The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Turkish Foreign Policy

Thesis Submitted to the
Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Political Science and International Relations

by
Müge Ece

Boğaziçi University
2004

Acknowledgments

I am most thankful to my advisor, Prof.Dr.Gün Kut for his directions and assistance throughout the whole writing process.

I also want to express my gratitude to my parents, who have been incredibly patient with me throughout my master years. Special thanks to Ali, for his being so understanding and motivating during my most difficult times and to my dear friends, Yetkin, Özlem, Ayşe, Zeynep, Büke, Can, Sanlı, without the support of whom, I would never be able to finish this thesis. And finally thanks to Yeşim, who has always patiently answered my never-ending questions.

Abstract

In our increasingly globalizing world, there is one thing that has the potential to affect all of our lives in the same detrimental way. Regardless of nationality, religion, or language terror challenges people's lives and changes them in ways that one cannot reverse. In such situations the Palestinian Question is one of the first issues brought about by terrorists to justify their actions.

The world's attention is many times shifted away from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict to other incidents which are believed to be in need of a more urgent reaction. However, the Palestinian Question remains the source of many ills that in turn disrupt the security and stability of not only the Middle East but the whole world.

For years, the dominance of individual leaders from both the Palestinian, as well as the Israeli side have been strongly felt in their policy making process, respectively. Unique ambitions, suspicions, and inflexibilities of these leaders have always hindered the peace attempts in one way or the other. At the same time, the biased proposals and peace plans of the United States and few attempts by the not that fervent European countries, have not worked and actually worsened the situation.

Up till now, Turkey has not taken an active role in the Middle East Peace Process, either. It has only made declarations in support of the Palestinian cause and acted in line with the decisions of the international community. However, it has a more thorough knowledge of the history, and has a better grasp of the dynamics of the region than either the United States, or the European countries, which have come up with peace plans and proposals that were rather futile. It also has good relations with both the Palestinians and the Israelis at the same time, which is an asset which none of the countries of the region acquire.

At a point where all efforts by powers foreign to the region have failed, it is time for Turkey to make initiatives of its own to bring the sides together to directly discuss the most critical issues. As time proved, it is pointless to plan a cooling off period, expecting confidence building measures to be of any use. At this point in time, hoping the sides will start negotiating without any hatred towards and suspicions of each other would be utterly naive. Thus, it is most essential that discussions start with critical final status issues, such as the right of return of refugess, the status of Jerusalem and the borders of the Palestinian state.

Kısa Özet

Günümüz global dünyasında insanların hayatlarını aynı şekilde etkileme potansiyeline sahip tek bir şey var. Terör, milliyet, din veya dil farkı gözetmeksizin, hepimizin hayatını tehdit ediyor ve bir daha aynı olmayacak şekilde değiştiriyor. Böyle bir ortamda, teröristlerin eylemlerini haklı kılmak için ilk ortaya attıkları konulardan biri de Filistin sorunu oluyor.

Uluslararası toplum ve dünya devletleri, İsrail-Filistin anlaşmazlığını çoğu zaman görmezden gelerek dikkatlerini, daha acilen çözülmesi gerektiğine inandıkları başka konulara veriyorlar. Halbuki Filistin sorunu sadece Ortadoğu'nun değil, bütün dünyanın güvenliğini tehlikeye sokan ve dengeleri bozan bir çok eylemin ve sorunun temelinde yatıyor.

Senelerdir hem Filistinli hem de İsrailli liderlerin kişisel özellikleri karar alma sürecinde hep baskın oldu. Peşinden koşulan büyük hayaller, güvensizlikler, kişisel kaprisler, çözüm çabalarını hep bozdu. Diğer yanda, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin çoğu zaman yanlı tutumu ve objektiflikten tamamen uzak barış planları, ve de sorunun çözümü konusunda çok da hararetli gözükmeyen Avrupa devletlerinin bir kaç denemesi, başarılı olmadığı gibi sorunun daha da içinden çıkılamaz bir hale gelmesine yol açtı.

Türkiye de bugüne kadar barış sürecinde çok da aktif bir rol oynamadı. Daha çok Filistin savını destekleyen deklerasyonlarla yetinip, uluslararası toplumun aldığı kararlar doğrultusunda hareket etmeyi tercih etti. Düşünülecek olursa, Türkiye'nin bu bölgeye coğrafi yakınlığı, tarihsel bilgisi ve bölge dinamiklerine hakimiyeti, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nden veya Avrupa ülkelerinden çok daha fazla. Aynı zamanda Türkiye'nin hem Filistinlilerle hem de İsrail devletiyle ilişkileri aynı anda, diğer bölge ülkelerinden çok daha kuvvetli. Bölgeye yabancı ülkelerin girişimlerinin fayda

etmediği bir noktada, Türkiye'nin insiyatif alarak, sorunun çözümü için daha ciddi bir çaba sarfedip, daha aktif bir rol oynamasının tam zamanı. Fakat bugün gelinen noktada taraflar arasında öncelikle bir güven ortamının oluşmasını beklemek oldukça naif olacaktır.Üzerinde önemle durulması gereken unsur bugüne kadarki barış planlarının aksine, vakit kaybetmeden direk olarak Kudüs'ün statüsü, Filistinli mültecilerin durumu, kurulacak Filistin devletinin sınırları gibi, anlaşmazlığın en kritik ve önemli konularının taraflar arasında tartışılmaya başlaması gereğidir.

Table of Contents

Chapter I: Introduction

1. *The Purpose and the Research Questions*

"The Middle East, with only eight percent of the world's population, has witnessed 25 percent of all the world's armed conflicts since 1945. It has suffered from all sorts of conflicts such as regional wars, wars of intervention, civil wars, intra-Arab rivalries and conflicts with devastating consequences to the human and material resources of the region."[1]

The Middle East is probably the most problematic region in the world, being prone to many conflicts, which continually disrupt the stability of the region. In other words, it is a region "which has known a lot of hopes, missed opportunities and failed peace initiatives."[2] It is claimed that there is always the risk of revisionist policies, because the borders of the states had been drawn in a most unnatural way by the imperial powers. "Syria has irredentist claims on Lebanon; Iraq still ambitions to annex Kuwait; and a dissatisfied Palestine could become sources for irredentist claims, east and west."[3]

Though there are a variety of issues which need to be addressed in the region, as Sami Kohen has said, "for many years, whenever we referred to the Middle East problem, we mainly thought of the Israeli-Arab conflict, which no doubt has been the major issue in the area."[4] At the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict lies the Palestinian Question, "which for both parties is at once territorial, political,

---

[1] Aly, Abdel Monem Said. (2001, June-July). Hot Bargaining: The Middle East 2001. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. VI, (2), 1
[2] Aly, Abdel Monem Said. (2001, June-July). 8
[3] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Realistic Assessment. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 6
[4] Kohen, Sami. (1996, June-August). On the Future of the Middel East. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. I, (2), 1

economic, military and above all, religious."[5] What is more, it should not be

oversimplified as the struggle between two nations only. There are many elements,

such as Zionism, Semitism, anti-Semitism, superpowers, Arab countries, that can be

included in this conflict.[6]

At the same time, it is of serious and immediate concern in the international

arena, not only "because of the destruction and suffering it has been causing on both

sides, but also due to its potential to affect developments beyond the scope of the

broader Arab-Israeli conflict."[7] The continuation of the crisis has such direct effects

on the domestic politics of neighbouring Arab or other Muslim-populated countries

that the region is prone to becoming highly unstable due to developments that are

dangerous for global peace and security as well. To be more specific, the Arab-

Israeli conflict "has been used to justify terrorist actions of unprecendented

proportions, to legitimize launching full-scale wars and to deflect attention from the

internal ills and disorders of the neighbouring societies."[8]

Turkey, on the other hand, is obviously a very distinctive country, for

playing a part in so many different geographical regions simultaneously, a fact

which, according to one author, "virtually no other state, except for the United

States"[9] does. It is "sitting at the northwestern end of the Middle East, but with one

foot in the Mediterranean and Europe."[10] That is why, the making of foreign policy

in Turkey, necessitates the consideration and careful analysis of more issues than

[5] Jaber, Kamel S. Abu. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Critical Evaluation". [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. V, (1), 3
[6] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 1
[7] Ünaydın, Solmaz. (2002, Winter). Turkey's Policy Toward the Middle East and the Question of Iraq. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 34-35
[8] Ünaydın, Solmaz. (2002, Winter). 35
[9] Rubin, Barry. A transformed international role. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press, 1
[10] Kohen, Sami. (1996, June-August). On the future of the Middle East. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. I, (2), 1

perhaps many other states in the world. It thus creates curiosity and interest in the ways and means by which Turkey has made decisions and conducted its foreign affairs until this time. For the reasons stated above, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Turkey's foreign policy towards the issue will be the major themes of this thesis. There is a huge amount of material that has been written and reviewed about the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian Question. Yet, it still remains to be a highly significant issue in today's world, with exacerbating hostility between the sides. On the other hand, I do not believe that enough importance and credit has been given to Turkey's foreign policy specifically towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Other than such studies done by Bülent Aras, Mahmut Bali Aykan, Şule Kut, Hakan Yavuz and İsmail Soysal, that dealt with both the Palestinian Question, the peace process and Turkish foreign policy, still not enough has been covered either in our media, or in academic papers with regard to this issue. It is my strong belief that along with research subjects such as, Turkey and the Middle East, Turkey in the Gulf War, Turkey's relations with its neighbours like Syria and Iran, Turkey's foreign policy with regard to the Israeli-Paletinian Question is also a highly important topic that needs further focus and analysis.

Accordingly, this thesis will try to find answers to and make explanations for two major questions. First of all, why is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict far from a sound solution? Considering the complexity of the subject, and the limit of this study, I will try to explain this mostly from the perspective of Israelis and the Palestinians. Along that line, the key question will be, why did the Israelis and the Palestinians fail to come to terms with each other and reach peace? What were the mistakes in their attitude and actions? Where have they failed? Naturally, it would be wrong to make final assessments and verdicts with regard to why there is no

peace today, by only examining the policies of the two sides of the conflict. To be able to fully grasp the realities of the issue, one should also look at it from other perspectives. Analysis of the attitude and resolutions of the United Nations; the Jewish lobby in the United States and American foreign policy towards the Palestinian Question; and also the role of the Eureopean Union in the peace process would be most probable subjects for future studies.

Secondly, how did Turkey react to and make its policies with regard to the conflict? What were the reasons that led Turkey to react the way it did? While trying to answer these questions I hope to find out whether there has been a consistent path in Turkey's decision making process towards the conflict or not. There is an especially significant debate among academicians about Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s. The argument is that as a result of changes in both the international scene and in regional dynamics and politics, Turkey has become a lot more active and assertive in making its policy decisions in the post-cold war era. In this study I expect to take this argument and apply it to a more specific case: Turkey and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. What kind of a role did Turkey play in the Middle East peace process? Was it actively involved? Did it take initiatives by its own, to bring about peace? Did it play the role of a mediator?

2) Methodology and Sources

When making a foreign policy analysis, it is not enough to explain "what" happened. Often it is the "how" and "why" which is most significant. In order to assess the reasoning behind the attitude, actions and decisions of both Turkey, as well as the Israelis and the Palestinians, there will naturally be brief explanations of and references to relevant and the most important events, occurences in the

history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Turkish foreign policy. This will

be based on an extensive literature review, covering books, as well as magazine

and journal articles. To make note of the contemporary developments and the

important issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, all the issues of " the

Economist", from October 2001 to the end of 2003 will be carefully reviewed.

While formulating the theoretical background of this thesis, I was guided

by, Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikov's "Essence of Decision: explaining the

Cuban Missile Crisis"[11]. Accordingly, in attempting to explain the rationale behind

foreign policy making, not one but several models and levels of analyses will be

taken into consideration, in order not to make the mistake of over-simplification.

Especially in the third chapter on Turkish foreign policy will be examined,

in line with the Rational Actor Model, through the analysis of external factors,

such as the regional developments and occurences in international politics,

objectives and choices of the Turkish government and leaders, and the pressures

which led them to make choices in a certain way. However, foreign policy

decisions and governmental behavior can not be completely understood by treating

a government as an individual and the decision as a unitary, rational action. There

are many other factors influential in the decision making process. By also looking

at domestic factors, the importance of socio-economic developments, traditional

principles of foreign policy making, and intra-national organizations such as the

military, on the formation of Turkey's foreign policy will be further elaborated.

The role and effect of the bureaucracy and the public in the decision making

process is also going to be stressed. This way, the significance of different actors,

interacting and bargaining with each other and the existence of a variety of

---

[11] Allison, Graham, and Zelikov, Philip. (1999). Essence of Decision: explaining the
Cuban Missile Crisis. New York: Longman, Inc.

personal, organizational and national goals, as mentioned in the Governmental Politics model; and also the decentralization in governmental structure, the cooperation of different organizations within, and the already existing and previously established set of rules and procedures as stated in the Organizational Behavior Model, will be taken into consideration.

3)The Content

In the second chapter, the focus will be on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. First of all, the reasons as to why the dispute emerged in the first place will be examined. Secondly, the internationalization of the problem and its evolution into an even more complicated conflict will be summarized through an analysis of the major wars fought. The next two parts of the second chapter, starting with the Madrid Peace Conference and the Oslo Accords, will discuss the initiatives for peace, such as Camp David, Taba Talks and also the setbacks faced during the peace process. The main emphasis will be on the second Intifada, and the most disputed issues such as the refugees and Jerusalem. Finally, after this detailed analysis, I will try to explain what the Israelis and the Palestinians have done wrong, and where they have failed, on the way to reaching an agreement and making peace.

In the third chapter, Turkey's foreign policy, attitude and decisions with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be examined in two different periods: Cold War period and post-Cold War period. In the first part, internal factors including, traditional principles of Turkish foreign policy making, Turkey's goals and strategies, Cyprus, economic concerns, the role of key figures and perceptions; and also external factors including, developments in the international arena,

international law and the United Nations resolutions, and regional developments, will be analyzed. Turkey's specific decisions with regard to developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be provided as examples to how each of these factors shape Turkish foreign policy making.

In the next section, post-cold war changes in the international as well as regional arena, and their effects on Turkish foreign policy in general, and its relations with Israel are examined. In the final evaluation, the similarities and differences of Turkish foreign policy with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in cold war and post-cold war years will be pointed out, in order to be able to answer whether there has been change or continuity in Turkey's foreign policy with regard to the conflict.

Chapter II: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

1. Emergence of the Conflict

In a study which deals with the Palestinian Question, as well as Turkish foreign policy, it is not possible to omit mentioning the historical roots. Before delving into the early 20th century period, during which one sees the first and major glimpses of problems between the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs, there needs to be some note taken of the Ottoman heritage of Palestine.

If at the outset, the size of the territory, the population and its natural resources are considered, it is easy to come to the conclusion that Palestine was not a really important part of the Ottoman empire in the eyes of the rulers. The fact that the contribution both in terms of revenues as well as soldiers during war times, has probably been the main criteria for the Empire to regard a certain province as significant, is a major reason to think so. Being divided into several districs (sanjaks), Palestine's main importance up till the mid-nineteenth century was religious , due to the presence of holy sites and shrines to not only Muslims but also to Christians and Jews.[12] Many times, the Ottoman sultans' attention was directed to Palestine, because they took great care to safeguard the Muslims' pilgrimage to Mecca, the road to which ran close by Palestine. At the same time, Christians and Jews also made pilgrimage to Palestine, and the status of their holy sites increasingly became an important factor affecting the Ottoman Empire's relations with the European states. The number of firmans concerning Palestine in the Mühimme Defteri, indeed, is a proof that Palestine

---

[12] Ma'oz, Moshe. <u>Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period</u>. (1975). Jerusalem: The Magness Press. XV.

was not that insignificant after all.[13] Starting in the nineteenth century, it acquired

growing importance. As the heyday of the empire came to an end, territories were lost

in the Caucasus and the Balkans. As a result there needed to be more attention given to

the rear provinces, so that the Ottoman Empire could consolidate its rule. At the same

time, when Egypt became independent, Palestine lost its position as a bridge land, and

became a border land between the Empire and the independent Egypt.[14]Among the

several districs, it was the Jerusalem district that especially began to gain more and

more political and strategic importance in the eyes of the porte.[15]

Considering that the status of Jerusalem is probably the most important and

indeed the basic source of disagreement between the two communities, it is of great

significance that the conditions and governance of the city of Jerusalem under

Ottoman sovereignty is examined. From 1517 onwards, when Selim the 1st conquered

Syria and Palestine, thus making the city of Jerusalem part of Ottoman territory, a

pluralist and tolerant administration became the norm. The city's importance, as a

sacred and holy place for Jews, Christians and Muslims alike, was quickly grasped by

the Ottoman rulers, who made Jerusalem a place where residents from all three

religions could live in harmony and peace. Both Jews and Christians were granted de

facto recognition of citizenship; they could buy and sell property in the Muslim part of

the city and they had equal status with the Muslims in the city's guilds. It is no wonder

that Jews, for instance, chose to solve their disputes in Ottoman courts, and submitted

to the decisions of the Ottoman kadis. They have come to regard Jerusalem as a safe

haven, since the Ottoman Empire provided them refuge when they had been expelled

from Spain, and again welcomed them when many of them fled persecutions in

---

[13] Heyd, Uriel. Ottoman Documents on Palestine: 1552-1615. (1960). Oxford: Oxford University Press. 39-44
[14] Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period. Jerusalem: The Magness Press. XVI
[15] Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). XVI.

Germany during the fifteenth century.[16] Compared to their brethren in Christian

Europe, the conditions of the Jews in Ottoman Palestine were much better.[17]

The sixteenth century can be regarded as a period of improvement and

resurgence for the Jewish community in the empire. The communities of Safed and

Tiberias , which were the leading communities in this century, enjoyed both security

and economic prosperity. In the following two centuries, however, these communities

were in decline while the focus of Jewish communal life transferred to Jerusalem.

There were Jews in other districts such as Gaza, Hebron, Nablus and Galilee as well,

but it was the Jewish population of Jerusalem, mainly of Sephardic origin, that was in

rise. Especially in the 19th century, due first to immigration from Russia and later in

the second half of the century the Zionist immigration and settlement, the Jewish

population in Jerusalem increased immensely.[18]

Until the 1860s the Jewish population was rather small mostly due to high

mortality and a resulting excess of deaths over births. In the later part of the nineteenth

century, however, the improvement in the living conditions and the local activities of

consular and missionary interests from abroad were influential, in addition to the

immigrations, in the increase of the Jewish population.[19]

The year 1840 and the following era is regarded as a turning point and a

happier era for the Jews in Palestine and Syria. It is no doubt that the experience under

a short period of Egyptian rule and the incidents in Damascus until 1840, has been a

key factor bringing about such a change. During the Egyptian occupation of Syria and

Palestine, Christians were given preferential treatment over the Jews, enjoying

---

[16] Aras,Bülent. (2004). Turkey and the Greater Middle East. Istanbul: Tasam Publications. 50-3
[17] Ma'oz, Moshe. "Changes in the Position of the Jewish Communities of Palestine and Syria in Mid-Nineteenth Century". In, Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). 142
[18] Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period. Jerusalem: The Magness Press. XVIII- XIX
[19] Schmelz, Usiel. O. "Some Demographic Peculiarities of the Jews of Jerusalem In the Nineteenth Century". In, Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). 119-141

equality for the first time, as well as security of life and property. There were serious anti-Jewish outbreaks, and Christians used their stronger position under Egyptian rule and backing, to destroy the Jewish community, by means of coming up with a blood libel. Under this accusation, many Jews in Damascus were arrested and tortured, resulting in a decrease in the Jewish population by the end of 1840.[20]

The reason why this experience has such significance for the later period is that, it formed greater attention among prominent Jewish leaders in Europe, who have, from that point in time, became more active in working to help the conditions of their brethren in Palestine. In this regard the Imperial Firman of 1840, just when the Ottomans were driving the Egyptians out of Palestine and Syria is very noteworthy. This firman, issued by Abdulmejid, upon the request of Sir Moses Montefiore,

> "denied and denounced the blood accusation against the Jews of Damascus (and Rhodes), stressing 'that the charges made against them and their religion are nothing but pure calumny'…and went on to declare that 'in conformity to the Hatti Sherif which has been proclaimed at Gulhane, the Jewish nation shall possess the same advantages and enjoy the same privileges as are granted to the numerous other nations who submit to our authority. The Jewish nation shall be protected and defended'".[21]

During the Tanzimat era, the conditions of the Jews continually improved. The immigrations from Russia and other parts of Europe, were not necessarily due to the traditional religious longing of the Jews to come to Palestine. It had to do more with the improving conditions, mostly the growing security and religious freedom they enjoyed. According to the consular reports during this era, oppression by the Turkish governors had come to a complete halt. It is no doubt that certain amount of foreign intervention helped Jews improve their condition. Especially the British consuls, both for humanitarian reasons, and mostly for intervention in Ottoman provinces, showed

---

[20] Ma'oz, Moshe. "Changes in the Position of the Jewish Communities of Palestine and Syria in Mid-Nineteenth Century". In, Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). 146-150
[21] Ma'oz, Moshe. "Changes in the Position of the Jewish Communities of Palestine and Syria in Mid-Nineteenth Century". In, Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). 150-1

great sympathy for and interest in the condition of the Jews in Palestine and Syria. In addition, there was an increasing number of Ottoman pashas, who, in line with the Sultan's orders, protected the Jews against bad treatment and oppresion of local governors. This is highly significant, for being exemplary for the Muslim masses, who started treating the Jews much better in this period, since they were affected by their leaders and also feared the punishment of the authorities.[22]

It is also necessary to note that the attitude of the Muslim masses as well as the governors toward the Jews, was also directly affected by the attitude of the Jews, themselves. The reason why Muslims preferred Jews as against Christians, is not hard to explain. While the Christians went on demanding more and more political equality, the Jews were satisfied with their religious privileges and good economic opportunities. They were more respectful and careful, so as not to hurt Muslim feelings while exercising their newly granted rights and they were more obeying to the government orders. As a natural consequence of this, the Ottoman Empire did not see the Jews as a threat to its security. Besides, Jews proved their loyalty to the empire during times of crisis and wars. The incidents of Damascus fresh in their minds, the Jews supported and sided with the Muslims against the Christian enemies, gradually improving their relations with Muslims, and increasing their number in Palestine by further immigrations.[23]

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with regard to the Jewish settlements in Palestine and the Ottoman Government's attitude should be examined in detail as well. Even though there was change in the nature and size of the Jewish population in Palestine, and though the empire was going through difficult years, the relations were not hindered. Sultun Abdülhamid initially had second thoughts

---

[22] Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). 157-161.
[23] Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). 161-3

concerning the continuing wave of Jewish immigrations. The empire was already struggling with communal-national movements, which challenged the intergrity of the empire. Besides, in these recent immigrations were Jews coming from Russia and Rumania. The significance of this is that these immigrants had the status of foreign nationals, able to buy land and settle on it. The fact that they were thought to be in preparation for reviving the ancient Jewish past, and their being protected by capitulations which could lead to even more intervention by the European powers, were main reasons for the Empire's doubts. What is more, the Ottoman government did not want to throw into danger the holy places in Jerusalem.[24]

As a result, Sultan Abdülhamid is known to issue a decree in 1882, which prohibited Jews coming from Russia, Bulgaria and Rumania from settling in Palestine. They were also prevented from settling as pilgrims, since the regulations allowed for first a month and later on three months for these immigrants to stay. They had to leave the country after that period. Again with regard to these immigrations, Abdülhamid is known to return a memorandum in June 1891, by declaring that it would not be logical to accept these people to Palestine, when civilized European countries were rejecting and sending them away. Besides it could also bring about the issue of a Jewish government in the future, so it would be best to send them directly to the United States.[25]

However, this policy did not last long, and for humanitarian, political, as well as economic reasons, Abdülhamid changed his attitude towards the Jews. First of all, the Jews of Palestine had always been loyal to the empire and they were not among the "communities-would-be-nations"[26]. They did not necessarily pose a threat to the

---

[24] Farhi, David. "Documents on the Attitude of the Ottoman Government towards the Jewish Settlement in Palestine After the Revolution of the Young Turks". In, Ma'oz, Moshe. (1975). 190-1
[25] Farhi, David. (1975). 191-2
[26] Farhi, David. (1975). 190

empire and indeed these immigrants coming from Russia could be of much use. They were being persecuted from Russia, for which they had obviously a strong hatred. This could be beneficial, considering that they were enlisted in the army along with the Ottoman Jews, and could help the empire better defend itself against the Russians.

