turkey's process of alignment with EU laws and standards is still very incomplete and interest in this goal seems to have weakened as political forces that once embraced the goal [as a means for facilitating Turkish domestic reform] have become stronger and more self-reliant."¹⁷⁶ Debate regarding Turkey's alignment with EU standards has intensified as a result of the June 2013 protests, the government response, and the June 20 blocking of accession negotiations on a chapter of the *acquis communautaire* by Germany, as described above.

Turkish domestic expectations of and support for full accession to the EU were apparently already waning before the June 2013 protests, and before fundamental concerns arose over the economic and political soundness of the EU as a result of the eurozone crisis.¹⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the EU provides over \$1 billion in annual pre-accession financial and technical assistance to Turkey aimed at harmonizing its economy, society, bureaucracy, and political system with those of EU members.¹⁷⁸

Other International Relationships

As Turkey continues to exercise increased political and economic influence, it seeks to establish and strengthen relationships with non-Western global powers. It is expanding trade and defense industrial ties with China,¹⁷⁹ Russia, and other countries in Asia and Africa. In June 2012, Turkey became a "dialogue partner" of the China- and Russia-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and Prime Minister Erdogan made remarks in early 2013 hinting at possible Turkish interest in an even greater role in the SCO.¹⁸⁰ Turkey also has held joint military exercises with China on Turkish soil.

Turkey additionally seeks to expand the scope of its geographical influence, with its officials sometimes comparing its historical links and influence with certain countries—especially former territories of the Ottoman Empire—to the relationship of Britain with its commonwealth. Through hands-on political involvement, as well as increased private trade and investment and public humanitarian and development projects, Turkey has enhanced its influence and image as a leading Muslim-majority democracy with Muslim-populated countries not only in the Middle East, but also in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁵ European Commission Staff Working Document, Turkey 2012 Progress Report, October 10, 2012.

¹⁷⁶ Emiliano Alessandri, "Turkey-EU Relations: Back to Basics?," *On Turkey*, German Marshall Fund of the United States, February 27, 2013.

¹⁷⁷ Dan Bilefsky, "For Turkey, Lure of Tie to Europe Is Fading," *New York Times*, December 4, 2011. According to the *Transatlantic Trends* surveys of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, the percentage of Turks who think that Turkish EU membership would be a good thing was 73% in 2004 and 48% in 2011.

¹⁷⁸ See http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/funding-by-country/turkey/index_en.htm for further information.

¹⁷⁹ Richard Weitz, "China-Turkey Summit: Economic Enticements Overshadow Differences," *Turkey Analyst*, vol. 5, no. 6, March 19, 2012.

¹⁸⁰ "Turkey seeks observer member status in SCO," *hurriyetdailynews.com*, February 1, 2013. Turkey is the only NATO member formally affiliated with the SCO.

¹⁸¹ See, e.g., Hajrudin Somun, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans and 'Neo-Ottomanism': A Personal Account," *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 3, summer 2011; Yigal Schleifer, "Turkey's Neo-Ottoman Problem," *World Politics Review*, February 16, 2010; Greg Bruno, "Turkey's Near Abroad," Council on Foreign Relations Analysis Brief, September 19, 2008.

Appendix E. Congressional Committee Reports of Armenian Genocide-Related Proposed Resolutions

Date Reported or of Vote for Report	Proposed Resolution(s)	Committee
April 5, 1984	S.J.Res. 87	Senate Judiciary
September 28, 1984	S.Res. 241	Senate Foreign Relations
July 9, 1985	H.J.Res. 192	House Post Office and Civil Service
July 23, 1987	H.J.Res. 132	House Post Office and Civil Service
August 3, 1987	H.Res. 238	House Rules
October 18, 1989	S.J.Res. 212	Senate Judiciary
October 11, 2000	H.Res. 596 and H.Res. 625	House Rules
October 10, 2007	H.Res. 106	House Foreign Affairs
March 4, 2010	H.Res. 252	House Foreign Affairs

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