Meanwhile, the Jewish immigrations continued, regardless of restrictions and by 1907, according to the estimates of the British Consul in Jerusalem the number of Jews in Palestine was 100,000 in a population of 400,000-500,000. It is necessary to note, however, that this increase in immigrations and thus the number of Jews, had not come about by its own. The empire's financial crisis and Theodore Herzl's successful initiatives had been most influential. After several visits to Istanbul, Herzl was able to persuade Abdülhamid to accept his offer, according to which Jews would be able to migrate to Palestine, upon the condition that Herzl, on behalf of the Zionist Movement, would pay the demanded sum to the Imperial Treasury. At the same time, Palestine would be granted a similar status as to that of Crete. While staying a regular vilayet, it would have a local assembly and a militia, special civil and penal codes, and also the right to use its own national language along with Turkish. Yet, the Jews would continue their unconditional loyalty to the Sultan.[27]

The year 1908 and the Young Turk Revolution is also noteworthy for Jews living in Palestine. Similar to other subject people, Jews were also influenced by the freedom movements all throughout the empire. Many well-known figures such as David Ben Gurion, Izhak Ben-Zvi, who were active Zionist youngsters, went to Istanbul to study and to later take part in Ottoman politics, so that they could achieve their aims. [28] Palestine was not to become a center of hostilities until the beginning of the 20th century.

---

[27] Farhi, David. (1975). 191-4
[28] Farhi, David. (1975). 197-8

"The conflict between Jews and Palestinian Arabs began in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, when Jews from all around the world began flocking back to their ancient biblical homeland in Palestine, driven by a modern Jewish nationalist ideology known as Zionism. The Zionists called for the ingathering of the Jews from around the world in Palestine and the creation there of a modern Jewish nation-state that would put on a par with all the other nations of the world. Most of the early Zionists either ignored the presence of the Arabs already living in Palestine or assumed they could either be bought off or would eventually submit to Jewish domination."[29]

Following World War I, the administrative control of Palestinian territory had been handed over to Great Britain, through a mandate of the League of Nations in 1922. At the end of World War II, however, Britain was struggling with internal problems and was no longer willing to deal with issues outside its borders. At the same time, due to increasing Jewish immigrations and escalating violence, Palestine, itself had turned out to be a region, the administration of which became to be regarded as an unsolvable question. As a result of massive immigration of European Jews, surviving World War II, "the Jewish population had increased from 83,790 in 1922 to 554,329 in 1945, thus enabling the Zionists to make a formal bid for a Jewish state"[30]. How this could happen can only be explained by Ben Gurion's enthusiasm for transferring the Palestinians so that there would be more territory left for the coming Jews. Already years before World War II, he had made his goal clear. In his diary, he wrote in 1938: " ' We shall propose to Iraq 10 million Palestinian pounds for the transfer of one hundred thousand Arab families from Palestine to Iraq.'"[31] As Benny Moris argues, the World War II and the Nazi

---

[29] Friedman, Thomas L. (1989). From Beirut to Jerusalem. New York: Anchor Books. 14
[30] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Francis Pinter. 4
[31] Morris, Benny. Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948. In, Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim. (Ed). (2001). The War for Palestine- Rewriting the History of 1948. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 45

persecution of the Jews, did not lessen, but rather increased his enthusiasm to create

more empty land in Palestine to settle Jewish immigrants. He also adds that,

> "the spectacle of Nazi exploitation of German minorities in Central and East
> Europe to subvert opposing regimes acted as a spur to Zionist thinking about
> how the perspective Jewish state must rid itself, ab initio, of its prospective
> subversive Arab minority; and the war itself provided precedents and models
> of actual ethnic transfers that served to rationalize the demographic and
> geopolitical situation in various nation states."[32]

Meanwhile, the Arabs of Palestine were attacking both the Jewish

settlements, as well as the British army units, in order to stop the creation of a

Jewish homeland in Palestine.[33] It is indeed not hard to understand the psychology

behind their attacks. It was a horrifying experience, "when 780,000 Palestinians,

literally two-thirds of the country's population were driven out by Zionist troops and

design."[34] As a result of such developments, the British government first turned over

the problem to the United Nations Inquiry Committee in 1946, which resulted in the

internationalization of the problem. When the committee was unable to find a

solution, Great Britain made an announcement on 18 February 1947 that it could

neither accept the schemes proposed by each side, nor could come up with a

solution itself. That is why, the Question of Palestine was submitted to the judgment

of the United Nations.[35]

To be able to understand the basics and make sound analyses of the future

developments with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one should study in

great detail the short period between the establishment of the United Nations Special

---

[32] Morris, Benny. (2001). 45
[33] Friedman, Thomas L. (1989). From Beirut to Jerusalem. New York: Anchor Books. xii.
[34] Said, Edward W. Afterword: the consequence of 1948. In Eugene L.Rogan, and Avi Shlaim.
(Eds). (2001). The War for Palestine- Rewriting the History of 1948. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge
University Press. 206
[35] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science
Publishers. 5-6

Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) and the adoption of the UN Resolution for the partition of Palestine.

First of all, the Jews were represented by the Jewish Agency, where as it was the Arab Higher Committee, which spoke in the name of the Palestinians. This representation by non-governmental organizations, was first in the history of the United Nations. The short period, during which UNSCOP visited Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan in order to investigate all the questions and problems related to Palestine thoroughly, is incredibly significant for the evolution of the conflict. The fact that power politics had become the central element of international relations in the aftermath of the Second World War, deeply affected the perceptions and attitude of the Palestinians and Israelis towards the immediate resolution of the crisis.[36]

The Special Committe on Palestine was made up of 11 member states and it had complete power, found appropriate by the UN General Assembly, to submit proposals, which it saw as appropriate for the solution of the conflict. That is why, it was really crucial for both sides to cooperate with the Committee, so that their interests and rights would be protected in the best way. It is utterly necessary to look at the positions and attitude of both the Jews and the Palestinians during that period, which I believe is key to further evolution of the conflict and the recent situation. When one asks how the Jews came to be so strong, diplomatically and how and why the Palestinians turned out to show a rejectionist attitude often throughout the conflict, it is important to go back in time and examine the initial phase.[37]

At that point Jews were definitely more advantageous for two main reasons. First of all there was a strong Jewish lobby, the activities of which were highly

---

[36] Aras, Bülent. (1998). <u>Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey</u>. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 5-7

[37] Aras, Bülent. (1989). 7-8

effective. The Zionist efforts for the mobilization of support were mostly directed

towards the American government and the American Jewry. Through resolutions in

the American Congress,

> "the question of a Jewish Palestine became an important item on the agendas
> of the Presidential election campaigns of both Democrats and Republicans.
> Election campaigns and growing public awareness about the Holocaust were
> successfully used by Jewish politicians to strengthen links between the
> solution to the Jewish refugee problem and the establishment of a Jewish
> Commonwealth in Palestine."[38]

Secondly, the fact that Palestinians rejected cooperation and that they were

not very strong diplomatically, helped the Jews a lot in achieving their demands.[39]

"According to an Arab scholar,

> 'The internationalization of the Palestine problem placed the Palestinian
> Arab community at a distinct political disadvantage. Lacking adequate
> organization, inexperienced in the by-ways of mid-twentieth-century
> diplomacy, wanting the necessary apparatus with which to wage a
> diplomatic offensive, unskilled in the techniques of propaganda, devoid of
> the unequivocal support of a Major Power or the staunch advocacy of a
> powerful constituency therein, the Palestinian Arabs were in no position to
> mount an effective campaign in international forums.'"[40]

When the Arab Higher Committee did not participate in the deliberations of

the UNSCOP, the Palestinians, in result, failed to defend their principle natural

rights. They could not convince the international community to do further

investigation related to their natural rights. The right of self-determination was also

de-facto rejected by the international community. Even though the principle of self-

determination had been internationally recognized after the end of WWI, it was

definitely not applied to Palestine. The obvious reason was that the international

community wanted to create a Jewish National Home, which together with a 'sui

---

[38] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Francis Pinter. 3
[39] Aras, Bülent. (1989). 6-9
[40] Aras, Bulent. (1989). 6-7

generis' Mandate for Palestine was contradictory with the principle of self-determination.[41]

Finally on November 29,1947, the UN General Assembly approved the partition plan for Palestine, proposed by the Special Committee. According to the plan the British mandate was being terminated. After a short transitional period, there would be an Arab state and a Jewish state, making up the independent, federal state of Palestine, the capital of which would be internationalized Jerusalem. The Jewish state would consist of the Negev Desert and the coastal area between Tel Aviv and Haifa and some parts of the northern Galilee; the Palestinian state would include the West Bank, the Gaza District, Jaffa and the Arab parts of the Galilee.[42] Both states, which would not be established later than 1 October 1948, would be in an economic union with Jerusalem. While the Jewish Agency accepted the plan, the Arabs totally refused it and claimed they would not be bound by it. The Palestinian Arabs and the surrounding Arab states, "felt that Palestine was all theirs, that the Jews were a foreign implant foisted upon them, and that they had the strength to drive them out."[43] In the immediate aftermath of this development, Palestine became a place of escalating violence and chaos, as the British forces withdrew from the region. It should be noted that on the very day the British mandate was rescinded, on 14 May 1948, the State of Israel was declared by the Jewish Agency[44].

One day after the declaration of the Israeli state, the Palestinians, supported by the armies of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Egypt, launched a war against the Jews, with the aim of controlling all of western Palestine.[45] The fact

---

[41] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 7-8
[42] Friedman, Thomas L. (1989). From Beirut to Jerusalem. New York: Anchor Books. 14
[43] Friedman, Thomas L. (1989). 15
[44] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 9-10
[45] Friedman, Thomas L. (1989). 15

that Arabs regarded the Partition Resolution as illegal and resisted it through military struggle against the Israelis, who were also ready to respond to the challenge militarily, ended up in a way highly detrimental for the Arab side. In the aftermath of the 1948 War and the signing of the armistice, the Arabs had not only been unsuccessful in getting in the way of the partition of Palestine, but they also had to face the establishment of the Israeli state. The latter was particularly damaging because the Jewish state was 21 percent larger than the one conceived of in the partition plan and almost half a million of Palestinian Arabs were displaced.[46] Thus the Palestinian Arabs fell into the position of a minority, even though they had been the majority in Palestine.[47]

Their situation became even more dramatic when Egypt and Jordan took the administrations of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, respectively, right after the war. The Question of Palestine, turned out to be a main concern on the agenda of the United Nations, which tried to recognize and guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people. Though it mostly tried to find a territorial solution to the question, the fact that Israel expanded beyond lands, previously assigned by the plan, seriously hampered the UN efforts.[48] At the end of armistice treaties with Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan, Israel came to control 77% of Palestine, that was previously under British mandate, the consequence of which was 726,000 Palestinian refugees that had to live in the West Bank and Gaza, from then on.[49]

After Resolution 181 (the Partition Resolution) the UN passed Resolution 194, as a result of which a Conciliation Commission, consisting of the United States, France and Turkey was formed. Among many things, the resolution

---

[46] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Francis Pinter. 5
[47] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 10
[48] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 11
[49] Özmen, Süleyman. (2002). Ortadoğu'da Etnik, Dini Çatışmalar ve Israil. (Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in the Middle East and Israel). Istanbul: IQ Kültürsanat Yayıncılık. 72

requested the Security Council to take steps to enable the quick demilitarization of

Jerusalem and also stated that the refugees could either return to their homes if they

wished, or they would be paid compensation for their property if they chose not to

return.[50]

Israel, being more concerned about the territorial aspect of the problem, and

determined to keep the territories that it had occupied during the war, made a

declaration saying that it recognized the UN resolutions 181 and 194 without any

reservations. As a result of these assurances, Israel became a member to the United

Nations on 11 May 1949, during when none of the Arab states had accepted these

resolutions. Concerning the territories, the Palestinians had an all or nothing

attitude. Besides, for them the issue of the return of refugees had more priority.[51]

However, the Question of Palestine seemed to be in the status of just a

refugee problem at the international level. Even though several resolutions including

the one, which admitted Israel to the UN, were supportive of the right of refugees to

return, it looked as if the question was losing its political nature. "This was

particularly evident in the growing number of resolutions of a 'technical and

humanitarian' nature pointing to the plight of refugees and noting the need to offer

them technical and financial assistance."[52]

At the end of the 1940s, what had started as a rivalry between the

Palestinians and the Israelis for land, resources and control over land, turned out to

be a major victory for Israel. The result was the disintegration of a society, which

had been displaced and had dispersed to Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and other

Arab countries, being denied a national homeland and the right to self-determination

---

[50] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 12
[51] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 12-3
[52] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Francis Pinter. 6

to run their own affairs. From then on, the Palestinian population or the diaspora, started their political resistance in those countries.[53]

---

[53] Berberoğlu, Berch. (1999). <u>Turmoil in the Middle East</u>. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 96-8

2. Evolution

In the beginning of the 1950s, it became clearer that the Palestinian Question

was pushed aside as a rather minor problem on the world agenda. Just when the

Arab delegations were trying to create a medium to discuss the political aspects of

the problem, the Secretary-General of the UN General Assembly did not include the

question in the provisional agenda. This was an apparent sign that the Question of

Palestine was no longer an independent issue on the international agenda, but rather

a trivial issue behind articles related to the refugees of the Middle East.[54]

It has been argued that during the 1950s, neither the United Nations, nor the

sides worked hard enough to reach a peace deal. What is more, the Suez Crisis in

1956, though it did not have a direct influence on the conflict, "far from refocusing

attention on the Palestinians, served only to divert attention from them."[55] Also

referred to as the Second Arab-Israeli War, the Suez crisis was a joint attack by

Israel, Britain and France as a response to Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal,

on 29 October, 1956. While the Israeli economy was seriously disturbed with the

closing of the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping and by the blockade of the Gulf of

Aqaba, Israeli leaders were also under pressure the Arab threats, and the Fedayeen

incursions into Israel, since the buffer between Egypt and Israel had been destroyed

with the departure of British troops from the region. At the same time Nasser's

aggressiveness made both the British and the French, highly concerned, as they had

imperialist interests in the region.[56] At the end of the war, Israel had occupied most

of the Sina Peninsula; however, due to first the Soviet calls, and later the

---

[54] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Francis Pinter. 7
[55] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 13
[56] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. 128-9

"diplomatic pressure from the U.S"[57] and the UN urges for armistice, the war finally

ended on 7 November 1956. Israel withdrew from both the Sinai and the Gaza

Strip.[58]

It was obvious at the end of the crisis, that the French and the British were

seriously discredited and the Soviet Union, along with the United States increased

their prestige, becoming the key superpower actors in the region.[59]

In the following years it was mainly the incursions and guerilla attacks of al-

Fatah from mostly Syria that infuriated Israel and caused the events leading to the

1967 War.[60] The war started with the Israeli response on 5 June, to the bombings on

its territory directed from Syria. It took only six days during which, the Israelis

destroyed the Egyptian airforce first, and continued with capturing the Egyptian

Sinai, the Jordanian West Bank, and the Syrian Golan Heights.[61] When it finally

came to a halt on 10 June with the diplomatic initiatives of the UN, Israel had

occupied the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the

Golan Heights from Syria, thus quadrupling its territory.[62] On 28 January 1967,

Knesset had declared Jerusalem the capital of Israel and had illegally started

expanding it. The major goal was to make Jerusalem completely 'Jewish'; to have

total control over the Old City and to spread to the Arab regions of Jerusalem.[63]

The first consequence of the war was that it was a major defeat and disaster

for the Arabs and the Palestinians, since Israel had occupied territories in Egypt,

Syria and also what was left of Palestine. At the same time, however, it led to a

---

[57] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 132
[58] Özmen, Süleyman. (2002). Ortadoğu'da Etnik, Dini Çatışmalar ve İsrail. Istanbul: IQ Kültürsanat Yayıncılık. 205
[59] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 139.
[60] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 147-9
[61] Berberoğlu, Berch. (1999). Turmoil in the Middle East. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 99
[62] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 18
[63] Çubukçu, Mete. (2002). Bizim Filistin. Istanbul: Metis Yayınları. 51

mass exodus of the Palestinians, which caused an increase in their national

consciousness:

> "Palestinian nationalism as an idea, and the political organizations based on this sentiment, were presented with the war... the old slogan that Arab unity was the road to the liberation of Palestine was reversed to read that 'the liberation of Palestine would be the path to Arab unity'".[64]

The second major outcome and perhaps the most significant development for

the future of the Palestinian Question was the international response, mainly the UN

Security Council Resolution 242. The resolution called for the

> "withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict; termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force".[65]

However neither Israel, nor Egypt and Syria recognized the Resolution.

Israel was refusing to withdraw from the territories it had occupied and Syria and

Egypt were not willing even to indirectly recognize Israel.[66] The PLO on the other

hand, was critical of Resolution 242, believing that it had reduced the question to

merely a problem of refugees.[67]

Even though the war was a complete military defeat for the Arabs, it still had

paved the way for the Declaration of the State of Palestine in 1988, by bringing out

the concept of ' Palestinian lands under occupation'. According to an argument, if

the West Bank, East Jerusalem or the Gaza had been under the sovereignty of the

Arab states today, the declaration of the state would in no way be possible.[68]

---

[64] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 14
[65] United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967. Retreived on December 24, 2003 from http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/vCouncilRes.
[66] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 18
[67] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 15
[68] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). 19

The final and perhaps a more immediate outcome of the war was the growth in militancy among the Palestinians, especially during the late 1960s and the 1970s. It has been asserted that,

> "Clandestine guerilla activity (including bombings, hijacking of planes, political kidnappings, and secret military operations) led by splinter groups of the PLO and other radical Palestinian organizations came to define the nature and scope of the Palestinian armed resistance in the period following the Six-Day War."[69]

Still, the turning point for the Palestinians was after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Long before the war started, there emerged tensions between the Palestinian refugees and the Jordanian authorities, who were becoming increasingly disturbed with the existence of these refugees. The quarrels turned into armed struggle, which then led to civil war in Jordan in 1970. The major outcome of the war for the Palestinians was the forced withdrawal of all Palestinian organizations from Jordan in July 1971. Thus, the PLO and other Palestinian groups moved to Lebanon, from where they continued their guerilla attacks on Israeli tragets.[70]

The 1973 War was initiated with the Egyptian tanks crossing the Suez Canal, while simultaneously the Syrian army stormed into the Golan Heights. It is claimed, though, that political maneuvers were key to the Egyptian actions, rather than military purposes. According to one argument, the basic reason why Egypt tried to liberate the Sinai, was to be able to exert pressure on the main powers to convince Israel to come to terms with the UN Resolution 242, and thus to withdraw from the territories it had occupied during the 1967 War. The October War was

---

[69] Berberoğlu, Berch. (1999). Turmoil in the Middle East. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 100
[70] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 18

again a military defeat for the Arabs, when Israel was quick to mobilize and could drive the Arab troops back.[71]

Perhaps the most noteworthy impact of the war, though not immediate and direct, was its opening the way for the recognition of the Palestinians at the international level. The United Nations adopted Resolution 338, which called for the sides to halt all their military activities and insist they implement Resolution 242.[72]

At the start of the 1980s came the Lebanese Civil War. First the siege of West Beirut and later the Israeli assault in Lebanon was the Israeli response to the PLO's shelling of Israeli villages from Lebanon. While Israel claimed it would move troops to the security zone in order to prevent PLO shellings, in the first place, it later extended its military operation, causing incredible destruction with the use of napalm and scatter bombs. When it started cooperating with the Christian Phalangist militias, terrible massacres of the Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps took place. Israel, was finally successful in expelling the PLO from West Beirut and destroying its camps in southern Lebanon, yet it had taken place at the cost of the death of innocent civillians. Major consequences of the war were direct Syrian intervention in Lebanese affairs and the rise of fundamentalist Islamic groups such as Iran-backed Hizbullah in Lebanon, which continued the resistance to Israeli incursions.[73]

---

[71] Berberoğlu, Berch. (1999). Turmoil in the Middle East. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 102
[72] Aras, Bulent. (1998). 19
[73] Berberoğlu, Berch. (1999). 102-6

A major result of the Suez War was that the Palestinians came to see their

struggle in a rather distinct way after this incident. They were not very organized,

yet, the Suez War happened to create the first glimpses of Palestinian national

identity. While there were small groups of Palestinians that were fighting against

Israel in a rather unorganized manner in the 1950s, in 1964 the Palestine

Liberation Organization was formed mainly to prevent the deeds of these

irresponsible, local groups and to unite them under a single unit, which would train

and equip them.[74]

One of the most essential developments with regard to the Palestinian

Question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, is no doubt the emergence of the PLO in

1964. At the first Arab summit meeting in Cairo in 1964,

> "the Palestinians were called upon to assume the role of liberating their
> homeland. At a later meeting King Hussein of Jordan convened a Palestine
> National Council of about 400 Palestinians in Jerusalem. This meeting
> established the Palestine Liberation Organization and provided for the
> formation of Palestine Liberation Army (PLA)."[75]

It is also necessary to note that at the time of its creation, it was argued that

the PLO was just an instrument of the Arab states, since it was dependent on

budgetary aid and direction from those outside its ranks. Also important is the fact

that among many different groups under the PLO, al-Fatah emerged as the main

Palestinian Organization, with Arafat as its leader.[76]

---

[74] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science
Publishers. 13-4
[75] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
146-7
[76] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 147-9

It is held that starting with the early 1970s, the Palestinian Question was no longer regarded as solely a refugee issue.[77] As Kemal Kirişçi suggests, during the period between the 1967 and 1973 Wars, there was considerable change in the attitude of the international community towards the Palestinian Question, which became a subject of attention especially at the United Nations. This was believed to be due to the debates, discussions of alternate opinions at the General Assembly that the Palestinian cause finally found increasing support, which revealed itself with the passing of the Resolutions at the time:

> "At the 25th Session the Assembly, in Resolution 2672 C (XXV) of 8 December 1970, expanded the 'inalienable rights' of the Palestinian people to include the right to self-determination and in Resolution 2628 (XXV) of 4 November 1970 declared the need to respect the rights of the Palestinian people in establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."[78]

However, more important than that was the General Assembly Resolution 3210 (XXIX) which was adopted on 14 October 1974, the content of which had been proposed to the Assembly by 56 member states.[79] According to this resolution,

> "The General Assembly,
> Considering that the Palestinian People is the principal party to the question of Palestine,
> Invites the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine in plenary meetings."[80]

As a consequence of this development, the PLO was being granted an 'observer status' by the United Nations in November 1974. With this status the PLO was invited to join the sessions of the General Assembly and the international conventions under the GA's supervision. This recognition was highly influential in

---

[77] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 17
[78] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Frances Pinter. 138-9
[79] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 19
[80] United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3210 (XXIX) 14 October 1974. Retrieved December 24, 2003 from http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/vGARes

shaping Arafat's attitude as well. In the immediate aftermath of the recognition, Arafat seemed quite inclined to the idea of a Geneva Conference to talk peace and reach settlement through negotiations.[81]

While the UN General Secretary was mentioning the possibility of a Palestinian state limited with the West Bank and the Gaza, the United States, in a Soviet-American joint declaration, used for the first time the concept of the 'legitimate rights of the Palestinians' on 1 October 1977.[82]

The change in the attitude of the international community became even more evident with the UN Resolution, in the following year. On 10 November 1975, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution describing Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination.[83]

The first half of the 1970s is also very important with regard to the support for Palestinians at the Arab level. The first time there was decisive and complete support for the PLO, as well as the political rights of the Palestinians was at the Algiers Arab Summit in November 1973. However, it was in 1974 at the Rabat Summit that Arab governments, including Jordan which had previously put reservations in Algiers, adopted a resolution which officially confirmed their support. The resolution accepted the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland and their right to establish their own independent authority in all liberated territories.[84]

It is also noted that during this period, the PLO efficiently consolidated its authority in the refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan and the Palestinians of the

---

[81] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 21
[82] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 22
[83] Mullen, George, D. (1994). Peace in the Middle East. San Diego, CA: Ican Press. 6
[84] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Frances Pinter. 59-65

West Bank and the Gaza Strip became more conscious of their national identity, supporting the PLO in greater numbers each day. According to the argument, by 1976 the Palestinians had accepted the PLO as their representative, thus providing their support in its efforts for the establishment of a Palestinian state.[85]

One of the most significant development of the 1970s with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict is without doubt the Camp David Accords in 1978 and the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel. During the talks between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, U.S. President Jimmy Carter and the Likud leader Menachim Begin, the sides reached agreement on such issues as the return of Sinai to Egypt, the signing of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, the right to autonomy of the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza and the obligation to grant independence following a five-year transitional period. There was however, no talk of the status of Jerusalem, since it was a highly sensitive subject.[86]

In the end Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty on 26 March 1979 and Israel slowly started pulling out from the Sinai. However, the Camp David Accords had no effect at all in even providing a sound framework for the resolution of the Palestinian Question. First of all, neither the Palestinians and the PLO, nor Jordan were included in the talks, which was a major mistake, because it had already been accepted at the international level that the PLO was the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This is basically why Camp David was not regarded as valid either by Arab governments or by the UN.[87]

Secondly, the Accords proposed a three-stage plan for the future of the West Bank and the Gaza. First, Israel would withdraw from the territories, later a self-

---

[85] Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). 50
[86] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 22
[87] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 24

governing body would be elected and finally, with the administrative council established, a five year transitional period would begin. The major problem with this plan was that the plan never proceded to the final stage. What is more, there was no clarity as to what was meant by 'full autonomy' and as to when the final status of territories would be discussed in the future.[88] That is why, it would not be wrong to regard the Camp David Accords as a failure to provide a sound solution to the Palestinian Question, which in return "blocked the development of a comprehensive peace plan for the Middle East"[89].

The fact that the Palestinians subsequently wanted to take matters into their own hands, was a key factor behind the Intifada. It is certain that the Palestinians in the occupied territories, who started the Intifada, were disappointed by both the leaders of the Arab states, as well as their own Palestinian leadership. The common feeling was that, "while everyone was willing to pay lip service to the cause, only a very few people were willing to do anything about it."[90] "They damn Israel's post-1967 occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, but for all their words, warnings and crocodile tears, Arab governments have done notoriously little to end that occupation and advance a Middle East peace."[91] The gap between the rhetoric and the action of the Arab states had become visible in the 1980s. The Lebanon War in 1982 was a proof of this and later the Intifada had proven that Arabs were highly passive. Unlike the westerners who strongly believed that Arab states were passionately supporting the Palestinian cause, it was a common opinion among the Palestinian people that "virtually every Arab state has stabbed them in the back at

---

[88] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 24

[89] Berberoğlu, Berch. (1999). Turmoil in the Middle East. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 102

[90] Said, Edward W. Afterword: the consequence of 1948. In Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim. (Ed). (2001). The War for Palestine- Rewriting the History of 1948. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 207

[91] "Flights of Fancy". The Economist. February 23rd-March 1st, 2002. 16

one point or another... A PLO intelligence chief estimated that the Arab states were responsible for slaying three quarters of the Palestinians killed in the struggle."[92]

While the feeling that injustice has been done to the Palestinians, continues to be a major part of the collective psychology of these people, it is not difficult to understand why they may have become infuriated with their leaders, who seem to ignore past experiences. Many are most disturbed by the leaders' "supernally gifted power of forgetting"[93]:

> "When one of them was asked recently what he felt about Ariel Sharon's accession to Israel's Foreign Ministry, given that he was responsible for the shedding of so much Palestinian blood, this leader said blithely, we are prepared to forget history."[94]

In the outbreak of the Intifada, one has to give credit to the "growth of a younger Palestinian generation that was more militant, better educated and less compliant than the older generation."[95] They had experienced more suffering and had gone through harder living conditions than their parents. It is known that

> "In the 1960s and 1970s, the Israelis had increased the standard of living in the territories, albeit not without Arab opposition to supporting taxation. Things changed however, when the Likud came to power and started its extensive settlement program. The socioeconomic discrimination that accompanied the ambitious settlement process- land seizures, disproportionate water restrictions on Arab business"[96]

have all coincided with the growth of such an educated and more militant younger generation of Palestinians. What is more, Israel's success in Lebanon was the most

---

[92] Rubin, Barry. (2002). The Tragedy of the Middle East. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 198

[93] Said, Edward W. Afterword: the consequence of 1948. In Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim. (Ed). (2001). The War for Palestine- Rewriting the History of 1948. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 207

[94] Said, Edward W. Afterword: the consequence of 1948. In Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim. (Ed). (2001). 207

[95] Freedman, Robert O. (1991). The Intifada. Miami, FL: Florida International University Press. XV

[96] O'Neill, Brad. The Intifada in the Context of Armed Struggle. In, Robert O. Freedman. (1991). The Intifada. Miami, FL: Florida International University Press. 55

apparent reason behind the provocation of the population in the occupied territories to be actively involved in the struggle. Considering that this younger generation of Palestinians were already disappointed with their parents' passivity and dependence on the PLO, it was not difficult to understand the reasoning behind the emergence of such a local resistance.[97]

It is a commonly held opinion that the harsh and violent reaction of the Israeli armed forces towards the unarmed Palestinian civilians, created a wave of sympathy for Arabs among the public in Western Europe. In March 1988, for instance, the European Community adopted a Resolution which was highly critical of the Israeli reaction and policies in the Intifada and twelve states voted against trade agreements with Israel.[98]

Probably the most central date for the future of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, was 15 November, 1988 when "the Palestinian National Council accepted, specifically the UN Resolution 242 (which included an implied, but not explicit recognition of Israel), renounced terrorism, called for peaceful coexistance in a durable and lasting peace, and declared an independent Palestinian state."[99] As a consequence of Arafat's assurances of peace and his speech before the UN, at a meeting in Geneva in 1988, the United States finally recognized the PLO, pointing out that the PLO had met its conditions for a dialogue.[100]

---

[97] Frankel, Glenn. (1994). Beyond the Promised Land. NewYork: Simon and Schuster. 39
[98] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 44
[99] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 54-5
[100] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 56

3.Breakthrough: The Madrid Conference and the Olso Accords

First and foremost, it is necessary to briefly explore the relations and

perceptions in the region, on the way to the peace conference.

At that point in time, the Soviet Union was unwilling to play the role of the

patron of radical states and be actively involved in the region, which left the United

States as the only power in the region. Also important was the fact that, there was a

notable change in the American attitude toward Israel after the end of the Gulf War.

During the war, direct contacts between the countries were less frequent and the

U.S. pushed Israel to be more cooperative and responsive to the peace initiatives of

the PLO. After the war, however, the U.S. was highly supportive of Israel, by

providing it with $13 billion in aid, which was for both its damages in the war and

also loan guarantees in order to help the settlement of Jewish immigrants from the

Soviet Union. Israel, in return, was hopeful that the U.S. would put more pressure

on the Arabs to be less hostile toward Israel. Arabs, on the other hand, thought that

as a reward for their cooperation, the U.S. would work to convince Israel to give

land for peace and allow for the right of self-determination for the Palestinian

people.[101]

Considering the duration and the complexity of the Arab-Israeli conflict, one

cannot help but wonder how such a serious process of peace could start between the

Arabs and Israelis, who mostly viewed each other with fear and suspicion. Before

discussing why the Madrid Conference stands out as such a significant event in the

history of Arab-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli relations, the key factors that led to

this process should be shortly summarized.

---

[101] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 255

According to one thought, the key factor was the exhaustion of the Arab

elites in their efforts to eliminate Israel. The successive wars fought with Israel (in

1948, 1956, 1967, 1973), all of which turned out to be detrimental to the Arab sides,

made it clear that it was rather useless to try to eradicate Israel by war. Taking into

account its conventional superiority, and increasing military strength, especially

with its strategic cooperation with Turkey, the Arab governments came to believe

that fighting a war was perhaps not the best option in countering Israel.[102] What is

more, the Gulf War and Iraq's failure convinced even the radical Arabs that perhaps

a military solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict was not attainable.[103]

Secondly, the decrease in PLO's power as the key proponent of the

Palestinian national movement, deeply affected the evolution of the peace process.

In the first place, its being forced to evacuate Lebanon in 1982 was a major loss of

prestige. On the other hand, there emerged a new group, 'the insiders', which took

the leading role in the movement, by starting the 1988 Intifada in the occupied

territories. It has been asserted that with their more realistic objectives and more

moderate attitude, they have been influential in changing the course of the

Palestinian national movement. For instance, "they were instrumental in pushing the

PLO away from its maximalist platform, which did not recognise Israel, into

adopting a two-state formula."[104]

Thirdly, events took place in the 1980s and the early 1990s which persuaded

Middle Eastern states like Egypt and Jordan, that there were bigger threats in the

region than Israel. The Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, then the first Gulf War

between Iran and Iraq, which lasted from 1980 to 1988 and finally the Iraqi

---

[102] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Realistic Assessment. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 2
[103] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 73
[104] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). 2

annexation of Kuwait made the Gulf states and Jordan start seeing "Israel as a balancing force in the region, particularly against hegemonic ambitions"[105]. The fact that even Syria was on the side of Israel during the war, made it evident that "the Gulf War shattered the myth of pan-Arab unity"[106].

It should also be noted that "power politics led Arab political elites to accept gradually Israel as a fait accompli. A strong Israel is a prerequisite for the peace process. Weakening it harms the peace process."[107]

Finally, the Arabs and the Palestinians were well aware of how the Palestine issue was being put aside on the world scene. In addition to the Gulf War, the break up of Yugoslavia, followed by the crisis in Bosnia and also the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, naturally diverted attention from the situation in the occupied territories.[108] "The weakness of the Palestinians was so apparent that they were expected to respond positively to any serious diplomatic overtures."[109] It was in such an atmosphere that the Arabs found themselves at meetings in Madrid.

It is also interesting how Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir had accepted going to Madrid, while initially in his speech to the Knesset after the start of the war " he had categorically ruled out Israeli participation in any postwar international conference on a comprehensive peace settlement."[110]

On the part of Israel, there was first of all a "growing social weariness with war..., little appetite to police the Palestinian inhabited areas and no attraction of the

---

[105] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Realistic Assessment". [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 7
[106] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 255
[107] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). 7
[108] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 256
[109] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 73
[110] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 256

notion of a 'Greater Israel.'"[111] Secondly, the end of the Cold War era had been

favourable for Israel, since the Arabs would no longer have the support of the Soviet

Union. What is more, "the discrediting of the PLO and the Palestinians during the

Gulf War, certainly made them more amenable to compromise as a way of retaining

their visibility and viability in an unenviable situation."[112] Besides, Israel was in a

close alliance with the United States, which was the major global power in the post-

Cold War era. All these developments meant that the Arab states were highly

limited in both their military and also diplomatic options. In a way they had to be

more active to the American preferences, which naturally included acceptance of the

Israeli state.[113]

At the same time, however, there had emerged such a situation after the Gulf

War that, "Shamir's power to say 'no' to the US had diminished sharply... and his

resistance to US demands were very low at the time."[114] This was mostly due to the

fact that the United States had defended Israel during the war and some billion

dollars of loan guarantees and serious American aid to make up for the Isreali war

losses, were being discussed.[115]

The central aim of the United States, which was the key player in initiating

this process, was to establish a peaceful regional environment that would require

minimum American interference. In almost all the meetings the Arab states had

been willing to see more US involvement, yet Washington was determined to play

the role of just a convener, rather than a mediator.[116] Besides as the then Prime

---

[111] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). 3
[112] Bickerton, Ian J. and Carla L. Klausner. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 256
[113] Inbar, Efraim. 4
[114] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 75
[115] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 75.
[116] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 77-9

Minister Yitzhak Shamir said, for Israel "all that mattered was that the talks were bilateral and direct and that the U.S. would not interfere."[117]

The Conference envisioned both bilateral and multilateral talks. The bilateral talks, which took UN Resolution 242 and 338 as the basis, were to be conducted between Israel and Syria, Israel and Lebanon and also between Israel and the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Previously, Shamir had strongly rejected the idea of the PLO being a party in the negotiations, and since it had lost prestige and strength after the war, the PLO had accepted the formation of a joint delegation with Jordan. It was hoped that at the end of these bilateral talks, major issues including first of all the conditions for signing the peace treaties, the situation of the occupied territories, the future of the Palestinians and naturally the boundaries of the Israeli state, would be resolved.[118]

At the same time, the multilateral talks were designed to discuss broader issues, such as economic development, water, environment, arms control, and refugees, which deeply affected the region. The discussions took place with the participation not only of the 11 Arab states, the Palestinians and Israel, but also delegations from European countries, Canada, the UN and Japan.[119] Even though the major actors chose to boycott the discussions on many issues (Israel on economic development and refugees, since Palestinians from outside the occupied territories had insisted on being present; Syria and Lebanon, were also determined to boycott until there was any progress in the bilateral talks), these multilateral talks

---

[117] Illan, David Bar. Israel's New Pollyannas. In, Neil Kozody. (2002). The Mideast Peace Process:An Autopsy. SanFransisco: Encounter Books. 3
[118] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 257-8
[119] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 80

continued. There was very little agreement on many issues, but at least, these issues had been studied and discussed.[120]

With regard to the bilateral talks, there was almost no progress on any of the issues. Most important of all the Palestinian delegation and the Israeli side had totally different positions, and each day, it seemed harder for them to reach consensus. The Israeli side could only go so far as to accept limited self-rule in the occupied territories, with having control of foreign affairs, security and of the territories itself. On the other hand, the Palestinians, despite their acceptance of interim measures, wanted self-determination and a Palestinian state at the end of the process.[121] What is more, they were not really interested in much of what was being discussed during the multilateral talks. Their main goal was to conduct bilateral talks with the Israeli side in order to clarify the final status of the refugee issue, and that is why, they were most frustrated when Israel rejected dealing with this issue in a multilateral forum.[122]

Despite the round of talks and negotiations, however, the parties could achieve no result and there was progress neither in the bilateral nor in the multilateral track. On the subject of the future of the Palestinians, the Israelis came up with a proposal in the forth round of bilateral talks, which gave the Palestinians limited authority on national, legal and security matters. In response, the Palestinians rejected the proposal, since it envisioned no autonomy and did not bring the Israeli occupation to an end. What they proposed instead was "more than an autonomy, and less than a state"[123] in James Baker's words.

---

[120] Bickerton, Ian J and Klausner, Carla L. Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 258
[121] Bickerton, Ian J and Klausner, Carla L. 258
[122] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 81
[123] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 81-4

Still, the process that started in Madrid is of utter significance. Beside having

covened with the co-sponsoring of both the United States and the Soviet Union, the

Conference is a mile stone, as the sides were engaged in face-to face talks for the

first time in the history of the conflict.[124] Moreover, it was the "first time the

Palestinians had put together documents, doctrines and tactics associated with their

interests through legal terms"[125].

With such deadlock in bilateral relations, how then was the Israeli-PLO

Accord was made possible in 1993? Obviously there had been new developments in

the region, which made both sides more willing to reach an agreement.

On the Israeli side, the general elections in June 1992, is a key development.

With Yitzhak Rabin as the head of the Labor-led coalition government, replacing

Shamir, there appeared a new atmosphere in the peace process. There was not a

radical shift in the Israeli position, but still, gestures made by Rabin were very

important. "He freed more than 800 political prisoners, halted most settlement

activity, barred private Israeli building permits in the occupied territories, and

reiterated the Labor party position of land for peace."[126]

When the Clinton Administration came to power, the United States

increased its involvement and the talks in Washington resumed from where it was

left. Despite proposals by both sides, though, there still was no progress, which

made the Israeli public critical of Rabin. According to one argument, Yitzhak Rabin

had two alternatives at that point. He would either deal with Syria, which

necessitated complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and destruction of the

Jewish settlements or he would directly get in contact with the PLO. Rabin naturally

---

[124] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 257
[125] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 85
[126] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 259

chose the second alternative, because that required neither total withdrawal, nor any dismantling of the settlements.[127]

Another argument maintains that, the 1990s had witnessed a new tactical shift in Israel. The leaders saw the need to integrate into the world system as a must and this was only possible by integration first, into the Middle East region. As a consequence of this goal, the three basic principles of the Israeli foreign policy - a refusal to talk with the PLO, denial of a Palestinian state and opposition to the idea of land for peace - had changed.[128]

On the Palestinian side, there was much opposition to Israel and disappointment with the talks, due to lack of progress. For many, "Rabin's actions were mere 'window dressing.'"[129] The chief development, which seriously affected the peace process was the deterioration of the economic condition of the Palestinians. This was both the result and the cause of the PLO's loss of credibility. As a consequence of Arafat's supportiveness of Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf States cut their aids to the PLO, which in result faced a major decrease in revenues. Moreover, Israel's travel restrictions on the Palestinians, played an important role in the worsening of the economic condition of the Palestinians in the territories, since they lost their basic source of income as a result of the inability to go to their regular jobs in Israel. This financial crisis was effective in Arafat's responding positively to the United States' demands for resuming the peace talks. However, there was an even more crucial factor along the road to peace, which was also a result of this financial crisis. While the PLO started losing its strength and became identified by the word 'failure' as there was

---

[127] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 88
[128] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 89
[129] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 259

no progress in the talks and no improvement in the condition of the Palestinians, more radical groups, the most important of which was Hamas, started gaining influence. As they were consolidating their influence through the network of educational, social and economic institutions, within time they emerged as a major threat to the PLO leadership. As Hamas increased its violent attacks against Israel, it became a concern not only to the PLO but also to Israel, which had at first tolerated it as an alternative to the PLO in the occupied territories. Thus the fear of the growing impact of Hamas, was the main factor which contributed to the concessions on both sides and the continuation of the talks.[130]

To sum up, the financial weakness, concerns of Hamas and also the internal disputes made the PLO more moderate. Though there was great disappointment in the world agenda when the negotiations were suspended, this was just a temporary situation for Arafat, who "in the name of the Palestinians, came onto a peace road where there was no chance of turning back."[131]

While the official talks in Washington kept going on without any sound achievements, a series of secret, direct talks between the Israeli and Palestinian officials took place in Norway until September, 1993, when the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government for the Palestinians was signed. It is really important that both Rabin and Peres, as well as Arafat and the PLO representatives acted in a way which was unbelievable to the world and which resulted in a completely historic development. There was, for the first time, such an optimistic environment in which both sides craved for peace at the same time.[132]

---

[130] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 259-62
[131] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 86
[132] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 266-8

Another major indication of the Oslo Accord was that the United States was losing its influence in the region and that it was no longer the only party that could play the role of intermediary. The fact that secret talks took place in Norway and it was Scandinavian diplomacy that was most effective in the signing of the Accord, also showed Israel's new preferences. It has been argued that this shift was in line with the changing realities in international politics, namely the shift from the Atlantic to the newly emerging regional blocs.[133]

The Knesset, much before the signing of the accord, had repealed the law, that banned contacts with the PLO, which had, thus, made the contacts of individuals with the PLO representatives legal. Regardless of oppositions and criticisms from the opposing Likud Party, for Rabin "the time has come to take a risk for peace."[134] Shimon Peres had also declared that, Israel wanted to live with the Palestinians in peace and had in no way a plan to rule over them. It was historic that Israel, for the first time in its history, recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and accepted it as a negotiating partner.[135] By 1993, it had become apparent to the Israeli leaders that, "the only Palestinian body which had the capability of running an interim agreement was the PLO. Additionally, the PLO was the only organization which was capable of controlling the situation in the occupied territories."[136]

Arafat, on the other hand, recognized the Israeli state, promised to bring an end to the violence and change the PLO charter, so that there would be no clause objectionable to Israel. He succeeded this, by ignoring the harsh criticisms within

---

[133] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 90
[134] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 268
[135] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 268
[136] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 89

the Fatah movement itself, and without being affected by the accusation of Hamas leaders.[137]

The Declaration, indeed, was drawing out the major issues and principles, which both sides had agreed to discuss and find solutions to in the near future. It envisioned a five-year interim period, during which a Palestinian self-governing authority would have jurisdiction in the West Bank and Gaza territory. Indeed, the Declaration of Principles was also called the Gaza-Jericho Accord. However, it was rather misleading because the transfer of authority was not limited to Gaza and Jericho only. The West Bank and Gaza would be regarded as a single territorial unit, the integrity of which would be preserved throughout the interim period.[138]

The authority of the Palestinian Council would cover such areas as education, health, tourism, taxation and social welfare. There would also be negotiations, during this period, as to how the elections to choose the Palestinian National Council would be conducted; how economic cooperation, including the issues of water, electricity, industry would be achieved and also as to how Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area would be achieved quickly and in a well-planned manner.[139]

"The Convening of the mutilateral Madrid Conference in 1991 and more so the signing of the Declaration of Principles in 1993 were regarded as signs of a new dawn in the region that would convert a perpetual conflict to peaceful coexistance".[140] Probably the most important outcome of this peace process was that

---

[137] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 268

[138] Feith, Douglas J. Land for No Peace. In Neil Kozody. (2002). The Mideast Peace Process:An Autopsy. SanFransisco: Encounter Books. 24

[139] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 93-5

[140] Altunışık, Meliha Benli. (2001, June-July). The Breakdown of the Post-Gulf War Middle East Order?. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. VI, 2

"the ice had been broken and the previous taboos ignored."[141] It has been claimed

that, after the initiation of the process with the Conference in Madrid, it was no

longer a "zero-sum game"[142], but rather a phase in which the sides tried to adjust to

each other about the issues which they would compromise.

Furthermore, unlike the previous Israeli governments, which had been

prepared and open to discussion concerning the rights of different religions to the

holy places of Jerusalem, it was Rabin's government which for the first time,

"expressed an explicit and unqualified readiness to put Jerusalem itself on the table.

This is what the DOP did in making the city a subject for negotiations with the

opening of final-status talks scheduled for May 1996."[143]

On the other hand however, some argue that the peace process had begun in

deception and self-deception, since

> "on the very day of the signing itself, Yasir Arafat broadcasted to the
> Palestinian people in Arabic that the peace accord to which he had affixed
> his name was nothing more than a first step in a longstanding plan for the
> 'phased' elimination of Israel."[144]

Moreover, the U.S. Aministration, in its secret private letters to Syria, Israel

and the Palestinians assured each party that the United States would be supportive

of 'its' position. It is no doubt that these assurances to the parties of the conflict

were irreconcilable. Indeed, "they were white lies intended to get everyone

together in the hope that differences would be ironed out at the negotiating

table."[145]

---

[141] Jaber, Kamel S. Abu. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Critical
Evaluation". [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 1
[142] Jaber, Kamel S. Abu. (2000, March-May). 1
[143] Gold, Dore. Where Is the Peace Process Going?. In, Neil Kozody. (2002). The Mideast Peace
Process:An Autopsy. SanFransisco: Encounter Books. 41
[144] Kozody, Neal. (2002). The Mideast Peace Process:An Autopsy. SanFransisco: Encounter
Books. VII
[145] Illan, David Bar. Israel's New Pollyannas. In Neil Kozody. (2002). The Mideast Peace
Process:An Autopsy. SanFransisco: Encounter Books. 3

4. On the Road to Peace

The talks, initiated by Bill Clinton in 2000, was a significant move to make peace between Arafat and Ehud Barak. In the proposals Clinton made, mainly Israel would withdraw from almost 96 percent of the West Bank and Gaza, and would also hand over a small part of Israel proper, in exchange for a small part of the West Bank it annexes. With regard to Jerusalem, Israel would have sovereignty over the Jewish areas, and the Palestinians over the Arab regions. At the same time, Temple Mount would be under Palestinian control, where as the Jews would have sovereignty over the Western Wall. The refugees, on the other hand, would have a right to return, but only to the new Palestine, and not to Israel itself.[146]

However, there was no successful bargaining or negotiation, during the talks, and Clinton's efforts at Camp David totally failed. One important thing may be Arafat's acceptance that there could be changes to the pre-1967 border and Israel could annex some West Bank land, only in exchange for equivalent land elsewhere. Still, his general negative attitude and unwillingness all throughout the talks was indeed, an early signal that the sides were not ready to discuss final status issues. Even though during the Oslo process, it was hoped that mutual trust would be built in the coming years, Camp David proved that the only thing built up in the last seven years had been frustration, ill-faith and recrimination.[147]

One significant disagreement surfaced on one of the core issues: the right of return. Ehud Barak clearly dismissed UN Resolution 194, which asserts the position on the rights of the refugees. The Israeli argument has been once again affirmed at Camp David. Israel could have no responsibility, because it was all the fault of the Arab armies, which had attacked Israel in 1948 and told the

---

[146] "Too bloody to ignore". The Economist. March 16th-22nd, 2002. 13
[147] "All the war is over". The Economist. April 13th-19th, 2002. 25

48

Palestinians to leave their homes until Arabs won the war. Secondly, the PLO's recognition of UN Resolution 242 as the basis of negotiations, was in a way the proof that the PLO had accepted Israel's own position on the Right of Return. This was because the Resolution 242 adressed only the 1967 war and its aftermath, and had no reference to the 1948 war, which was the basis of the refugee problem.[148]

It should also be noted that, interesting enough, the same Israeli state had recognized the Resolution 194, when it joined the United Nations. It had also accepted in the same year, in 1949, to the return of 100,000 refugees. However, after its admission to the United Nations, and thanks to the disinterest of the international community, which preferred to look the other way, Israel has neither kept its original position, nor its promises.[149]

The proposals made by Bill Clinton, seem to reflect almost completely the Israeli demands, while putting pressure solely on Arafat, for whom the demands were unaccetable. After all, what was demanded from the Palestinians was, "recognition of a mini-state in return for giving up on Jerusalem, and the refugees and the question of settlements."[150] What is more, Clinton's attitude, accusing Arafat for not being flexible enough is quite funny. And his strategy of threatening Arafat with cutting aid to and isolating the Palestinians[151] is quite futile. First of all, there is no way Arafat could be flexible, because the expectation was complete submission on the core final status issues; not one, but all of them. Israel, on the other hand, was not making any concessions on its behalf, at all. In such a complex conflict, where such sensitive issues are being examined, agreement is possible, on the condition that both sides make concessions.

---

[148] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. New York: Zed Books. 97
[149] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). 98
[150] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). 73
[151] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). 74

Secondly, Clinton's threats of isolation and of cutting aid, do not seem to have been effective on the Palestinians at that point in time. Compared to the aid and support to the Israelis, American assistance to the Palestinians is nothing serious, with most of the economic aid coming from the European countries. Besides, by accepting the demands proposed at Camp David, Arafat could have more to risk, than just American isolation. Agreeing to the Israeli demands, would probably lead to further disappointment of the Palestinians with Arafat, which could then cause him lose his respect and already weak authority on his people.

Considering the failure of the previous Camp David Summit, Taba Talks can be considered an important event, with regard to the final status issues. The Israelis and the Palestinians met in Taba, Egypt in January 2001, to discuss the major disputed subjects like territory, Jerusalem, refugees and security. This time around, neither the United States nor Arafat or Barak were participants. Senior Israeli and Palestinian delegations included Yossi Beilin and Mahmoud Abbas, respectively, in their teams and as it turned out they were much more successful, in approaching an agreement, than Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat.[152] Based on the notes that were prepared by the EU Special Representative to the Middle East Peace Process, Ambassador Moratinos, and his team after consultations with the Israeli and Palestinian sides, and which were first published in the Ha'aretz newspaper in 14 February, 2002, the talks seem to be quite a progress. Even though the paper is not official, the fact that both sides had acknowledged it as a reasonable description of the outcomes of the talks, makes it a possible source for grasping the basics of the Taba Talks.[153] It is definitely a noteworthy development, considering that both sides had mutually declared that they had never been closer

---

[152] "After the war is over". The Economist. April 13th-19th, 2002. 26
[153] Retrieved on 6 April, 2004 from http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/taba2001.htm

to reaching an agreement and thus, it was their common belief that remaining gaps could be bridged by the resumption of negotiations after the Israeli elections.[154]

First of all, on the issue of territory it was accepted by both sides that in line with the UN Resolution 242, June 4, 1967 lines would be taken as the basis for borders between the Palestinian state and Israel. The Gaza Strip would be under Palestinian sovereignty and the Israelis would evacuate all the settlements. Besides, there would be safe passage between the north of Gaza and the Hebron district and also the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be territorially linked. There was, however, no agreement on under whose sovereignty this territorial link would be and on the timetable the settlements would be evacuated.[155]

With regard to the West Bank, there was not as much agreement as there was on Gaza. It was significant that for the first time, both sides presented maps of their own version of the West Bank, but when it came to discussing the Clinton proposal and parameters, which were taken as the basis, there were serious differences in how the sides interpreted them. For instance, according to the Israelis, the proposals made it possible for annexation of settlement blocs. Yet, the Palestinians neither agreed on the existence of blocs in the parameters, nor accepted any proposals that gave way to annexations, stating that they would seriously harm the interests and needs of Palestinians, especially the ones residing in areas Israel wants to annex. What is more, the Israelis talked about further developments of settlements in the West Bank, which for the Palestinians, was totally unacceptable.[156]

---

[154] "Israeli-Palestinian Joint Statement- 27 January, 2001. Retrieved on 6 April, 2004 from http://www.mideastweb.org/taba.htm
[155] Retrieved on 6 April, 2004 from http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/taba2001.htm
[156] "The Taba Talks, 2001". Retrieved on 6 April, 2004 from http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/taba2001.htm

On yet another very important and conflictual issue, Jerusalem, there was agreement on the basics, even though certain arrangements were left unresolved for future discussions. In terms of sovereignty, the Palestinians would have control over the Arab neighborhoods and while the Israelis would control the Jewish sections, respectively. The idea of an Open City was approached favorably by both sides, but details of arrangements were not agreed on. Again, there was agreement in principle on that both sides would have control over their own respective holy sites, which included Israeli control over the Western Wall. The question of Haram al-Sharif/ Temple Mount was left unresolved, even though it was stated that parties were close to accepting Clinton's ideas on Palestinian sovereignty over the area.[157]

There were also discussions with regard to the right of return and compensation of refugees and also security arrangements during the Taba Talks. Even though there was hardly any solution, the reason why it can be considered a big progress is that, such critical issues were at least discussed between the sides. Until that time, these final status issues were always being postponed to a future date.

The specific arrangements about refugees were still not agreed upon, but at least the sides had recognized the establishment of an International Commission and an International Fund to deal with compensation. The International Commission would consist of the Palestinian State, Israel, host countries, and members of the international community, including the United Nations, the World Bank, The European Union and the G8, along with other relevant international institutions. What is more the International Commission would have full and

---

[157] "The Taba Talks, 2001". Retrieved on 6 April, 2004 from
http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/taba2001.htm

exclusive responsibility for implementing the resolution of the refugee issue in all its aspects.[158] Even though the Israelis had proposed a 36-month period for withdrawal from the West Bank and additional 36 months for withdrawal from the Jordan Valley, as opposed to the Palestinian demands of 18 months[159], there was at least an agreement on the principle of Israeli withdrawal, which cannot be overlooked in such a hard-to-solve conflict as that between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

The Taba talks proved that Arafat was right to reject the proposals made at Camp David, and that there could be better alternatives to Clinton's proposals.

The refugee issue is probably the most important final status issue, because it symbolizes the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In order to understand the roots of the conflict, one surely goes back and examines the emergence of the refugee problem, when "about 500,000 to 780,000 Palestinians were displaced during the 1948 Israeli War of independence, either because they fled Palestine or because they were forced out by the Israelis."[160] Even though it constitues the basis of the problem, Israel, up until Camp David in 2000, rejected even to address the issue of the refugees. When it was brought to the negotiation table at Camp David, this time around, Israel claimed to have no legal, moral or political responsibility over the subject. Since then, it has come up with pretexts not to recognize the Right of Return, which, has been classified by the United Nations Resolution 194, as an inalienable right.[161]

While taking these concerns into consideration, however, one should not forget and take for granted the humanitarian side of the problem. Everything put

---

[158] "The Taba Proposals and the Refugee Problem". Retrieved on 6 April, 2004 from http://www.mideastweb.org/taba.htm
[159] "The Taba Talks, 2001". Retrieved on 6 April, 2004 from http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/taba2001.htm
[160] "The Taba Proposals and the Refugee Problem".
[161] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. New York: Zed Books. 95-7

aside, the issue of refugees, the poor treatment they see, and the horrible conditions

under which they are striving to survive is no doubt a shameful page in the history

of humankind. The Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, are probably the best example

to this:

> "Almost 40,000 Palestinian refugees have had to endure not only the
> massacres of Sabra, Shatilla, Tell el Zaatar, Abay and elsewhere but have
> remained confined in hideous quarantine for almost two generations. They
> have no legal right to work in at least sixty occupations, they are not
> adequately covered by medical insurance, they can not travel and return, they
> are objects of suspicion and dislike."[162]

Still today, the right of return of refugees constitutes a key part of the

"Palestinians' negotiating mythology."[163] It is an issue that is felt really strongly

about, that some 700,000 refugees who either fled or were forced out of their

homes during the 1948 war, return to their former homes in Israel proper.

However, this claim is not taken very seriously among peacemakers during

negotiations, and according to an argument, even the Palestinians themselves have

come to the understanding that if they insist on the right of return, a peace deal is

not likely. This was, for instance, the line of thinking during the talks initiated by

Bill Clinton in 2000, because in case the refugees used their right to return to Israel

proper, the Jewish majority would be lost, which no Israeli would accept.[164]

In the spring of 2002, the refugees in the West Bank, had probably their

worst experience, and had to go through hardships as they had never gone through.

When the Israeli tanks entered the West Bank, with the plan to reconquest, in order

to root out terrorism, as they argued, there emerged an incredible humanitarian

disaster. Along with countless deaths, there were refugees left homeless. There

---

[162] Said, Edward W. Afterword: the consequence of 1948. In Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim.
(Ed). (2001). The War for Palestine- Rewriting the History of 1948. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge
University Press. 209
[163] "Out of Gaza". The Economist. April 17th-23rd, 2004. 13
[164] "Out of Gaza". The Economist. April 17th-23rd, 2004. 13

was food, water and medication shortages, while villages were cut off by army checkpoints or dirt walls. Besides, even the emergency aid, distributed by the UNRWA that was responsible for the welfare of Palestinian refugees, was hindered because of the Israeli army's sieges.[165]

The reason why Jerusalem is another highly disputed issue is that it is a sacred city to Jews, Christians and Muslims alike. After Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem after the war in 1967, it became one of the key conflictual issues between the Palestinians and Israelis. Any agreement between the two sides, must definitely find a solution to Jerusalem.

After the unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem, which is not recognized by international law, Israel has expanded its boundaries of East Jerusalem by annexations to the boundaries of West Jerusalem. In the years that followed, houses were built in the expropriated land and many Jewish settlements were established. In the meantime, as a result of the Israeli blockade of the city, Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza were not allowed to enter the city and they were denied the right to residency in Jerusalem. However, according to the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel had no right to transfer its population to these newly conquered territories and no right to prevent the access of Jerusalem's Palestinian residents. Regardless of international law, though, Israel has continued its illegal actions and that is why Jerusalem became one of the most disputed issues of the final status negotiations.[166]

There have been many proposals, but the one that seemed most probable and that got closest to agreement was that discussed at Taba. In principle, unlike previously, when Israel claimed Jerusalem to be its undivided capital, this time

---

[165] "After the Assault". The Economist. April 27th-May 3rd, 2002. 41
[166] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. New York: Zed Books. 103-6

Israel accepted that in the future, Jerusalem would be the capital of both Palestine, as well as Israel. While it is obviously "not in Israel's interest to have sovereignty over Moslem holy sites"[167], it is for sure that it is in Israel's interest to solve the issue of Jerusalem, because no government in the world, recognizes it as Israel's capital. There are no countries, except Costa Rica and El Salvador, which have embassies in the city.[168] "In 1999, 149 countries to 1 voted in favor of a UN resolution that called Israel's decision to impose its laws and jurisdiction and administration in Jerusalem illegal and, therefore null and void"[169].

According to one argument, as of March 2000, the peace process has shown a considerable improvement; however it cannot improve much further. "While the mere nature of politics (the pursuit of national interests) makes Israeli participation in interstate interactions easier, the religious and the cultural dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict are less amenable to quick change."[170]

Not long after, the al-Aqsa intifada broke out in September 2000, starting again severe violence between the sides and bringing to an end any hopes for confidence building. It was triggered by Sharon's visit to Al-Aqsa Mosque, the "killing of Palestinians in the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem"[171] and the excessive use of force by Israel, which followed. However it is claimed that it was Barak and not Sharon, who was to be blamed for the outbreak of the second Intifada, since Barak was the head of the government and he commanded the Army.[172] Indeed, the growing anger of the Palestinians, due mostly to the Israeli measures, increase in settlements and also to the disappointment with the Palestinian Authority and the

---

[167] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. New York: Zed Books. 109
[168] "After the war is over". The Economist. April 13th-19th, 2002. 27
[169] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). 112
[170] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Realistic Assessment. Perceptions. V, 1, 7
[171] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). 62
[172] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). 31

failure of Camp David, was a key reason behind the initiation of the second

Intifada.[173]

As argued, the intifada happened to result in a decline both in the economy

and the international prestige of the Israelies, as well as the Palestinians[174]. In the

Israeli case,

> "the longer the Intifada lasted, the more Israel seemed to lose overall, as instability became a factor in its own political and economic life. The Israeli tourist industry was severely affected as long-term reservations were cancelled. The stock market suffered and Israeli companies trading on the New York Stock Exchange were badly hit."[175]

In the Palestinian case, the Israeli blockades as a result of the Intifada,

mainly destroyed the already weak Palestinian economy.

> "According to UN economists, it is this blockade, more than anything else, that has cost the Palestinian economy at least $2.4 billion since the Intifada broke out in September 2000, sending unemployment soaring to 35% in the West Bank and 50% in Gaza, and leaving 46% of all Palestinians officially improverished. The 'closure', says just about every Palestinian, is the main reason why no ceasefire will hold."[176]

As seen unlike the Intifada in the 1980s, in this Intifada, which is armed,

Palestinians not only suffered themselves, but they also destroyed normal life in

Israel. When there are Palestinians, who are willing and ready to blow themselves

up at any time, any place, Israelis are nothing but vulnerable in terms of security,

because it is not possible for the army to catch every such Palestinian. In such a

situation, more and more Israelis, were tipped to the right, favoring harsher

policies against the Palestinians.[177] That is why, it may be argued that the intifada

turned out to be "self-destructive"[178]. Many Palestinians, such as Mahmoud Abbas,

---

[173] "After the war is over". The Economist. April 13th-19th, 2002. 26
[174] Liel, Alon. (2003, summer). The Middle East After Saddam and Arafat. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 42
[175] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. New York: Zed Books. 35
[176] "Building a Palestinian state, in reverse". The Economist. January 19th-25th, 2002. 37
[177] "Too bloody to ignore". The Economist. March 16th-22nd, 2002. 13
[178] "It should have been so simple". The Economist. January 25th-31st, 2003. 23

strongly criticized the intifada for the very same reason. Accordingly, the intifada, not only strengthened Sharon with his own people, but " its military and suicidal cast has strengthened... has lost support in America and Europe, and destroyed the PA"[179], as well. Politically, it has also shattered the trust of the common Israeli. Majority of Israelis feel betrayed, thinking that they gave land to the Palestinians, who replied with violence.[180]

The Israelis, on the other hand, were sharply criticized by the international community, as a result of their reactions during the intifada. As early as October 2000, the United Nations Human Rights Commission adopted a resolution, and condemned Israel for its disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force agains Palestinian civilians. And upon the report by UNHRC Special Rapporteur, the Commission, this time, accused Israel of war crimes and crimes against humanity.[181]

Encouraged by U.S' reaction against all sorts of anti-state political movements and violence everywhere in the world, Ariel Sharon had no hesitations to abide by the American strategy of crushing self-determination struggles, which in this case was the Palestinian struggle, led by Arafat, whom he regarded as Israel's Osama Bin Laden.[182]

During the year Sharon has been Prime Minister, settlements continued full scale, with 34 being authorized. And Palestinians were oppressed and had to live under conditions below the poverty line.[183]

[179] "To the trenches". The Economist. February 1st-7th, 2003. 39
[180] "It should have been so simple". The Economist. January 25th-31st, 2003. 23
[181] Bishara, Marwan. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. New York: Zed Books. 35
[182] Falk, Richard. Foreword. In Marwan Bishara. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. London: Zed Books. xiii
[183] Falk, Richard. Foreword. In Marwan Bishara. (2002). xiv.

At the same time there is strong rejectionism not only among the religious or secular political areas outside government circles, but also within the government circles. "The vote of 47-31 with 24 abstentions within the Israeli Knesset on the 13 December 1999, is not only a display of how divided Israeli society is, but sends powerful signals even sustenance to the rejectionist forces on the other side."[184]

While on many occasions, it is a terrorist bomb or a suicide attack which destroys talks for agreement, it is also the Israeli assasinations and more often "raiding the heart of Palestinian territory"[185] that ends efforts for peace. There is no question with regard to the interest of the terrorists, who try hard to maintain an atmosphere of horror and violence. Yet, it is quite confusing when it comes to the Israeli case. For example, the attempt to put an end to violence with the Bethlehem, Gaza first plan was initiated by the Israeli defence minister, Binyamin Ben-Elizer. According to the plan, Israel would begin loosening its control and ending its restrictions, first in Bethlehem and Gaza, and later in other areas if the plan worked. However, even though there was a decrease in violence as demanded from the Palestinians and though the plan succeeded in Bethlehem, Israel has twice drove in Palestinian territory by tanks, in two days. As can be seen, the plan initiated by an Israeli minister, was smashed again by Israeli leaders, prime minister Ariel Sharon and chief –of- staff General Moshe Yaalon.[186]Thus, no matter how confusing it may be, it looks as though some Israeli leaders, "also doubt that a peaceful respite would be in their best interest"[187].

---

[184] Jaber, Kamel S. Abu. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Critical Evaluation. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 1
[185] "Crushing Palestine is no answer". The Economist. September 14th-20th, 2002. 10
[186] "Crushing Palestine is no answer". The Economist. September 14th-20th, 2002. 10
[187] "Crushing Palestine is no answer". The Economist. September 14th-20th, 2002. 10

In the words of a United Nations diplomat, trying to foster a political process, " ' any viable state needs to control its borders and police, and meet its people's basic economic needs. By damaging these institutions and capacities, Israel prevents the Palestinians from managing their own affairs. It is a kind of state-building in reverse.'"[188]

While the Palestinian terrorists continued their attacks on Israeli civilians, Israeli forces were not passive either. Believing that putting pressure on Arafat would make him curb terrorism, Israel laid siege to his headquarters in Ramallah and even imprisoned him in his office for a week.[189] Indeed, this strategy backfired because it made the Palestinians more angry and resort to even more violence. What Israel should have understood was that the Palestinians were already frustrated with Arafat's ceasefire efforts, beginning to consider him as a betrayer to the cause. For instance, there was a big protest and civil unrest when "thousands of people stormed the gates of a PA prison in Nablus, demanding the release of Hamas prisoners interned as part of Mr.Arafat's now futile ceasefire."[190] Thus, putting pressure on Arafat, who already seemed to lose his authority over people, was a rather meaningless act by the Israeli state.

Unfortunately, since Ariel Sharon came to power Israeli policies got more radical and violent. It is not surprising, of course, when one considers Sharon's declarations about Palestinians and the mood he wants his government to reflect. According to him, the Israelis "must cause them losses, casualties...so that they understand they will gain nothing by terrorism...must hit them, and hit them again and again, until they understand"[191]. Israeli bombings, incursions and measures in

---

[188] "Building a Palestinian state, in reverse". The Economist. January 19th-25th, 2002. 37
[189] "It can only get worse". The Economist. January 26th-February 1st, 2002. 38
[190] "It can only get worse". 38
[191] "The Middle East's bloodstained spiral". The Economist. March 9th-15th, 2002. 42

refugee camps have come to such a point that even some Israelis have become terrified. After television pictures of arrested Palestinian men with their hands clasped, eyes blindfolded and army numbers stamped on their arms, an Israeli human-rights organization was quick to declare that the Israeli army had lost its moral limits.[192]

Ironically however, such policies do not make the Palestinians understand, but rather cause them to react in a harsher way and thus any prospect for a political solution impossible. The only logic behind Israel's intensification of military pressure seems to be to give way to Palestinian terrorism, so that Israel can have the pretext to increase its settlements and use even stricter measures for those Palestinians in the occupied areas, for security reasons.

Other than Arab governments, even European governments, which accept that what Palestinians are engaged in is terrorism, do not accept Israel's right to military reply against the Palestinias. They also reject Sharon's plan to send the Israeli army back to the Palestinian areas in the West Bank, as a part of his war against terror, because Israel has already signed over that territory to Palestinian Authority under the Oslo Accords.[193] But then again, Israel has no habit of complying with international law, considering the previous UN Resolutions, so it is no suprise when Israel invades territory, which is in opposition with an agreement it has signed. It is still sitting on land it occupied in 1967, and it is transforming much of the land with permanent settlement, which has been prohibited by international law on occupied land.[194]

What is more, Israel often breaks the rules of war, moving into the territory of war crimes. Mass killings in the Jenin refugee camp is one example which

---

[192] "Slugging it out". The Economist. March 16th-22nd, 2002. 46
[193] "Sharon;s war". The Economist. April 6th-12th, 2002. 11
[194] "It should have been so simple". The Economist. January 25th-31st, 2003. 23

shows that Israel is not good at observing humanitarian norms. Of course, the

Palestinian suicide bombings can not be claimed to be acts of war, either, because

they are directly targeting civillians. Still, when an army is reacting there is the

alternative of holding back, if the line between civillians and combatants is

blurred.[195] Israel, however has preferred the other alternative of over-reacting, by

"flattening people's homes, without waiting, as alleged in some cases, to warn the

residents."[196]

When it comes to negotiations on final status issues and any proposal for

peace, Israel has usually been the first one to come up with objections. Because the

Palestinians have often disrupted the peace process by terrorist attacks, especially

in the recent years, it seems at the outset that they were the obstacles to any

solution. Yet, when one examines the beginning of any peace process, it is obvious

that Israel did not hesitate to come up with pretexts to delay the talks.

Sharon's reaction, upon the United States' enthusiasm to immediately start

the implementation of the Mitchell Report in 2001, is a good example. The

Mitchell Commission recommended, after a ceasefire, a cooling-off period, during

which there would be a series of confidence building measures so that the sides

could quickly start negotiations, from where they had left. It was Ariel Sharon,

who didn't lose any time in opposing to the confidence building measures, which

included a freeze on settlement expansion and also rejected the implications of

final status talks. What is more, he has even come up with new procedures, as if

Israel was not one of the sides to the conflict, but rather an intermediary. With a

unilateral declaration, he demanded a week of calm on the Palestinian side, before

the cooling-off period could start. Meanwhile, however, Israel would have the

---

[195] "Israel's 'war crime'". The Economist. April 20th-26th, 2002. 10
[196] "Israel's 'war crime'". The Economist. April 20th-26th, 2002. 10

right to defend itself and it would decide whether the Palestinians had calmed

enough or not.[197] Again, in April, 2002, he promised in the Knesset to negotiate

with the Palestinians, only if there was a responsible leadership instead of Arafat

and also to seek a long-term interim agreement, not a final peace.[198]

Similarly, Sharon has totally rejected the land for peace alternative. In

september 2002, he stated that, " Oslo doesn't exist, Camp David doesn't exist,

neither does Taba."[199]

At this point,

> "international law is on the side of the Palestinians with respect to
> every major issue in contention: withdrawal from the territories occupied in
> 1967, right of return of Palestinian refugees expelled or departed in 1948,
> sovereignty over Jerusalem, status of the settlements, both throughout the
> territories and within the expanded jurisdiction of Jerusalem. This
> assessment of Palestinian rights is a matter of a consensus among members
> of the United Nations, including such expert bodies as the Human Rights
> Commission, and among international law experts who are not closely tied to
> Israeli or American policy perspectives."[200]

One of the major reasons why the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is still far

from any solution is that, "both sides have become deeply alienated from each other

and advance maximalist demands from the opposition"[201]. Even though there is talk

of the beginning of a new era, during the Post-Cold War years in the 1990s, as

Kemal Kirişçi argues, unlike "some Arab governments which had chosen to develop

some degree of cooperative relations with Israel, some had preferred to pursue a

'cold' peace, which had given way to a cold war"[202].

It seems that the military and political disaster the Arabs faced were a result

of their ignorance about Israel, which, grew more and more due to both the military,

---

[197] "Powell, the pusher and prodder". The Economist. November 24th-30th, 2001. 12
[198] " From here to Palestine". The Economist. April 13th-19th, 2002. 13
[199] "Crushing Palestine is no answer". The Economist. September 14th-20th, 2002. 11
[200] Falk, Richard. Foreword. In Marwan Bishara. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. London:
Zed Books. xvi.
[201] Kirişçi, Kemal. (2002, winter). Internationalism vs. Parochialism in the Era of Globalization:
Can the EU Help the Search for Security in the Middle East. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 120
[202] Kirişçi, Kemal. (2002, winter). 120

as well as the rhetorical hostility against the Israeli state. According to the same

argument,

> "The cult of the army which implied that there were only military solutions
> to political problems was so prevalent that it overshadowed the action that
> successful military action had to derive from a motivated, bravely led, and
> politically integrated and educated force, and this could only issue from a
> citizens' society. Such a desideratum was never the case in the Arab world,
> and was rarely practiced or articulated."[203]

While the Palestinian Authority and Yasser Arafat has stated their

willingness to renounce terror on many occasions in the past, suicide bombings

and violence against the Israelis is still popular among the Palestinians, among

whom the radical tactics of Hamas are becoming more favorable each day. It is

debatable, of course, how willing the PA is to stop terrorist attacks and how much

authority it has to establish order and rule among the majority of the Palestinians.

Even if there is sincere will and effort, their tactics seem to be futile, in my

opinion.

It is a common belief among many secular Palestinians that Hamas can be

better contained, if it turns into a political party, opposing Israel ideologically,

instead of fighting it militarily. As of 2004, Yasser Arafat also seems favorable to

accepting Hamas as a partner in the government. The general hope seems to be

that, if a group like Hamas, which is very popular in Gaza, is included within the

political structure, then the Palestinian Authority might have a better chance to

assert control and stop suicide bombings.[204] This is a rather naive way of thinking.

First of all, Hamas is not likely to halt its fight and terrorist acts against the

Israelis, once it becomes a political party and shares power. With such popularity,

---

[203] Said, Edward W. Afterword: the consequence of 1948. In Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim.
(Ed). (2001). The War for Palestine- Rewriting the History of 1948. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge
University Press. 210
[204] "Might Hamas ever negotiate?". The Economist. April 10th-16th, 2004. 37

it is likely that it might even increase its authority in mobilizing the masses to take radical measures against the Jews. After all Hamas is a group that views the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza as a " victory for armed struggle"[205]. So why give up violence, once it is believed to lead to fruitful results.

Arafat made a ceasefire call for instance on December 16th, 2001 and even Fatah claimed its committment; yet it was Hamas which destroyed the ceasefire in January 2002 by killing Israeli soldiers in a Gaza town, across the Israeli border.[206]

Still, however, it was Arafat who seemed, in the eyes of the international community, but especially the United States, to be unwilling to put an end to the terror. How much Arafat could play an active role to stop Palestinian armed violence is a matter of debate, because he has a serious dilemma. If he bows, especially to American demands, and arrests and punishes terrorists, he will have to confront the Palestinian factions. Considering that not only his people, but also his own Fatah movement is no longer very supportive of him and more cooperative with Hamas, this is a serious concern. With such a confrontation, he could lose his authority. On the other hand, if he does not try and show his sincere efforts to stop the intifada, he risks his existence at the hands of Ariel Sharon, and he cannot expect any backing from the United States.[207]

Yet the disappointment with him and the increasing belief that every terrorist act took place with his consent, if not with his active support, was influential in shaping the Israeli attitude, along with the American policies. Even though it is impossible for Arafat's police force to stop every suicide bombing, still when he "calls for 'a million martyrs'to liberate Jerusalem, the martyrs know what

---

[205] "Might Hamas ever negotiate?". The Economist. April 10th-16th, 2004. 37

[206] "Building a Palestinian state, in reverse". The Economist. January 19th-25th, 2002. 37

[207] "Hamas has the people's hearts". The Economist. December 1st-7th, 2001. 41

he means"[208]. He does not look like a leader keeping his promise to prevent attacks and stop violence. According to the argument, it was a result of this that the United States decided to give Sharon the free hand he needed to stop terror with intense military force.[209] However, if previous U.S. policies towards the issue are considered, it is well known that the United States has never been very objective with regard to the Palestinian question and that it has most often been on good terms with the Israeli state.

Another significant failure of Arafat and the Palestinian Authority is that they are not only approached with suspicion by the international community, but they have also lost the faith of their own people. This was mostly a result of " the leadership's incoherent 'strategy', which signals a ceasefire to the West but adopts a largely hands-off attitude to the militias."[210] According to Muhammed Dahlan, who resigned as the PA's chief of security in Gaza, in November 2001, there was no unity between the different Palestinian factions, and especially within the Fatah movement. In order to be successful, the Palestinian Authority had to agree with the factions on a common policy to follow. For instance when Arafat arrested members of Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front of the Liberation of Palestine, after Palestinian assasination of Israeli minister, Rahavam Zeevi, it only seemed to be a gesture to the international community, which continually pressurized him to crack down on his militias. The arrests neither stopped the intifada, nor were welcomed by the Palestinian factions, all of which, including the Fatah condemned these arrests as detrimental to national unity.[211]

---

[208] "Sharon's War". The Economist. April 6th-12th, 2002. 11
[209] "Too bloody to ignore". The Economist. March 16th-22nd, 2002. 13
[210] "Be coherent, Dahlan tells Arafat". The Economist. November 17th-23rd, 2001. 44
[211] "Be coherent, Dahlan tells Arafat". The Economist. November 17th-23rd, 2001. 44

According to another argument, Arafat's failure and weakness seems to stem from his efforts to "give a little bit of ground to everyone – the Americans, the Israelis, his own people"[212]. While trying to do this, he has obviously lost the trust of all three of them.[213] Naturally, loss of authority followed it.

For instance, there is much dissention in his Fatah movement. The al-Aqsa Brigades, the military wing of Fatah movement, which was first founded in the begining of the second intifada, as militias of self-defence, later became a highly autonomous military force. This was both a result of Israeli closures, that cut off each region from the other, as well as the Palestinian Authority, which collapsed as a central governing body. As it is, the brigades, take the responsibility of many bombings and terrorist attacks. With the feeling that they have started a new national movement, they often declare that they will not be bound by any of the decisions made by a leadership, including Arafat, which they see as defeated.[214]

The worst thing now is that Palestinians seem to be more united than ever, with even the moderate ones expressing their admiration of suicide bombers. The reason behind this seems to be the hope that most of them still have. However, this hope is in armed struggle and fighting back as hard as they can, because there is strong belief that this will be the last bloodshed, last war. If they can resist a little longer, Israelis will have to give up.[215] While this seems to be a rather naive hope, it also implies it is not very likely that Palestinians will give up terrorist measures.

Regardless of progress, "the Middle East is still living in a state of nature in which power is the defining factor for politics."[216] It is a unique geography, in that a regime like the Iraqi regime can endure defeat, while at the same time manage to

---

[212] "Adieu, Arafat?". The Economist. December 8th-14th, 2001. 11
[213] "Adieu, Arafat?". The Economist. December 8th-14th, 2001. 11
[214] "Who's to blame for the Tel Aviv bombs?". The Economist. January 11th-17th, 2003. 35
[215] "Mending walls, but not fences". The Economist. March 30th-April 5th, 2002. 34
[216] Aly, Abdel Monem Said. (2001, June-July). [Electronic version]. Perceptions. VI, 2, 5

stay in power. On the other hand, the peace process, for which global as well as regional powers have made investments, diminishes with losses to all the parties. There is probably no other region in the world, where there is so little progress and which "can remain in a state of prolonged conflict where original sins remain unforgiven."[217] Meanwhile, "the conflict has not only done dreadful things to the two peoples concerned- reducing aspiring Palestinians to penury and sturdy Israelis to paranoia- but its tendencies stretch far and wide, distracting and distorting both public opinion and government policies."[218]

As of 2002, reaching peace and ending the conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis seemed harder than ever. With the intifada and the failure of the Camp David Talks, even the peace camp in Israel was shattered. As opposed to peaceniks like Yossi Beilin, many Israelis on the left, also believe that a unilateral withdrawal from most of the Palestinian areas is unacceptable, since it would be a sign of weakness of the Israeli state.[219] Besides, many Israelis were now beginning to advocate harsher measures for security and seemed to be more and more supportive of Ariel Sharon each day, as terrorism in their cities continued and disillusion with Arafat grew.[220] Still, it is not possible to ignore it and let it become one of the most complex conflicts of our time. In the words of Richard Falk,

> " never has the quest for peace seemed more vital as both a moral and a political imperative. It is a moral imperative to emancipate both peoples from the daily ordeal of terrorist tactics, as well as to liberate the Palestinians as a captive people after decades of oppression and severe deprivation. It is a political imperative because the Israeli/Palestinian violence can at any point spiral out of control, engulfing the region in bitter turmoil and severe civil strife, if not regional war on a large scale that might persist for years."[221]

---

[217] Aly, Abdel Monem Said. (2001, June-July. 5
[218] "It should have been so simple". The Economist. January 25th-31st, 2003. 22
[219] "War outside, and within". The Economist. February 23rd-March 1st, 2002. 47
[220] "Flights of fancy". The Economist. February 23rd-March 1st, 2002. 16
[221] Falk, Richard. Foreword. In Marwan Bishara. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. London: Zed Books. xiii.

According to an argument, especially the second part of the 1990s is

characterized by confrontation and parochialism, against which internationalism

should be advocated by the international community. In order for this

transformation to take place, and in order for the emergence of a "pluralized public

opinion, in which it would be possible to find constituencies that would support

internationalism"[222], there should develop first and foremost a democratic culture. In

this context, as noted, the leverage of foreign powers is rather limited. It has been

seen that the major advances in the resolution of the conflict have come to fruition,

with the initiative of regional actors. Unless they are really willing and committed,

there is little that a power like the United States can do. "It can play a positive role

in compensating the parties for the risks taken, but it cannot impose a Pax

Americana."[223]

Until now the United States has not been very balanced in the sides of the

conflict. There is significant Israeli-bias, in the American government, especially in

Congress. Without doing something about this, the United States can not be,

unfortunately, of much help in bringing about stability in the Middle East region,

and it can definitely not succeed in getting support from the Islamic world, in its

fight against al-Qaida.[224]

Yet again, there does not seem to be much point in criticizing the United

States and repeating that it should also put pressure on Israel to change its tactics. It

is obvious that neither the critics in Europe nor those in the Arab world can change

the American mind, in which, "it is Yasser Arafat, who condemns suicide bombings

---

[222] Kirişçi, Kemal. (2002, winter). Internationalism vs. Parochialism in the Era of Globalization: Can the EU Help the Search for Security in the Middle East. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 129
[223] Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Realistic Assessment. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 7
[224] Falk, Richard. Foreword. In Marwan Bishara. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. London: Zed Books. xiii-xiv

out of one side of his mouth while extolling 'our glorious intifada' out of the other, who is totally incorrigible."[225] Until now, there has been little criticism of Israel by the United States, which preferred to put the onus, especially on Arafat, to do more than he had done so far[226], and George Bush's designation of Ariel Sharon as a man of peace[227], is probably the final point.

Europe, on the other hand, seems and hopefully will be, more balanced and willing to actively take part in the efforts to find a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and will provide a better alternative as an intermediary diplomatic force.[228] When the EU foreign ministers met in December 2001, they have also joined the United States, in putting the onus on Arafat, telling him that he had to dismantle terrorist networks of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and to make a call to end the intifada. Yet, they have also gone on to call on Israel to stop its assasinations and sieges of Palestinian towns and to freeze settlement activity.[229] Later at a meeting, in February 2002, for instance, "the European Union's foreign ministers sharply criticised Israel's ostracism of Mr. Arafat. They also ciriticised America's general tacit approval of the way that Israel is countering violence, an approval that, in practice, is granting enormous latitude to Israel's gradual reconquest of Palestinian controlled land."[230]

The European Union, especially can play a very critical role in fostering democracy in the authoritarian regimes of the Middle East. Indeed, it has already become more involved in its efforts to find a sound solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. What should further be done is to look for plans and

---

[225] "Gaza isn't the end of it". The Economist. April 24th-30th, 2004. 15
[226] "Sharon aims Israel's guns at Arafat". The Economist. December 8th-14th,2001. 39
[227] " Terrorism's body-blow at peace". The Economist. May 11th-17th, 2002. 41
[228] Falk, Richard. Foreword. In Marwan Bishara. (2002). xiii
[229] "Arafat's choice". The Economist. December 15th-21th, 2001. 35
[230] "Bombs and plans but no new faces". The Economist. February 16th-22nd, 2002. 40.

arrangements that would not only prevent the escalation of the crisis but which could efficiently resolve the key areas of dissent in the long-run. However, for the international community to have more influence and more say, there has to exist a leadership which will be willing and committed to bringing about a democratic culture.[231]

On the other hand, there needs to be agreement and a united line of thinking among the European powers. Without such unity, it is not possible to come up with a sound plan and until not it seemed to be a major setback. During the first months of 2002, Israeli tanks were entering Palestinian towns and bombing Gaza city to destroy PA buildings and there was incredible chaos within the Palestinian towns as the Palestinians protested outside the prisons, demanding the release of Hamas and Islamic Jihad prisoners. It was then that countries such as France came up with different plans. However, they were not effectively put into effect, because there was no agreement among the European powers in terms of what was proposed. While France demanded that Israel withdraw from areas controlled by PA and declare an early recognition of a Palestinian state, Britian was more in line with the United States, insisting that before parties returned to talks, there should first be a ceasefire.[232]

What is more, the resolution of the Arab-Israeli Conflict does not, unfortunately, guarantee peace in the region. In order to have complete stability in the region, all the problems, such as terrorism and the water issue, should be

---

[231] Kirişçi, Kemal. (2002, winter). Internationalism vs. Parochialism in the Era of Globalization: Can the EU Help the Search for Security in the Middle East. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 124-29
[232] "Bombs and plans but no new faces". The Economist. February 16th-22nd, 2002. 40

acknowledged and solved. That is why, there is need of a rather broader agenda for

peace and cooperation in the Middle East[233].

The basis of the problem lies in the fact that there still exists no trust and

belief in each other's committment to efforts for peace. Unfortunately, as time

passes, there is no improvement in this aspect; both sides are still highly suspicious

of each other and are looking for ulterior motives and plans behind what is seen and

told by their partner. This lack of trust can best be observed in the philosophy of

Israeli General Yaalon. The worst thing is he is not even considered a right-winger,

like his predecessors and he still believes that,

> "the Palestinians pose a cancerous threat to Israel's very existence: they are
> not... fighting to end the occupations but to liquidate Israel itself. Israel,
> therefore, must go for total victory. The Palestinians must be beaten in an
> unambiguous way that sears into their obstinate minds that they must never
> try anything against Israel again."[234]

It is normal that the Palestinians do not believe in the words and promises

of Israelis,the actions of whom proved just how the Palestinians were right in their

suspicions. According to a study by an Israeli human rights group, B'tslem, done

in late 2002,"The West Bank settler population doubled in size during the seven-

year Oslo peace process, and the settlements' territorial reach has now been

extended to cover 42% of the West Bank"[235].

During the recent years, Israel's basic argument has been that it is fighting

and it has to fight back in order to establish security for the Jews and in order to

stop terrorism. Yet, its actions have led us to doubt this aim, from time to time.

The fact that it has invaded villages, occupied Palestinian Authority towns,

blocked roads and left the Palestinians facing a revengeful, unaccountable

---

[233] Kohen, Sami. (1996, June-August). On the Future of the Middel East. [Electronic version].
Perceptions. I, 2, 2-3 of the article
[234] "Crushing Palestine is no answer". The Economist. September 14th-20th, 2002. 10
[235] "Swallowing all before them". The Economist. November 2nd-8th, 2002. 42

occupying army[236], is something that people have become used to. Yet, during the reconquest of the West Bank in 2002, Israeli forces have ransacked ancient places, destroyed the oldest mosques in the cities, invaded the Palestinian Authority ministries in Ramallah, destroying maps, stealing money from the banks. [237] Not only that, but soldiers have also gone into the Ministry of Education. "They took the hard drive from every computer and blasted open a safe, robbing it of around $10,000. The discs contain information on 650,000 teachers and student in 155 West Bank schools. Some of the data is irreplaceable."[238] As it is, it is hard to legitimize these acts with the pretext of building security. It looks more like a destruction, an erasing of history, so that no state can be established in the future.

Under such a way of thinking, there is hardly any chance for compromise, without which a solution is impossible. This naturally diminishes the hope in people, and leads them to turn to radical measures and ultimately to terrorism.

As things stand now, it is agreed by all parties, even Ariel Sharon that a Palestinian state has to come into existence at the end. Yet there are still questions that remain unanswered. "What should the borders of the new state be? What happens to the Jewish settlements that have been set up in the land the state must occupy? How can Jerusalem be shared as a joint capital? And what is the future of the Palestinian refugees?"[239] Besides in the last three years, Israel has mostly waged its war against Arafat and his Palestinian Authority. Believing that it was Arafat and his presidential guard were the main supporters of terrorist acts, Israel's major focus has been on eliminating Arafat, at least, making him lose his credibility, so that it is acceptable by the United States as well. This, however,

---

[236] "Be coherent, Dahlan tells Arafat". The Economist. November 17th-23rd, 2001. 44
[237] "After the assault". The Economist. April 27th-May 3rd, 2002. 41
[238] "After the assault". The Economist. April 27th-May 3rd, 2002. 41
[239] "After the war is over". The Economist. April 13th-19th, 2002. 25

seems to bring no better results. First of all, Arafat has already lost control, while radical groups such as Hamas are increasing their popularity. Secondly, even if Arafat was totally eliminated out of the picture, his successors would most probably react more radically towards Israel's policies, no matter how democratic they can be, or how cohesive programmes they can come up with.[240]

The argument that time has proven that it is really difficult for the sides to develop mutual trust seems to be very true. Confidence building measures have not worked, at all. There needs to be an immediate leap to the final stage, where final status issues are negotiated. Besides, there definitely needs to be international presence, not as monitors, but as an armed force, to establish security in areas under its control. However, I'm not very comfortable with the idea that since the sides cannot agree on secure borders, the world powers- the United States, the United Nations, the European Union and Russia- should form the map and design the borders, for them.[241]

It would be reasonable to say that, "The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) has been pushed bloodily from pillar to post, more by the Arabs than by Israel"[242]. With a good examination of the past, it is easy to see that Arab countries have not liked and whole-heartedly supported the Palestinians, even though they have championed their cause. Other than Syria and Jordan, all the other Arab countries presented excuses not to accept the Palestinian refugees in 1948-49. It is a fair argument that they do not accept them as permanent citizens in their countries, but rather treat them as possible trouble makers. This was, in a way, proved during the second Gulf Crisis, when Iraq invaded Kuwait. When Arafat sided with Saddam, the Gulf states lost no time in expelling their Palestinian workers en masse. The

[240] "Adieu, Arafat?". The Economist. December 8th-14th, 2001. 11
[241] " From here to Palestine". The Economist. April 13th-19th, 2002. 13
[242] "It should have been so simple". The Economist. January 25th-31st, 2003. 24

reason, why they do not like them, but still support their cause is simple. The

Palestinian cause reminds them of their own defeat and humiliation by Israel, in the

past. Still, they support the cause because the establishment of a Palestinian state is

the only way, they can get rid of this memory. Besides, as long as Israel does not

withdraw from the places it occupied, there increases dissent in the Arab world.

More and more each day, radical Islamists and nationalists use this as a way to

question their regimes and governments, accusing them of not being strong enough

to liberate even a small part of Palestine.[243]

Considering all the experience, and all efforts for peace and negotiations,

one sees that there is obvious difference between the Palestinians and the Israelis

and a comparison of leaders reflects this difference in the best way. "Mr.Arafat blew

his chances at the Camp David talks, but Mr Sharon would have avoided starting

them"[244]. As it is, it is a pity that the solution of the conflict depends on the

agreement between these two characters. "Mr Sharon is a disaster because he does

not accept the central land-for-peace equation; Mr Arafat because he has lost control

and drifts with the tide of events"[245]. In sum, foreign policy decisions have been

dominated by leaders' personal ambitions, enmities, inflexibilities, suspicions.

To repeat Edward Said's comment on the Camp David peace process,

besides the regulations with regard to such issues like territory, sovereignty,

Jerusalem and the refugees, the real and most important issue is whether the

Palestinians and Israelis will be able to put an end to this clash between them and

whether they will be able to declare that they are putting the past behind them, as

---

[243] "It should have been so simple". The Economist. January 25th-31st, 2003. 23-4
[244] "Killing Arafat is wrong". The Economist. September 20th-26th, 2003. 16
[245] "It should have been so simple". The Economist. January 25th-31st, 2003. 24

trivial when today and the future is the case.[246] It is this very comment that makes me rather pessimistic about the turn of events. As time passes, it seems that no matter how much effort is put on the table, how close the sides get to agreement, there will always be something that will disrupt the resolution of the conflict. With each passing day, the suspicion and hatred among the Israeli people and the Palestinians grows so much that, one cannot help but feel that even if the final status issues are resolved, there will not be peace between the sides. At this point, considering the amount of revenge people from both sides are filled with, it looks as though no agreement will ever satisfy the sides to come to terms with each other.

---

[246] Said, Edward. (2002). Yeni Binyilda Filistin Sorunu. (The Palestinian Question in the New Thousand Years). Istanbul: Aram Yayincilik. 25

Chapter III: Turkish Foreign Policy Towards the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

1. Cold War Period: Attitude and Decisions with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

There have been basic traditions which have played a significant role in constituting the pillars of Turkish foreign policy. While they have shown themselves more strongly at certain periods in time, still their presence has always been felt in the case of Turkey's foreign policies and decisions. These are principles such as neutrality, non-interference in regional or global conflicts and the following of balanced politics with regard to her relations with other countries.

Since the establishment of the Republic, Turkey's main goal has been to consolidate the nation, achieve socio-economic development while at the same time trying to gain acceptance in the West and be seen as a part of Europe. It is known that for most of the actors in the Turkish foreign policy making process, the principle, which Ataturk had declared in 1923, has always been a dominant theme. Accordingly, it was believed that, "The West has always been prejudiced against the Turks... but we Turks have always and consistently moved towards the West... In order to be a civilised nation, there is no alternative."[247]

Regardless of these aspirations, though, Turkey, in general, has been in an effort to avoid foreign involvements and has acted real carefully not to be seen as pan-Turkic or expansionist.[248] "Foreign adventures, spheres of influence, alliance

---

[247] Hale, William. (1992, october). Turkey, The Middle East and the Gulf Crisis. [Electronic Version]. International Affairs. 68, 4, 680
[248] Rubin, Barry. A transformed international role. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 1-2

systems, and ambitious international interests were all considered foolish, risky and even suicidal."[249]

An exception to this neutrality may be the voting at the United Nations during the Partition plan for Palestine. When the UN General Assembly had met to vote on the partition plan, Turkey sided not with the United States and Soviet Union, but rather with the Arab states and rejected the partition of Palestine. This was mostly because of its support for the principle of self-determination, considering that Turkey itself had once fought against occupying forces and against such a treaty as Sevres. If one considers that the Arabs were the majority in mandate Palestine in 1947, constituting almost 60 percent of the whole population, self-determination would naturally imply a unified, Arab-dominated Palestine. Instead, however, there emerged the Israeli state.[250]

According to an argument, the voting process for the UN Partition Plan was a major turning point for Turkey's Middle East policy. First of all, Turkey did not have very close and deep relationships in the region until that time, since it was mostly concerned with her security in the new conjucture, which had emerged after the end of World War II. However, from that point onwards, it became clear that Turkey would be in much closer interaction with the region. Secondly, for the first time in years, Turkey took a side during the voting session at the UN, leaving aside its traditional policy of avoiding interference in regional conflicts.[251]

> "In the post-Second World War era, Turkey's political rulers decided to change the course of Turkish foreign policy from neutrality to military and economic alliance with the Western world on the pretext of Stalin's

---

[249] Rubin, Barry. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). 1
[250] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 74-75
[251] Özmen, Süleyman. (2002). Ortadoğu'da Etnik, Dini Çatışmalar ve İsrail. Istanbul: IQ Kültürsanat Yayıncılık. 161

territorial ambitions over parts of Turkish territory as contained in the Soviet memorandum of 1946."[252]

It should also be noted that neutrality is regarded as the first characteristic of newly formed states. However, western orientation has probably been the most fundamental aspect of Turkish foreign policy, which was not only maintained but reinforced after the Second World War, during which Turkey acquired the role of a devoted ally of the West.[253] It is argued that, Turkey's new strategy found support from majority of the public and all the political parties, as it was concerned with the country's security and acceptance into the civilized Western world.[254]

However, Turkey's joining Nato and becoming a partisan in the Cold War, was a part of the long-term plan to join the European Union and the West, besides being an immediate reaction to the Soviet threat. These aspirations for a Western-type modernization and becoming a part of Europe, was not a novelty, but a continuation of Atatürk's program of socio-economic development. That is why, such developments in the course of Turkish foreign policy making had to be accepted and justified as exceptions to that traditional Turkish strategy.[255]

It is obvious that despite prejudice of the Arabs and common stereotypes, such as the "untrustworthy Arab and the uncivilized, backward Arab states governed by the Sheriat law"[256], that were dominant in the minds of the Turkish people, still the "Turkish Republic maintained good relations with all the Arab states in

[252] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies, 37, (1), 72
[253] Stone, Leonard A. (2001, June-July). Turkish Foreign Policy: Four Pillars of Tradition. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. VI, (2), 1 of the article
[254] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). 73
[255] Rubin, Barry. A transformed international role. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 3
[256] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 92

accordance with the 'peace at home, peace abroad' principle of Atatürk's foreign policy."[257]

It should also be noted that in the meantime, Turkey acted completely neutral in the war that broke out in 1948. It "prevented arms shipments and travel to the area of conflict by some young Turkish Muslims who wanted to help the Palestinians and a few young Turkish Jews who volunteered to help the Israelis."[258] At the same time, Turkey served with the United States and France in the Palestine Conciliation Commission, found by the United Nations in 1948, to help the Israelis and Arab states negotiate a settlement of the questions between them. In this way, it also had limited, but a direct experience in playing the role of a mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict.[259] It showed its neutrality also by means of always insisting that a solution should be found through negotiations and discussions.[260]

Turkey has also been careful always to pursue balanced politics in its bilateral relations. Even though there were times of crises when these relations were not that pleasing, Turkey still tried to preserve its relations with a country no matter what. A good example to this would be its relations with Israel, right after the Suez Canal Crisis.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the Turkish minister plenipotentiary to Tel Aviv was withdrawn, relations were downgraded to legation level and Israel was declared to be a threat to the peace and stability of the region. However, it is also argued that on the same day of the withdrawal, 20 November, 1956, the Turkish Ambassador to Tel Aviv, Istinyeli made a visit to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, declaring that Ankara's decision was just tactic politics and that it did not

---

[257] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 92
[258] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). Turkey's Potential Contribution to Arab-Israeli Peace". Turkish Review of Middle East Studies, (7), 181
[259] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). 181-2
[260] Ozcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 160

imply an anti-Israeli attitude.[261] Similar to this, when the Baghdad Pact was established, the Democrat Party Government, in order to ease Israel's concerns, assured the Israeli government that the Pact would not affect bilateral relations.[262]

Even after the 1967 War, when Turkey voted for the UN Resolution 242, which was supportive of the Palestinian cause and demanded that Israel withdraw from the territories it had occupied, it was careful in its rhetoric against Israel and abstained from condemning the Jewish state as the aggressor.[263]

It became clear in the early 1980s, that Turkey had no intention of changing its foreign policy principles and that it was still firmly tied with the West, as long as it didn't lose its impartiality. Just as it had previously done, during the wars of 1967 and 1973, Turkey remained neutral in the Lebanese war. It allowed for the use of the Incirlik base by American forces, but also made it clear that it could only be used for humanitarian reasons.[264]

Turkey, consistently showed efforts not to disturb its relations with any country. The message that it wanted to give was that Turkey would never make a decision in favor of one country, or one side of the conflict, that would seriously damage its relations with another country or the other side/s of the conflict. Kenan Evren, for instance, took care to respond to the American concerns. By calling upon the ICO members to readmit Egypt to membership, Evren was in a way showing U.S.' fears that

---

[261] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 571

[262] Ozcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 161

[263] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 95

[264] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 124

Turkey would encourage Arab extremism were invalid and that Turkey was aligning with the more moderate elements of the Arab world.[265]

Similarly, Turgut Özal was careful not to alienate Israel during the 1980s, when Turkey had good relations with the Arab countries. He made it clear to the Arabs that Turkey had no intention of severing its relations with Israel. Just about a month before Kenan Evren's participation in the ICO Summit in 1984, Özal said in an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Anba, that Turkey would maintain relations with Israel, which would neither improve nor deteriorate; that Turkey had close relations with the United States, where there was a strong Jewish lobby. Besides, as Özal argued, it was in a way good for the Islamic world that an Islamic country, such as Turkey, had an open window to the Western world.[266]

During the 1980s, "in line with its policy of praising all sides in order to alienate none"[267], Turkey declared its support of both the Shamir Plan of May 1989, and Mubarak Plan, mostly to keep the peace process going, one way or the other.[268] This way, Turkey was signalling that it was in full support of any peace effort, being equally favorable to proposals by both the Israeli, as well as the Arab side.

It is seen that Turkey's long term goal of being a strong ally of the United States has been effective, and even dominant during specific periods, in Turkey's foreign policy decisions, inluding those with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The first example to prove this would be Turkey's attitude towards the conflict in the late 1940s. It is stated that Turkish support for the Arabs continued if

---

[265] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). Turkey's Potential Contribution to Arab-Israeli Peace. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7, 184
[266] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). 185
[267] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 81
[268] Robins, Philip. (1991). 82

it was not contrary to her interests with the Western countries.[269] For instance, when

it voted, for the first time with the West in the United Nations in March 1948, for

the creation of a reconciliation commission on Palestine, its relations with the Arab

states were soured, because the act was clearly a sign of Turkey's strong alliance

with the West, especially the United States.[270] Due to its determination to become a

trusted partner of the West, Turkey was enticed into recognizing Israel in March

1949. This was an obvious shift in policy, for which Turkey had recourse to the

altered circumstances as a consequence of the military success of Israel during the

1948 Arab-Israeli war.[271] The recognition was first formalized with Turkey's

sending a chargé d'affaires to Tel Aviv, in 1949, after the Arab-Israeli ceasefires.

After this de facto recgonition, Turkey's elevation of her emmisary to the level of

minister plenipotentiary in 1950 was considered as a de jure recognition. Later in

1952, the two countries exchanged ambassadors.[272]

Previously the policies of Turkish authorities were affected by those perceptions

and attitude of the Turkish elite. It is argued that the "ruling Turkish elites had always

assumed a sense of superiority in relations with the Jews... The Jews in Turkey were

unambiguously regarded by the Turks as being timid, passive and compliant."[273]

However, as a counterargument, it should also be noted that the Turkish

Representative to the Commission on Palestine, Huseyin Cahit Caglayangil, had

presented Ismet Inonu with a report in March 1949, during his visit to Israel. In that

---

[269] Soysal, Ismail. (1994/95, Annual). The Middle East Peace Process and Turkey. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies, (8), 69

[270] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 92

[271] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 75

[272] Soysal, Ismail. (1994/54, Annual). 69

[273] Robins, Philip. (1991). 75

report, he had emphasized that Israel's being a communist country hardly seemed possible and he insisted that Turkey immediately recongize Israel.[274]

Another example would be the Suez Crisis, one of the most critical events in the Middle East in the first half of the 1950s. As early as 1951, to the disappointment of the Arab States, especially Egypt, Turkey sided with the West in protest against Egypt's prevention of the passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal. Though Turkey's decision was prudent under international law, still this was a real blow to her relations with the Arab world. While Adnan Menderes, during a visit to Washington, declared that it was time for the Arabs to recognize the Israeli state, President Nasser of Egypt, was not late in answering him by saying that Turkey was disliked in the Arab world.[275]

As can be seen, Turkey's foreign policy decisions during the 1950s went through changes in line with the policies of Western, particularly American interests in and attitude towards the Middle East. Turkish-Israeli relations especially were, to a great extent, shaped by Turkey's relations with the West. According to one argument, though the 1962 Cuba crisis and the 1965 United Nations abandonment led to concern with regard to Turkey's relations with the West, it took this quite some time to affect Israeli-Turkish relations.[276] A natural consequence of this was a rather ambiguous approach towards both sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict. As, "a Turkish commentator later observed, 'the indecisiveness of Turkish diplomacy in this regard [Arab-Israeli conflict] has aggravated Arab disenchantment.'"[277]

Especially during the 1980s, Turkey's policy behaviour towards the Israelis and the Palestinians was mostly constituted in line with the Western attitude towards

---

[274] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 160. footnote 3.
[275] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 76
[276] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 572
[277] Robins, Philip. (1991). 77

Turkey. "Turkey's economic, political and trans-societal relations with the Middle

East were paralleled by an increase in military, political and economic relations with

the US."[278] The major determinant leading to this was Turkey's close cooperation

with the United States in the 1980s, due to the increasing role Turkey had in the

Middle East. The reasons as to why Turkey became so important in the region are

several. The Iran-Iraq war, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the revolution in

Iran, which brought a revisionist regime, were the main developments in the

beginning of this era.[279]

---

[278] Aras, Bülent. (1998). <u>Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey</u>. New York: Nova Science
Publishers. 123
[279] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 123

Cyprus was probably the major internal incident that has become an effective determinant in Turkey's foreign policy decisions. It was significant, both in terms of the Turkish attitude towards Israel and the Palestinians, and also in terms of its decisions with regard to the specific crises in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It was for instance, one of the considerations in Turkey's recognition of Israel. It was not only for the American aid that Turkey sought the support of the Jewish lobby in the United States. It was also to gain supporters in the Cyprus issue.[280]

Similarly, a key reason why Ankara had decided to recognize an independent Palestinian state, was its aspiration to strengthen the role of Fatah, the leader of which was Arafat, as opposed to those high-level Palestinians, who were Orthodox and who sympathized with the Greeks.[281] Previously, the PLO had been supportive of the Greek Cypriot position that Turkish troops had no right to be on Cyprus. Besides it had not upheld the resolutions of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers that was held in Istanbul in May 1976, and thus has proven that they were not supporting the Turkish side. This was a major reason why PLO had been able to open an office in Ankara, only in 1979, though Turkey had granted a verbal recognition already in 1975.[282]

Later on, the incident in 1964, was a major blow for Turkey. "The Cyprus crisis challenged the basic assumptions upon which Turkish defence foreign policy had been founded."[283] Turkey was most disappointed upon not receiving the support of the United States when it was considering intervention in Cyprus. The Johnson

---

[280] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 160
[281] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 578
[282] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 122
[283] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 78

Letter was a clear sign that, despite Turkey's complete loyalty to Washington, the friendship of the United States had major limitations and a committment to the Western camp was not necessarily a guarantee to secure Turkey's national interests.[284]

By abstaining from the voting of the UN General Assembly's decision on 18 December, 1965, Syria, Egypt and Lebanon had given indirect support to the Turkish cause. The fact that direct support had also come from Muslim countries led to the reevaluation of Turkey's foreign policy principles by the Turkish General Assembly. During the debates at the Assembly, Turkish foreign policy was harshly criticized and the need to improve relations with the Third World and Muslim countries was especially emphasized.[285]

In March 1965, in an article published in the Bulletin of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a senior official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hamit Batu, outlined the basic principles Turkey would pursue in her foreign policy from that time on.[286] It was generally argued in the article that Turkish policy makers had carefully examined the mistakes and failures of foreign affairs decisions during Menderes' time and they had taken these lessons into consideration while instituting a new foreign policy. It was pointed out that, despite the decrease in the priority of the Soviet threat, Turkey was not completely ruling out the communist ideology as a threat. Besides, it would be as committed to an alliance with the West as the previous government had been. The most crucial argument, was probably with regard to Turkey's plans for the Middle East region. It was declared that according

---

[284] Robins, Philip. (1991). 78.
[285] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 572
[286] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 162.

to Turkey's new strategy Turkey could contribute to the peace of the region, only by avoiding interference in the relations between the Arabs and the West and also by making sure that its pro-Western alliance did not harm its good relations with the Arab states.[287] What was basically proposed was that Turkey give up its attempt to play the leader of the Middle East, as it had done in the 1950s.[288]

"The new policy was not meant to result in a shift toward the Arabs at the expense of Turkey's connections with the West. It was rather intended to achieve the best of both worlds."[289] It can be said that Turkish foreign policy became a lot more cautious during the 1960s. The makers of policy were clearly in an effort to stay neutral in the Arab-Israeli conflict, by refraining from any participation in pacts or by openly siding with either side. This policy became very clear upon the break up of war in 1967. The Demirel Government accepted neither the use of bases in Turkey, for aiding Israel, nor the military build-up at the border with Syria. After the war, in both official declarations, as well as in its attitude in international forums, Turkey made it clear that it was strictly critical of Israel's occupation of lands by force. This, however, should not be regarded as a one-sided policy, by Turkey, in favor of the Arabs. In reality, Turkey was endorsing its original, traditional foreign policy principle and being equally distant to the sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict. As a proof to this, one can say that Turkey never questioned Israel's right of existance, and did not support the attitude, which declared Israel as the agressor. Moreover, it rejected the demands of the ICO Summit in Rabat, in 1969, that relations with Israel be completely suspended.[290]

---

[287] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 95
[288] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları 162.
[289] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). 95
[290] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). 163

Turkish foreign policy decisions were also deeply affected by key players, in this context, leaders in Turkish political life. Due to the influence of prominent figures such as Adnan Menderes and Turgut Ozal in the ruling party, the decisions made in foreign affairs came to reflect the unique ambitions and goals of these leaders.

For instance, the conservative Democrat Party's association with the United States and Britain reached such an extent that, the party almost became a mouthpiece of Western interests in the Middle East.[291]

Particularly two significant developments during the 1950s, deeply and adversely affected Turkey's relations with Israel. First of all, with a rather different policy, the Menderes Government, unlike its predecessors, hoped to bring together the Arab states in a security framework, in an effort to bind them into a pro-Western and anti-communist alliance. For the Democrats, the threat from the Soviet Union was very real and they perceived it as a duty for Turkey, which was "the most important factor in the preservation of peace in the Near and Middle East, a bridge, both culturally and geographically, between the East and the West."[292] This policy of a stronger confrontation of communism and the establishment of a northern tier, was indeed advocated by the U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. Adnan Menderes, enthusiastic about this 'new look' foreign policy review by Dulles, hoped to realize this policy with the Baghdad Pact of 1955. It was this development, particularly the inclusion of Iraq in the alliance, that led Turkey to make several compromises at the expense of Israel. At that point, it was of great significance that Turkey rejected to issue a declaration in support for Israel's sovereignty and terriotorial integrity. Moreover, with an addendum to the Pact, Turkey made it clear

---

[291] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 73
[292] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies, 1993, 25, 92

that those articles, related to military assistance at times of crisis, would only be valid in the context of the problem of Palestine.[293]

Besides other factors, then Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's personal goals and strategies had also been influential in the Turkish attitude towards the Palestinians, in the 1970s. "The Question of Palestine was an important tool for the mobilization of support from the Arabs... and the newly emerging 'New Security Concept' of Prime Minister Ecevit aimed to strengthen the relations with the countries in the region"[294]. It was also a result of this consideration that the PLO was permitted to open an office in Ankara and the head of the office was recognized with the rank of charge d'affaires. This way, Ecevit was showing how friendly Turkey was towards the Arabs.[295]

No doubt, Turgut Ozal was another key figure, whose personality was strongly felt in Turkey's foreign policy decisions. When his Motherland Party, which had a rather Islamic outlook, came to power in 1983, "the skepticism of certain circles in the West concerning Turkey's Western orientation increased."[296] However, Özal wanted to combine the Turkish-Islamic synthesis with modernity. That is why, it could be quite wrong to think that his eagerness to reconcile Islamic values and nationalism was in any way in opposition with aspiring for Western ideals or a Western-oriented foreign policy. "He advocated the economic and political integration of Muslim countries into the world system, even if it was patently dominated by the USA and its allies."[297] He actually believed that the

---

[293] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 76-7
[294] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 122
[295] Aras, Bulent. (1989). 122
[296] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 102
[297] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 75

connection with Islam would be beneficial as a foreign policy tool, for making Turkey a strong power in the region."[298]

He sought to enhance Turkey's role in the Middle East, believing that this would "gain the advantage of a better bargain with the West, particularly with the European Economic Community."[299] It was confirmed in a way that Özal was careful not to change Turkey's identification as a part of both the Western and the Islamic world, when his government became the first Turkish government to apply for full membership to the EEC.[300] According to the argument, the 1980s marked the beginning of Turkey's increased role and involvement in the international Islamic politics. President Kenan Evren was the first Turkish head of state to participate in an Islamic Conference, when he attended the ICO Summit in Casablanca in 1984. Upon being elected the President of the Islamic Standing Committee on Economic and Commercial Cooperation, he declared his content about Turkey's growing importance and prestige in the Islamic Conference Organization. Regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict, Evren was highly supportive of the Arab cause, in his declarations. According to him, the Arab states had to act in unity, to be able to defend the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and to be capable of defying the Israeli fait-accomplis with a sound and realistic counter strategy. [301]

It was Özal's strong belief that "Turkey would have to increase its involvement in regional politics and assume the role of peacemaker ... and it would

---

[298] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). 76
[299] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). Turkey's Potential Contribution to Arab-Israeli Peace. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7, 185
[300] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 102
[301] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). 184

have to do more than it had to the preservation of peace in the region."[302] Considering that he was supportive of the PLO, while at the same time maintaining ties with Israel, Özal's policy seems quite consistent with those of his predecessors. Even though he was willing to take an active peace role in the region, he was still conscious of Turkey's 'bridge' role between the Middle East and the West and, thus he never tried to make Turkey a mediator.[303]

In Turkey's recognition of the PLO as the only representative of the Palestinians, what was also effective was Turgut Özal's broader goals. He was determined to see Turkey as a regional power in the Middle East and regarded this recognition as an important opportunity for the realization of this wish.

Also noteworthy is that economics was at the core of international relations for Turgut Özal. One of the main reasons why he was interested in the Middle East was that he hoped for an economic establishment, based on free trade and cooperation between the countries of the region. At the same time, he strongly believed that water could be a source of peace in the region. With his proposal to distribute Turkish waters, through pipelines to the Gulf region, including Israel and Syria, he wished to contribute immensely to the creation of a peace environment in the Middle East. This proposal, however, was never realized, because it was highly costly and also since the Arab countries did not want to open Turkey's way in gaining such political weight in the region.[304] It is suggested that in actuality, most of Özal's plans for the Middle East did not materialize for several reasons. First of all, the enmities in the region, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict, were too strong

---

[302] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 103
[303] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). 103.
[304] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 76

and deep to be solved by economic collaboration. Secondly, the Middle Eastern countries were highly dependent on both the United States and the EEC countries to be able to form close economic links among themselves.[305]

On the other hand, according to Turgut Özal, Turkey's national interests not only in the Caucasus and Central Asia, but also in the Middle East, coincided with those of the United States. Besides, he believed that the U.S. could be really destructive against its enemies. That is why, it can be argued that, "Ozal conducted his policies on the basis of a pro-American bias. He was convinced that Turkey did not possess the necessary means and resources to pursue an independent strategy which could potentially harm U.S. interests".[306]

Beside the Cyprus issue, Turkey's economic concerns and either short-term or long-term economic aims are probably the most important internal factor, shaping Turkey's reaction to developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As early as in the late 1940s, economics had started to be an important consideration in Turkey's decision making process. It is known that one of the rationales behind the recognition of Israel was Turkey's concerns about the highly-influential Jewish community in the United States. Turkey was careful not to antagonize the American Jews, so that it could guarantee the American aid, to be received through the Marshall Plan.[307]

It was probably in the 1970s that economics became one of the highest priority concerns of Turkish policy makers, due to the oil crisis, following the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

---

[305] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 87, footnote no: 23
[306] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). 77
[307] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies, 25, 92

"As the founding members of the OPEC such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait replaced their pacifist policies to act against Israel and her supporters in October 1973, the price of oil increased from $5.12 to $ 11.65 per barrel almost instantly."[308]

Even though Turkey was lucky in that it was exempted from the oil embargo, as a result of her balanced policy in the 1973 war, still the crisis had indirect effects, which led to an increase in Turkey's economic burden.[309] In addition to the rise in oil prices, the need to benefit from the job opportunities in the rich Arab states, were serious concerns that led the Turkish governments to support and in return seek the support of the Arab states. It is maintained that the deteriorating economic conditions in Ankara was a key factor behind rapprochment with the Arabs. "In this respect, development of economic relations is very important in this period. The situation forced Turkey to act in the midst of opposing lines. Arabs vis-a-vis Israel and Secularism vis-a-vis Islamic principles."[310]

The fact that 1970s is mentioned as the period, when Turkey was the closest to the Palestinians[311] is mostly regarded by many as a shift in Turkish foreign policy, as a result of various, both domestic as well as external developments. According to the argument, the National Salvation Party, which was a partner in the coalition governments formed after 1973, had a limited role in the rapproachment between Turkey and the Islamic world.[312] It was obvious that, economic concerns were the real pushing factor behind this policy.

According to the supporters of this argument, what was considered to be a continuation of this policy showed itself clearly in the beginning of the 1980s. As a

---

[308] Kalaycıoğlu, Sema. (2000/01 Annual). Sources of Change in the Middle East: Accomplishments and Failures. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 62
[309] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 120
[310] Aras, Bülent. (1998). 122
[311] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 20
[312] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 97

protest at Israel's annexation of Jerusalem and its declaration making it the immutable capital of Israel in 1980[313], the Turkish Foreign Ministry made an announcement, saying that

> "Turkey has decided to limit its relations with Israel and to mutually reduce the level of representation... because Israel would not retreat from its intransigent policy toward the Middle East conflict and the fait accompli that it wishes to create in connection with the legal status of Jerusalem."[314]

Even though many states, including the United States were critical of Israel's Jerusalem law, which even the United Nations declared to be invalid, Ankara's decision was considered too excessive by the United States. It is argued that Washington was concerned about Turkey's action, fearing it could disturb the spirit of the Camp David Accords and that it would only benefit those extremist countries in the region. Turkey, however, was firm in its decision and withdrew all its diplomatic personell, leaving only a second secretary, who would have the title of temporary chargé d'affaires in Tel Aviv.[315]

It was said in the Western press that this decision was a natural outcome of Turkey's growing economic dependence on the Arab world, and in a way this was a political concession at the expense of Turkey's ties with the West. It was also asserted that the, "Saudi assistance of +250 million was delivered to Turkey immediately after Turkey's downgrading of diplomatic relations with Israel."[316] According to a similar argument, the promised cheque of $75 million, was given to Turkey on the very same day that Ankara downgraded its relations with Israel.[317]

---

[313] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 23
[314] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). Turkey's Potential Contribution to Arab-Israeli Peace". Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7, 183
[315] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). 183
[316] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 124
[317] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 576

Yet, despite the belief that the financial aid and oil from Saudi Arabia, which serve

as important economic considerations, it would not be correct to explain the

reasoning behind Turkey's December 1980 decision, solely by financial concerns.

First of all the status of Jerusalem is an inseparable part of the Palestinian problem

and also a really sensitive issue. It is most probable that Turkey, already having

been supporting the Arab cause since the 1960s, felt the need to show similar

support for the Arabs as a member of the Islamic Conference. What is more, if the

decision had been made purely out of economic reasons and had been political

concession, then Turkey would most probably break all its diplomatic relations with

Israel, according to the demands of the Arab states.[318]

It is interesting, however, that although Turkey was highly favourable

towards the Palestinians, and particularly towards their cause in this conflict, its

relations with the PLO were not that close until late in the 1970s. There was no PLO

office in Turkey until 1979, even though Turkey had announced its permission, as

early as 1976, at the Seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in Istanbul.[319]

This delay, is explained by several reasons, among which Turkish

perceptions of the Palestinian Liberation Organization was one of the most

ifluential. The Turkish government was suspicious of the PLO, believing that it

aided the terrorist and secessionist groups, such as the Kurds. Indeed, it had every

reason to think so, since the government had learnt that the Turkish militants were

receiving training in PLO camps and that the PLO had been involved in various

terrorist acts. Also highly noteworthy was that the PLO had not been on Turkey's

side with regard to a very sensitive issue: Cyprus. It had always defended the Greek

---

[318] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 100-1
[319] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). 98

Cypriots' position, claiming that Turkish troops had no right to be on Cyprus and that they should immediately be withdrawn.[320]

It was finally on 5 October 1979 that, upon Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit's invitation, Yasser Arafat came to Turkey and the PLO opened its office in Ankara. Even though it is hard to change people's perceptions, completely, in one go, the Egyptian Embassy Affair had been influential in Turkey's decision to let the PLO open an office in Turkey. Due to its cooperation with Turkey, and its help, the Egyptian Embassy in Ankara had been rescued from four militants who were protesting the peace deal between Israel and Egypt, also demanding that Turkey cuts all ties with Egypt. [321]

The fact that Turkey abstained from voting on UN Resolution ES 9/1, which condemned Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights and declared that Israel wasn't a peace loving state.[322], was in a way a sign that old perceptions of and doubt about the Palestinians still existed. The PLO's link with terrorist organizations was influential in Turkey's abstention. Turkish authorities were already conscious of Kurdish and Armenian terrorists' being trained in the PLO camps. In addition, Israel was helpful, by providing Turkey with information about the activities of these groups and by destroying the camp and killing the leader of the ASALA.[323]

External factors, particularly the developments and politics at the international arena were also a major influence on Turkey, seriously affecting the way policy makers perceived their environment and conducted strategies and objectives.

---

[320] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 98
[321] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 165
[322] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). 102
[323] Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 125

In this context, the end of the Second World War was the beginning of a long

era in which Turkish foreign policy decisions were made in consideration of the Soviet

threat .[324] In a bipolar world, where the United States and the Soviet Union were the key

powers, around whom politics revolved, Turkey, with its yearning for westernization,

was keenly on the side of the United States. Thus the most significant concern for those

who planned Turkey's strategies and made decisions, was communist ideology and

Soviet expansionism.

Going back in time, to the aftermath of the Second World War, the change in

Turkey's attitude towards Israel, and the growing importance attached to the

relations with the Jewish State during the 1950s, can be explained by Israel's

position during the Korean War. When the State of Israel was first established there

were quite a number of left-oriented parties in Israeli politics, which was a real

concern for Turkey. It had serious doubts about the future political orientation of

Israel. However, when Israel supported the UN position in Korea, as opposed to the

neutrality of the Arab countries[325], it was obvious that Israel also sided with the

West, especially with the United States, in its fight against international

Communism. This, naturally led to a relief in Turkish worries.[326] Especially after

the American backing of Israel, Turkey had no hesitation in recognizing the Jewish

state. Despite criticisms made by the Arabs, Turkey became the first Muslim

country to grant official recognition to Israel. In his declaration, then Turkish

Foreign Minister Necmettin Sadak answered these criticisms by saying that, " The

---

[324] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 159
[325] Ozcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). 160
[326] Gürkan, Ihsan. (1993, Annual). Turkish-Israeli Relations and the Middle East Peace Process. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. (7), 101

state of Israel is a fact. More than thirty countries have recognized it. Arab

representatives, too, are talking to the Israeli representatives."[327]

The developments in international politics have also been important in

Turkey's changing foreign policy preferences during the 1960s. Basically there

seemed to be a retreat in the threat of international communism. The early 1960s

witnessed a period of detente between the Soviet Union and the United States. There

was also an improvement in the Soviet relations with Arab countries. All of these

developments made Turkey more relaxed in pursuing her diplomacy during this

period. The fact that Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East was no longer going to

be strictly dependent on its allignment with the West, became evident with the

incidents during the second half of the 1960s.[328]

Two other developments at the international level, played a leading role in

stimulating Turkey's encouragement of the Palestinian cause. The first was the

acceptance by the United States that Palestinians could also be represented at a

Middle East Conference in 1977. The second was the joint declaration by the Soviet

Union and the United States on 1 October, 1977, in which the U.S. used the phrase,

' the legitimate rights of the Palestinians' for the first time.[329]

One of the consistencies in Turkish foreign policy, with regard to the Israeli

Palestinian conflict, has been that Turkey has always made its decisions in line with

the relevant United Nations resolutions. Even during times of crises, when Turkey

was in a dilemma, due to the interplay of various factors, not knowing how to

decide and what reaction to show to specific events, it has most often acted in line

with international law.

---

[327] Aras, Bülent. (1998). <u>Palestinian Israeli Peace Process and Turkey</u>. New York: Nova Science Publishers. 115
[328] Robins, Philip. (1991). <u>Turkey and the Middle East.</u> London: Pinter Publishers. 78
[329] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). <u>Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye.</u> (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 22

For instance, the dealings between Turkey and Israel were seriously handicapped when Israel attacked Egypt in 1956, during the Suez Canal war[330] and invaded the Sinai Peninsula. During a short period, after the Suez-Sinai crisis, Turkey faced a major dilemma. On the one hand, Iraq, one of its Baghdad Pact ally, insisted that Turkey breaks of its diplomatic relations with Israel and join the Arab countries in their boycott of Israel; on the other hand Britain, another Baghdad Pact ally, had taken sides with France and Israel in attacking Egypt. To complicate matters even more, the United States had been critical of and condemned the tripartite British-French-Israeli action. After long hours of debate, Turkey finally decided to join the United States in its condemnation of Israel and calling for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces in the UN.[331] On November 26, 1956 the Turkish Foreign Ministry, made its announcement regarding the issue. Accordingly,

> "The Turkish Government has always supported a solution of the Palestine problem within the framework of the resolutions of the UN General Assembly, and has made continuous efforts in this direction both inside and outisde the United Nations Organization. Noting with regret that this problem-which continues to be a very basic source of disorder and danger in the Near East- has not been solved so far, the Turkish Government has decided to recall its Minister in Tel Aviv, who will not return to his post until a just and final solution of the Palestine question has been achieved."[332]

Like its predecessors, the Menderes Government has consistently declared Turkey's sincere committment to the goals of the United Nations and its will to cooperate with the UN in achieving peace among nations of the world. The agreement with Pakistan, in this regard, was claimed to be just like the Athlantic

---

[330] Soysal, Ismail. (1994/95 Annual). The Middle East Peace Process and Turkey. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. (8), 69

[331] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). Turkey's Potential Contribution to Arab-Israeli Peace. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7, 182

[332] Gruen, George E. (1993, Annual). 182

Pact, being totally in line with the high principles of the UN, trying to establish security and peace.[333]

Turkey's reponse in the immediate aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war was again in accordance with the approach of the United Nations. It was not only supportive of the Arab case, but it also defended, in line with Resolution 242, Israel's obligation to withdraw from the territories it had occupied during this war.[334]

When the foreign ministers of 14 Arab states met in an Islamic Conference in Rabat, Morocco in 1969, Turkey was among the states who participated in the organization, after the Demirel government closely consulted with the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and decided that this would be required on foreign policy grounds. Yet, this was only a de facto participation, since the Demirel Government had reservations with regard to Turkey's secular, constitutional characteristic and its foreign policy. Turkey participated because it considered this not as a religious, but rather a political conference which had, on its agenda, such issues like the status of Jerusalem and the fire at the al-Aqsa Mosque.[335] What is more, even though the participant Arab states put pressure on Turkey during the meetings, so that Turkey would accept the Conference resolutions and severe its relations with Israel, Turkey never gave in to these pressures and maintained relations with the Jewish state.[336]

> "The Turkish delegate to the Rabat conference said that Turkey
> would approve, without reservation, criticizing Israel for not conforming
> with the United Nations resolutions, should the conference eventually decide
> on this, but added that Turkey would not go beyond criticism to
> condemnation"[337].

---

[333] Adnan Menderes Hükümeti Dış Politika Programına Dair Beyanı. In Kemal Girgin. (1998). T.C. Hükümetleri Programlarında Dış Politikamız. Ankara: T.C. Dış İşleri Bakanlığı. 26-7

[334] Soysal, Ismail. (1994/95, Annual). The Middle East Peace Process and Turkey. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. (8), 69

[335] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 95-6

[336] Soysal, Ismail. (1994/95, Annual). 70

[337] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). 96

It should also be mentioned that even though Turkey seemed to be trying to improve her relations with her Arab neighbours and to bolster their cause, during the 1960s, it was definitely not open and very clear about its support to the Palestinians. Indeed, this was mostly due to the fact that Turkey sticked to the decisions of the United Nations, and refrained from taking any other decision. For instance, the Turkish delegation did not sign the Final Communique of the Rabat Conference, since it advocated encouragement and aid to the Palestinian people in their fight for their national rights and independence. As the then Foreign Minister and the head of the delegation, Ihsan Sabri Çağlayangil declared, Turkey could support the resolutions of the Conference only if they were compatible with the UN resolution Turkey had voted for. He also insisted that the Palestinian Question could only be discussed in the general context of human rights, not national rights[338]. In this case, there was no mention of the Palestinian people by name in the UN Resolution 242 and that is why, Turkey seems consistent in its policy, by not putting its signature under the Final Communique of the Rabat Conference.[339]

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War, probably the chief event in the early 1970s, seems to have elucidated the shift in Turkish foreign policy in this decade Not only did Turkey not let the U.S. use Turkish military facilities to send aid to Israel, but it also permitted the Soviet Union to use its airspace, in order to resupply aircraft heading to Syria and Egypt.[340] This is argued to be a definite shift away from neutrality, to active political support to the Arabs in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

---

[338] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 573
[339] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 95-6
[340] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). 97

This might, however, also be regarded as a consistent policy for Turkey, considering that there was growing emphasis on the Palestinian issue and increasing sympathy for the Palestinians at the United Nations, as well. In 1974, the UN seemed to be highly supportive of the Palestinian cause, when it mentioned, for the first time on 22 November 1974, the right of the Palestinians to national independence and sovereignty and invited the PLO to the General Assembly and to conferences with an observer status.[341]

Turkey, naturally, voted in favor of the UN resolutions and also supported any proposal in the General Assembly which invited the PLO to participate in the discussions of the UN. The reason why one can reckon this a change in traditional Turkish policy was that most of the Western countries either abstained from the voting procedure or voted against these proposals, simply due to the fact that none of them made a reference to the UN Resolution 242. The fact that Turkey gave full support to these proposals, which did not at all, refer to the right of the existence of the Israeli state, was a sign that the emphasis in Turkey had moved to the Palestinians.[342] Later in 1975, Turkey recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and also voted in favor of the UN resolution which declared Zionism to be a type of racism.[343] Even though these moves look like alterations in Turkish foreign policy at the outset, considering that Turkey has always moved with the international community and that not only the Arab League, but also the United Nations had recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians, one can also say that there was continuity in Turkey's policy making in general.

---

[341] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (The Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: Tüses. 21
[342] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 97
[343] Kut, Şule. Filistin Sorunu ve Türkiye. In Haluk Ülman. (1991. 21

Kenan Evren's participation in the ICO Summit in Casablanca in 1984, his declarations supportive of the Palestinian cause in the Arab-Israeli conflict was reported in the Western press, as an adjustment in Turkey's foreign policy. However, there was actually no sign and no declaration in Evren's speech, which would imply such a change. One of the things he had also mentioned was the moderate Fez Plan, that had been accepted in the Arab Summit in 1982. It should not be taken for granted, since the plan implicitly recognized Israel. What is more, Turkey's tradition of approving the final declarations of the Islamic Conferences with reservations, continued at the Casablanca summit.[344]

It is held that relations between Turkey and Israel started to improve in 1986, when Turkey assigned Ekrem Güvendiren, a diplomat with a personal rank of ambassador and when the foreign ministers of the countries met at the United Nations. It should not be ignored, however, that there was no change in relations at the formal level. Though there was an increase in commercial ties and an expansion in tourism, Turgut Özal's government was critical of "Israel's foreign policy, including the air raid on the PLO headquarters in Tunisia in October 1985."[345] Cultural relations were not in good shape, especially after the Intifada broke out in 1987. Similar to the approach of the Western European countries, Turkey condemned the violent response of the Israelis to the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. It is argued that this was totally in line with the approach of the European Community in its Venice Declaration in 1980.[346] In March 1988, "The Turkish Grand National Assembly unanimously adopted a communiqué stating: We donounce the violent actions of the

---

[344] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993. The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 103
[345] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). 103
[346] Gruen, George E. (1993,Annual). Turkey's Potential Contribution to Arab-Israeli Peace. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7, 185

Israelis against the Palestinians living in the occupied territories and the inhuman violation of Palestinians' human rights."[347]

Along with the developments in the domestic scene and the international arena, Turkey was also influenced by all the occurences and changes in the Middle East. This influence, naturally affected Turkey's relations with and attitude towards the sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

No wonder that the year 1958 stands out as the high point of political cooperation with Israel, regardless of the fact that diplomatic representation was still at legation level. At a time when Arab radicalism was at its height, when both "Jerusalem and Ankara were deeply concerned about Soviet-backed Communist and Nasserist subversion of the region"[348] and when the pro-Western Hashemite rule in Iraq was overthrown, Turkey was willing to seek a strategic relationship with Israel. In this regard, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion's visit to Ankara and offer of a secret project was very timely. The project, or the so-called Periphery Pact, was mainly a result of Israel's goal to formalize its extention of its relations to countries other than the Arab states, including Turkey as well as Ethiopia and Iran. The project foresaw secret cooperation in military, diplomacy and security areas[349], and in a way, reflected the concerns over instability in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq[350]. For the Turkish side, it was a sign of Turkey's distrust in and suspicion of the Arab states[351], exacerbated by the latest regional developments.

On the other hand, the emergence of an optimistic environment, made it easier for Turkey to have an even-ended policy in the region, during the late 1980s.

---

[347] Gruen, George E. (1993,Annual). 185
[348] Gruen, George E. (1993,Annual). 183
[349] Özcan, Gencer. In Faruk Sonmezoglu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 162
[350] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 77
[351] Gürkan, Ihsan. (1993, Annual). Turkish-Israeli Relations and the Middle East Peace Process. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies, 7, 103

In 1988, the PLO announced the acceptance of UN Resolution 242, implicitly recognizing Israel and also renouncing terrorism and accepting the principle of land for peace. Along with the international community, which happily welcomed this diplomatic development, Turkey immediately extended recognition to the state of Palestine, on the first day of its existence.[352]

With this decision, Turkey was accepting the PLO as the only representative of the Palestinian people and also approving the right of the Palestinians to self-determination. It should also be noted that the Intifada, which had significantly increased sympathy for the Palestinians, and created public pressure, was very influential in Turkey's making such a decision.[353]

In conclusion, it could be said that during the cold war period, Turkey's relations with Arabs and her foreign policy in the Middle East have developed in the context of duality. This duality is an important result of Turkey's geopolitical position, as well as the Westernization policy that has been followed since the Ottoman period. Accordingly, oil, much needed economic aid and the Cyprus issue have been the three main factors which vitalized this duality and led Turkey to realize two foreign policy goals at the same time. One of the goals is to maintain relations with Israel, while the other is to support the Palestinian cause at any political platform and to enhance bilateral economic relations with the Arab states. It has been strongly emphasized that Turkey's poliy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict has mainly been formed in an effort to create a balance between these two goals.[354]

---

[352] Robins, Philip. (1991). 80
[353] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 578
[354] Yavuz, M. Hakan. İkicilik (Duality): Türk-Arap İlişkileri ve Filistin Sorunu (1947-1994). In Faruk Sönmezoğlu. (2001). 569

According to an argument, it was only during the 1970s that Turkey started openly favoring the Palestinian cause. The fact that it had avoided discussing Palestine at the 1969 Rabat Conference, is shown as a major proof of this. Nevertheless, I feel that Turkey had always regarded the Palestinian problem, particularly the refugees, both as a political and a humanitarian issue[355]. There does not seem to be any doubt with regard to Turkey's support for the Palestinian cause, and the fact that it began openly favoring the cause during the 1970s, should not be misleading. This is rather the result of Turkey's cautious foreign policy. After an analysis of its cold-war foreign policy, especially with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is most clear that Turkey has consistently acted along with the international community and refrained from making declarations and decisions which would be contradictory to the decisions of the United Nations and the international community.

Obviously, there have been many factors, both internal and external, which have been critical during Turkey's decision making process. Until the 1960s, cold-war politics, fear of Soviet threat and the eagerness to be a strong ally of the United States had been dominant in Turkey's decisions, often leading to unbalanced relations with the sides of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. It was only after the mid 1960s, that Turkey began to construct its foreign policy with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, along more balanced lines, again as a result both domestic, and also international developments. What is consistent among all these, is that Turkey's diplomatic relations with the Israelis and the Palestinians, and its attitude towards the conflict, have mostly been shaped, not only by the specific developments and

---

[355] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993). The Palestinian Question In Turkish Foreign Policy From the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic Version]. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 25, 96

incidents in the conflict, itself, but rather by regional and international developments, and events, changes within Turkey.

It is, without doubt, difficult to give an answer, faced with the question, "what was Turkey's foreign policy with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, during the cold-war years?" The difficulty stems from the fact that shifts in Turkey's relations with Israel, the Palestinians and the Arab governments, often confuse people's minds. Still, it can be said that Turkish support to the Palestinian cause has not been more or less than that of the international community. It has voted in favor of the United Nations resolutions with regard to the conflict. At the same time, it was careful to preserve its relations with all sides. Even during times of crises, when level of representation was downgraded, Turkey has always kept diplomatic relations with Israel, never completely cutting of ties, as demanded by the Arab governments from time to time.

2. Post-Cold War Period

The fact that the world was experiencing the beginning of a new era, defined by uncertainty, became apparent first and foremost by the dissolution of multiethnic socialist federations. On December 21, 1991, the Soviet Union formally came to an end with the signing of the Alma Ata Declaration and a year later, on April 27, 1992, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was declared, manifesting the disintegration of Yugoslavia.[356]

The international system definitely got more complex in this era, as a consequence of the emergence of new states. All of a sudden, there was a conspicuous increase in the number of different type of states, all with the capacity to interact with each other. It is said that globalization, as well as fragmentation are simultaneously suitable concepts, which characterize the new international system in the post-Cold War era.[357]

An obvious change in the geostrategic plane, as a result of the end of bipolarity was naturally the emergence of the United States as the single, dominant superpower. It was expected that despite the relative development of powers like Japan and some leading European countries, which especially extend their military and security capabilities, the United States would be unchallenged in the global security system and that it would go on playing the central role. What is more, according to one hypothesis, the mid-range powers would find more space to both manouever and also to extend their influence in this new era, as opposed to their rather minor and fixed roles in the bipolar environment of the Cold War years.[358]

---

[356] Kut, Şule. "The contours of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s", p.7 and p.15-footnote #1 in, in Rubin, Bary and Kemal Kirişçi. Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press, 2002

[357] Laos, Nicolas K. (1999, December-2000, February). International Security in the Post-Cold War Era. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. IV, 4, 2 of the article.

[358] Öniş, Ziya. (1995, winter). Turkey in the post-Cold War era: In search of identity. [Electronic Version]. The Middle East Journal. 49, (1), 50

In the light of another thought, however, this new international system,

would not enable one single state to dominate all the power in its own hands. There

are six main geopolitical actors, simply the United States, EU, China, Japan, Russia

and India, which have the capacity to alter the geopolitical image of the new

world[359] and this new order "obliges the United States, for the first time in its

history, to found its foreign policy on the maintenance of balance-of-power

arrangements, since the global security system of the post-Cold War era should be

based on Nato, Russia, China, Japan and India."[360]

The end of the Cold War period and the demise of the Soviet Union had

major implications for the Middle East region, as well. While some Israelis were

glad to welcome the changes in world power realities, hoping that the Arabs would

be less likely to make war since the Soviet support had been withdrawn, others were

concerned that the value of Israel as a strategic ally to the United States, would

decrease due to the fact that the 'evil empire' was no longer a factor.[361]

Following the end of an era, the major incident, which took not only the

Middle East but also the world by suprise and which led to serious concern was the

Iraqi annexation of Kuwait. To summarize the factors that led to the annexation,

first of all Saddam Hussein claimed historical territorial rights over Kuwait.

Secondly, he did not have port facilities in the Gulf and he was in serious debt due

to long years of fighting with Iran. What is more, he resented the Sabah family in

Kuwait, which kept oil prices low.[362]

---

[359] Laos, Nicolas K. (1999, December- 2000, February). International Security in the Post-Cold War Era. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. IV, 4, 1
[360] Laos, Nicolas K. (1999, December- 2000, February). 6
[361] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. 249
[362] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 250

Since it was the fear of Saddam Hussein acquiring the control of over 40 percent of the world's oil reserves, it did not take long for the international community to respond. Four days after the invasion, the UN Security Council adopted a trade embargo on Iraq and within weeks, a multinational naval force was in the Gulf to blockade Iraq. By November, using military force to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait, appeared as a logical option to the Bush administration, since the economic sanction could take too long to solve the problem and could even strengthen Saddam Hussein. Until January 15, 1991, which was the dateline for Iraqi withdrawal, set by the UN Security Council Resolution 678, efforts to end the crisis with diplomacy turned out to be rather futile. The talks between the United States and Iraq, broke down in December and the U.S. Secretary of State Baker and Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, failed to reach an agreement in Geneva. That is why, the coalition forces, led by the United States launched the 'Operation Desert Storm', as a result of which Kuwait was liberated on February 27 and a formal ceasefire was signed in April.[363]

What is most significant about this incident was that it was a confirmation of the end of the Cold War in the Middle East. The fact that the Soviet Union supported the United Nations sanctions and approved the stationing of American forces in Saudi Arabia was a proof of the consensus between the United States and the Soviet Union on a number of issues such as the threats of potentially volatile regional conflicts. Moreover, Israel's claim that restricting the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict solely to the future of Palestinians, not including all the Arab states, was verified.[364]

---

[363] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 251
[364] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 250

The Gulf Crisis definitely had high importance for Israel, though "it played a very low-key role in the crisis, at the request of the United States"[365] The war, first of all, increased Israel's security concerns . Even though it found itself capable of withstanding an Iraqi attack, still the risk of war, with the possibility of chemical weapons being used was frightening. Secondly, Israel became more anxious now that its role as the main ally of the United States was undermined. Besides, there were signs that in the new post-Cold War era, the U.S. would consider Israel's failure to solve the issue of occupied territories as an obligation.[366]

With regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the war in the Gulf obviously shifted the world's attention away from the Intifada and how Israel handled it. Even though there was no conspicuous change in the way Arabs and Israelis perceived each other, there certainly was alteration in the balance of power in the conflict. It is said that while Israel was strengthened, the PLO's reputation was seriously damaged and Arafat's power base was weakened. This was a natural outcome of Arafat's siding with and supporting Saddam Huseing during the war.[367] Still, Saddam's trying to make a connection between his war and the cause of the Palestinians, created an impetus for the immediate future to find solutions to the future of the Palestinians.[368]

[365] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 250-1
[366] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 251
[367] "Be coherent, Dahlan tells arafat". The Economist. November 17th-23rd, 2001. 44
[368] Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). 254-5

With the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and a change in the global balance of power there emerged one after the other, a series of conflicts, in different regions of the world. The world became eyewitness to crises in the Balkans and the Caucasus, which have emanated out of "pent-up ethnic and micro-nationalistic ambitions"[369], while at the same time the Middle East struggled with two successive Gulf wars. What was significant about these conflicts was that they had major commonalities. "They erupted in Turkey's own neighborhood; they had no direct cause-and effect relationship with Turkey; yet they almost invariably had a negative impact on us."[370]

In such an international and regional environment "Turkey has transformed its foreign policy and self-image more thoroughly than any noncommunist country in the post-Cold War era."[371] With the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the communist system, Ankara became increasingly worried that the drastic changes that took place, implied a decrease in the geostrategic value that Turkey had enjoyed as an ally of the West and a crucial part of the Nato alliance during the Cold War years.[372] Indeed, these fears seemed to be justified in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War, since there was also debate in the United States with regard to whether Turkey could be as important for the United States in the future, as it had been for Nato during the Cold War years. In this atmosphere,

> "In the absence of a Soviet threat, problematic issues relating to human rights, Cyprus, and the Caucasus became more prominent on Washington's agenda America's traditionally strong military relationship to Turkey was called into question, economic and military assistance programs were

---

[369] Ünaydın, Solmaz. (2002, winter). Turkey's Policy Toward the Middle East and the Question of Iraq. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 32

[370] Ünaydın, Solmaz. (2002, winter). 35

[371] Rubin, Barry. (2002). A transformed international role. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 1

[372] Öniş, Ziya. (1995, winter). Turkey in the post-Cold War era: In search of identity. [Electronic Version]. The Middle East Journal. 49, (1). 49

reduced and eventually zeroed out, and even cash purchases of arms and equipment became subject to congressional holds."[373]

However, in a short period of time, it was seen that even though the Cold War was behind, there were still threats and challenges such as terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. In facing these threats, Turkey was not on the Southern Flank, as sometimes codenamed in the Nato alliance, but rather on the front line and Nato needed Turkey's cooperation for mutual defence.[374] What is more, the emergence of both new states neighbouring the country, as well as ethnic conflicts brought about a totally new agenda and "in this situation Turkish foreign policy required a new strategy, identity and set of goals."[375]

Besides,

"Ozal did not at all think that Turkey's geopolitical and strategic significance for the Western world diminished with the coming to an end of the Cold War. He instead saw the emergence of a Turkic world and the developments in the Balkans as an opportunity to expand the Turkish influence in international politics. According to Ozal, as a remnant of an empire, Turkey was bound to show close interest in territories formerly ruled by the Ottoman Empire. This meant that Atatürk's motto peace at home, peace in the world, which precluded active involvement outside Turkey's borders, could no more be a valid principle of Turkish foreign policy."[376]

For this reason, its major occupation became, finding a new role which would both be within the Western strategy and also ensure Turkey's continued importance. When the map of Eurasia was redrawn with Soviet Union's dismantling, the most logical option for Turkey was to present itself as a bridge

---

[373] Parris, Mark R. (2003, spring). Starting Over: US-Turkish Relations in the Post-Iraq War Era. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 6
[374] Robertson, George. (2002, winter). Nato and the New Threats. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 6
[375] Kut, Şule. The contours of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 7
[376] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Soiety during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 78

between the West and the Caucasus and the Turkic republics of the former Soviet Union.[377]

Beside the main geopolitical actors such as the United States, China or Russia, there were states, which could not change the geopolitical image of the new era, but had high significance due to their geographical position and the impact they could have on the actions of the main geopolitical actors. Along with Israel, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and South Korea, Turkey was also among these states.[378] Regardless of its domestic problems, Turkey was essential as a stabilizing actor in the Black Sea and in terms of balancing Russia's influence in the Caucasus, not to mention its important services within Nato. What is more, it could also play a key role in countering terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism through bilateral cooperation with Israel.[379]

Even though there was fear of insecurity and isolation along with economic benefits that were rather uncertain, it would not be wrong to say that there were significant changes brought about by the new era, which had crucial implications for Turkey.

First of all, the integration of former Soviet republics and Eastern Europe in the global economy implied long-term trade and investment opportunities for Turkey. Secondly, Turkey's domestic polity was seriously affected. With communism collapsed and no longer a Soviet security threat, the process of democratization in Turkey would be enhanced. The major reason was that, ideological differences were mostly eliminated and the major political parties, in terms of their policies, had converged. Especially with regard to economic issues

---

[377] Stone, Leonard A. (2001, June-July). Turkish Foreign Policy: Four Pillars of Tradition. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. VI, 2, 6 of the article
[378] Laos, Nicolas K. (1999, December- 2000, February). International Security in the Post-Cold War Era. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. IV, 4, 4
[379] Laos, Nicolas K. (1999, December- 2000, February). 4

such as the domains of the state and the market, the disagreement between the left-of-center social democratic and right-of-center conservative parties had, to a large extent, died out.[380]

Secondly, in two years time, the number of Turkey's neighbors doubled. While it formerly had land borders with Greece, Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, Syria, Iraq and Iran, with the end of the cold war, the number of its neighbors rose to twelve with the addition of Romania, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Cyprus. According to Şule Kut, Turkey enjoyed good relations with many of these states. With the exception of former neighbours Greece, Iran, Iraq and Syria, Turkey had bilateral problems only with Armenia, among the newly independent states. While links with Albania, Romania and Bulgaria improved significantly, favourable ties were established with the independent Central Asian Republics (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan), four states of former Yugoslavia, as well as with Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan. In this regard, it would not be wrong to claim that Turkey became a diplomatically active country in the post-Cold War era.[381]

The reason why Turkey's policy in this era became relatively more active, is because it could not escape involvement in the solution of conflicts and crises, in the emergence of which, it had no role. Leaders from probably all these new states, such as Ukraine, Georgia, or Bosnia-Herzegovina, visited Turkey, seeking its support.[382]

What is more as believed by Turgut Özal, the end of the Cold War and the dismantling of the Soviet bloc, turned Turkey into a model for a vast region from the Adriatic to Central Asia. The emergence of the new Central Asian republics, that

---

[380] Öniş, Ziya. (1995, winter). Turkey in the post-Cold War era: In search of identity. [Electronic Version]. The Middle East Journal. 49, (1), 49
[381] Kut, Şule. The contours of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 10-11
[382] Kut, Şule. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). 8

share a common religious, cultural and linguistic heritage with Turkey, is thought to be a confirmation that Turkey has a broader identity, which obviously extends beyond just a European one. As seen in the beginning of this new era, Turkey did not consider this as a weakness or a disadvantage, but rather as an asset.[383] "The principle objective of Turkish foreign policy towards the Central Asian republics can be conceived of as helping these countries to become secular democracies and progress towards a market economy."[384]

However, these republics had serious economic problems and Turkey did not have the necessary "financial muscle to invest substantially in these republics"[385] and thus was unable to satisfy their foreign investment needs. Consequently, Özal was well aware that Turkey, by itself, could not be able to solve the problems of these states. For this purpose, he tried to make Turkey a channel for Western and Japanese investments in the exploration, production and distribution of oil and gas of these republics. Even though it managed to allocate one billion dollars of aid and trade credits to them, still Turkey was not very successful in providing much economic assistance to the Turkic republics during Özal's presidency.[386]

On the other hand, Özal shifted his attention to international economic cooperation, in order to make up for Turkey's lack of material resources. Within this context, he played a vital role in invigorating the Economic Cooperation Organization. Membership of the organization, which was first formed between Turkey, Pakistan and Iran, was extended to five Turkic republics: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in February 1992. The major

---

[383] Öniş, Ziya. (1995, winter). Turkey in the post-Cold War era: In search of identity. [Electronic Version]. The Middle East Journal. 49, (1), 49

[384] Stone, Leonard A. (2001, June-July). Turkish Foreign Policy: Four Pillars of Tradition. Perceptions. VI, 2, 5

[385] Stone, Leonard A. (2001, June-July). 5

[386] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 81

goal of this establishment was to coordinate transportation and communications, loosen customs tariffs and create a joint investment bank between the member states. The Western world was also approving of such an establishment, in which Turkey tightened its relations with the Turkic Republics, which in this way, would not easily be opened to Islamic influence from Iran.[387]

One major difficulty for Turkey, with regard to its foreign policy toward Central Asia, was to maintain the precarious balance. While it tried to create special relations with these republics, that would grant it a preferential position in their foreign relations, it also tried to assure Russia that it had no pan-Turkic intentions, or a desire for regional leadership. This proved almost impossible and Turkish leaders, especially in their declarations, could not prevent ambiguities and being misinterpreted.[388] On his visit to Central Asian states in April 1992, Süleyman Demirel, for instance, "declared that Turkey had no intention of patronizing the new republics, but at the same time he spoke of the possibility of establishing an association of a sovereign Turkic world"[389], as if to confirm Russian fears that Turkey wanted to replace Russian influence in the region. It is also argued that despite the broad sympathy of Turks for the peoples of the Muslim republics of Central Asia, the idea of a pan-Turkish union was just a dream for only a group of ultra-nationalist politicians.[390]

There should also be note of how Turkey's role and attitude in this new era was perceived by the Arabs. According to an Arab observer, with the end of the Cold War, which removed the threat from the Soviet Union and which opened up

---

[387] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 81

[388] Stone, Leonard A. (2001, June-July). Turkish Foreign Policy: Four Pillars of Tradition. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. VI, 2, 6

[389] Stone, Leonard A. (2001, June-July). 6

[390] Hale, William. (1992, October). Turkey, The Middle East and the Gulf Crisis. [Electronic Version]. International Affairs. 68, 4, 680

new vistas in Central Asia, "Turkey was like someone who woke up in the morning and found a big treasure beside his bed."[391] However, Turkey's relations with especially the Muslim republics of Central Asia were watched with suspicion by the Arab states. For some, Turkey's new policy was described as 'new Ottomanism' and for others, it was 'new Turkish imperialism'. It was feared that when Turkey opened up to Central Asia, there would form two blocs, namely the Turkish world as against the Arab world, which would lead to rivalry between the two and thus upset the balance of the region.[392]

However, when the outcomes of Turkish initiatives, in the long run are examined, it is noticed that Arabs had no need to worry. In spite of Özal's fervor, relations with the Turkic republics did not turn out to be as gainful as expected. This might be explained by Turgut Özal's excessive pragmatism, over optimism and his lack of understanding of the true nature and experience of these Turkic republics. The fact that Özal, "was part of a political establishment which viewed the Turkic republics as a homogenous whole which needed the helping hand of Turkey as the 'big brother'"[393] and that he did not try to understand and take into consideration at all, "the distinct histories, ethnic and cultural characteristics, political traditions, collective aspirations"[394] of these republics, are possible reasons why Turkey failed to come up with a practical strategy and ended up with disappointment in its relations.

While it is true that Turkey did not succeed in achieving some of its goals, it still had the will and the opportunity to take advantage of the new environment, by

---

[391] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). Changing Relations: Turkish-Israeli-Arab Triangle. [Electronic Version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 2
[392] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). 3
[393] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic Version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 82
[394] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). 82

being more active beyond its borders. In this regard, Turkey's efforts, in general, are considered pretty successful.[395]

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Scheme, Turkey's "first active foreign policy initiative"[396] was a highly crucial step towards regional economic cooperation development during this era. It is believed that, "the pursuit of regional cooperation initiatives has emerged as an important foreign policy trend across southern Europe and Turkey has made a substantial contribution to this trend"[397] with this project. The origins of the scheme, the formal agreement of which was finally signed in 1992, go back to 1990 and Turkey has been pivotal in coming up with the idea and the necessary steps towards implementation. It is also noteworthy in that, the initiative was "a sign of Turkey's new activism and its involvement in additional regions."[398] The BSEC, which included Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Romania, Moldova, Georgia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey and Ukraine, is a rather loose agreement unlike the European Union, which required full political and economic union among its members. The flexibility of this arrangement provided such an environment that the participant states could closely cooperate both among themselves, and also develop bilateral and multilateral relations with non-member states.[399]

The basic goal behind the BSEC, particularly for Turkey was to open up a formerly closed market and establish a free-trade area. Also among the initial priorities were improving communications and infrastructure, as well as fostering

---

[395] Kut, Şule. The contours of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 7
[396] Kut, Şule. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci. (2002). 9
[397] Fuller, Graham E and Lesser, Ian O. (1993). Turkey's New Geopolitics. Colorado: Westview Press. 103
[398] Kut, Şule. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci. (2002). 9
[399] Öniş, Ziya. (1995, winter). Turkey in the post-Cold War era: In search of identity. [Electronic Version]. The Middle East Journal. 49, (1), 55

administrative reforms which would further commercial relations.[400] However, upon

a more thorough examination, it can be seen that the benefits of the organization can

go well beyond economic gains. "A leading architect of the Black Sea Project

regards it as perhaps Turkey's first independent regional initiative in fifty years, and

one with potentially important security, as well as economic and political

consequences."[401] While it was not dependent on Turkey's relations with the United

States or relations in Europe, some believed that it could raise Turkey's value in the

eyes of its Western partners, if it proved successful. According to Turkish officials,

the project also had the ability to improve further Turkish prospects for membership

into the EC.[402]

 With regard to the Middle East, the Gulf Crisis was the key incident that

signalled the novelties in Turkish foreign policy making in the new era. When Iraq

invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990, it was expected that Turkey would issue some

kind of a condemnation of Iraq. Since the act was an occupation of territory by

force, it would be completely out of question for a country like Turkey, which has

always advocated the maintanence of the territorial integrity of states, to do

anything but condemn the Iraqi invasion. The only thing that was unclear in the

early days, was whether Turkey would take an effective action to alter the situation

or not[403].

 In the immediate aftermath of the incident, it looked like Turkey would

pursue its traditional neutral position, perceiving the war as a purely inter-Arab

conflict. This was made clear by the fact that the National Security Council had met

---

[400] Fuller, Graham E. and Lesser, Ian O. (1993). Turkey's New Geopolitics. Colorado: Westview Press. 103
[401] Fuller, Graham E. and Lesser, Ian O. (1993). 103
[402] Fuller, Graham E. and Lesser, Ian O. (1993). 103-4
[403] Hale, William. (1992, october). Turkey, The Middle East and the Gulf Crisis. [Electronic Version]. International Affairs. 68, 4, 683

on 3 August, and it was reported on the following day that Turkey had no intention to close the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline and was not considering to take any action against Iraq at that point.[404]

Only on 8 August, it was announced by the government that the pipeline would be closed and the commercial links with Iraq would be suspended. The decision, was most probably taken unilaterally by Turgut Özal, without necessarily consulting his cabinet beforehand. Unlike Özal, the parliament, foreign ministry and the public seemed strongly against risking involvement in the war, which would clash with Turkey's traditional principle of neutrality.[405]

Still though, after long debates and regardless of conflicting opinion, the bill, which allowed for the sending of Turkish troops abroad and receiving foreign troops on Turkish soil, was passed in the Parliament on 5 September. It was not, however a declaration of war and even though the government gained war powers, the battle in the parliament made it clear that there was strong opposition to active and direct involvement in Iraq. It should also be noted that Saddam's rejection to evacuate Kuwait and the strength and unity in the international opposition to him, resulting in the Security Council Resolution 661, were important factors behind Özal's determination and will to move together with the coalition powers and the decision of embargo on Iraq.[406]

The role of key figures, such as leaders, as an important factor in the foreign policy making process, as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, can well be seen during specifically this period. Turgut Özal's weight in foreign policy decisions was conspicuous even when he was elected the President. The Gulf Crisis,

---

[404] Hale, William. (1992, october). Turkey, The Middle East and the Gulf Crisis. [Electronic Version]. International Affairs. 68, 4, 683
[405] Hale, William. (1992, october). 683-4
[406] Hale, William. (1992, october). 685-6

is perhaps the best proof of this. His pro-American stance, pragmatism and

willingness to exploit external events to Turkey's advantage, can easily be realized

with an analysis of the Gulf conflict.[407] The resignation of both Mesut Yılmaz and

later Ali Bozer, as his foreign ministers are valid examples to Turgut Özal's

increasing interference in the foreign policy making process. While Mesut Yılmaz

had

> "left the government apparently in protest at constant interference by the
> president in the work of his ministry,...Ali Bozer had departed since he
> resented the fact that Özal had virtually cut him out of conversations with
> President Bush when they had both visited Washington in September."[408]

Considering that "even before the outbreak of the Gulf War, Özal had told

CNN that the USA commander in İncirlik could have used the air base whenever

he wanted"[409], it is not surprising that Turgut Özal was never critical of and that he

never raised any objections to the motives and actions of the United States during

the conflict. "The legality and legitimacy of these decisions, to him, were

unquestionable."[410] It was Özal's firm belief that as a regional power, it was a must

for Turkey to be actively involved in this conflict. As he said, right after the

ceasfire in the Gulf,

> "Turkey should leave its former passive and hesitant policies and engage in
> an active foreign policy. The reason for my call is because we are a powerful
> country in the region... and I prefer to pursue a more dynamic policy for my
> country."[411]

What is more, this was a profound opportunity to convince both Europe and

the United States that Turkey was an essential part of the Western world and its

---

[407] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International
Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1),
78
[408] Hale, William. (1992, October). Turkey, The Middle East and the Gulf Crisis. [Electronic
version]. International Affairs. 68, 4, 685-6
[409] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). 79
[410] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). 79
[411] Hale, William. (1992, October). 691

security and strategic concerns. Özal was also anxious that in case of a deterioration in Turkey's role in the region, Turkish national interests would be seriously harmed. In such a situation, for instance, the United States could well be manipulated by strong lobbies of the Greeks and Armenians, who could pursuade American administration to make decisions or the Senate to vote for bills, counter to Turkey's interests.[412]

Arab concerns of Turkey's ambitions in the region were once again revealed with the Gulf War and the situation in northern Iraq. Even though some Arab countries had also participated in the anti-Iraqi alliance, it was Turkey, which had been blamed for being a tool, the Trojan horse of the United States and Zionism, in the region. Indeed, it was claimed to be the U.S.' new policeman in the Middle East, since it had repleaced the Israeli state, which had lost its power as a result of the Gulf War.[413]

However, according to another argument, it would be rather misleading to talk about Turkey's activism in the Gulf Crisis, as a shift towards a more active foreign policy. When the international and regional situation of the day is considered, any Turkish government would probably have acted the same way. What this war exposed indeed, was Turkey's "support for multilateralism, and internationally sanctioned military intervention in conflicts, where Turkey was not directly involved."[414]

In sum, since the end of the Cold War Turkey has become a far more active country. It played a central role in the 1991 Gulf War and for the first time, it really

---

[412] Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 37, (1), 80

[413] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). Changing Relations: Turkish-Israeli-Arab Triangle". [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1i, 3 of the article.

[414] Kut, Şule. The contours of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 8

became a prominent player in the Middle East. The crises in Bosnia and Kosovo made Turkey a key actor also in the boiling Southeastern Europe, as well.[415]

> "In the Balkan, Black Sea, Caucasus and Central Asian areas, Turkey tried to influence and even direct developments following the collapse of communist states. It used not only its geopolitical position but also its historical and cultural ties with the newly independent states to play this role. This new type of activity was not seen as an alternative to engagement with the West. On the contrary, Ankara carefully stressed that its special relations with former Soviet and Yugoslav republics would in fact prove Turkey to be more valuable to the West."[416]

Still, it should be noted that there were no changes in the basic, traditional principles of Turkish foreign policy. Turkey still had the same priorities and continued to construct its policies with the intention of preserving the status-quo. What had changed, indeed, were the political environment and relationships outside Turkey. Similarly, the mentioned conflicts and instability in Turkey's surrounding regions had not been created by Turkey.[417]

---

[415] Rubin, Barry. A transformed international role. In Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 3

[416] Kut, Şule. In, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). 7

[417] Kut, Şule. In, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). 13

"In Turkey's relations with its neighbours in the Middle East, the region where Turkey perceives its highest security threat, foreign support for separatist terrorism constituted the primary issue. The connection between domestic threats and such issues as water availability with Syria, Islamic fundamentalism with Iran and Turkish involvement in northern Iraq again increased the mixing of domestic and foreign policy[418].

Relations with Israel during the post-cold war period, had been developed, mainly along these lines of concerns.

Before going on with the discussion of how Turkey and Israel not only maintained but further improved their relations in this period, it is crucial to draw a general picture of the commonalities and similar characteristics, which make the two countries "natural partners, as Daniel Pipes notes."[419]

The basic characteristic they share is that, both Turkey and Israel are non-Arab, Western-oriented and democratic countries in an Arab-dominated region, where they continually perceive a threat and fear terrorism, and thus maintain large militaries. Secondly, both Israel and Turkey share this psychological bond, which might be called "the sense of otherness"[420]. Both countries feel alienated from the Arab world, which has been the most important element in the establishment of their national identities, because the relations in the Middle Eastern region are mostly shaped by this distinction between Arab and non-Arab. While Turkey can be considered as a geographical marginality, Israel is definitely a politically marginal state in the region. On the other hand, neither Israel nor Turkey is totally an insider in the European state system. Even though both countries are highly devoted to western ideals and seek to be a part of the European state system, they also have

---

[418] Kut, Şule. In, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). 14-5
[419] Arıboğan, Deniz Ülke. (2000/01, Annual). The Role fo Turkish-Israeli Alliance for Maintaining Security in the Middle East. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 130
[420] Arıboğan, Deniz Ülke. (2000/01, Annual). 130

their native and unique cultural, political and social values which are neither

European nor Middle Eastern. [421]

The era starting with the end of the cold war and a totally new international

environment has been witness to an increasing rapproachment between Turkey and

Israel. This has been presented as the "the newest and at the same time the most

controversial aspect of Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War Middle

East."[422]This rapproachment and developing relations between the two countries

have taken shape throughout the years. The immediate aftermath of the Gulf War

and the mid 1990s definitely stand as two different periods in terms of these

relations. It is obviously an outcome of distinct developments and concerns, which

shaped Turkish foreign policy decisions. In the first part of the 1990s, Turkey was

mostly, and naturally affected by the emergence of a new environment and changes

in both the international and regional systems. Throughout this era, relations with

Israel kept improving, which, however, was only seen in economic, cultural and

technical areas. In the second half of the 1990s, however, there was a new trend in

Turkish-Israeli relations. With the increasing role of the military elite, along with

the political decision makers, in foreign policy decisions, and with the perception of

new security threats, Turkey's policy has turned out to be highly affected by

political and security considerations. As a result, there was more and more emphasis

on the security cooperation between Israel and Turkey, which had not been so

fervently advocated during the first part of the post-Cold War era.[423]

First of all, the improvement in Turkish-Israeli relations had already started

during the late 1980s. Even though Ankara had never, even when it was most pro-

---

[421] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 82
[422] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era".
[Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 172
[423] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 173

Arab and despite pressures from the Arab governments, completely broken its relations with Israel, the real and obvious development in relations had begun in mid-1980s. From 1985 onwards, high ranking diplomats had been assigned by both countries and closer commercial ties and development in tourism had been realized. It was Özal's strong belief that, maintaining relations with Israel was a practical necessity along with connections with the Arab countries, in order to have a role in the solution of the problems of the Middle East.[424]

It was especially the political developments in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, which indirectly, led Turkey to reconsider its relations with Israel. With sudden changes in their positions the governments, which had previously avoided Israel, such as Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, all established full diplomatic relations with Israel. What was even more a surprise for Turkey was that Greece, which had always been soothing towards the Arabs, "as a way of forestalling a Muslim consensus behind Turkey over the Cyprus problem"[425], raised its diplomatic ties to full relations. Thus, already in late 1980s Turkey had started considering to restore its relations with Israel to full ambassadorial status, as it was concerned that the improvement of relations between Israel and her main rivals, Greece and Bulgaria, could turn out to be to the disadvantage of the Turks.[426]

In 1986, Turkey and Israel decided to raise the level of their diplomatic representatives in Ankara and Tel Aviv. For this purpose, they exchanged two senior diplomatic representatives, who were to be called Charge d'Affaires, not using their ranks. The significance of this exchange is that, it started a process during which relations normalized. There was especially development in economic and commercial spheres. With more Israeli tourists discovering Turkey, Turkish

---

[424] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 174
[425] Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers. 81
[426] Robins, Philip. (1991). 81

Airlines became, after Israel National Airlines, the second biggest carrier of Israel.

Moreover, in this very period, total trade, with the exclusion of tourism, increased

from 20 million dollars to 100 million dollars in 1992.[427]

Still, the environment after the end of the Cold War has been much more

suitable for an increasing development of relations. Turkey was in full support of

the peace process that began with the Madrid Conference, and hoped to encourage

Israel that, in case of an agreement with the Palestinians, Israel would normalize and

develop its relations not only with Turkey but with many other countries such as

USSR, and other Warsaw Pact countries, which had severed their relations with

Israel.[428] In conclusion, "the two countries entered into a more public and more

intense period of co-operation following Israel's agreement with the PLO in 1993

and after Turkey's pro-American involvement in the Gulf Crisis."[429]

The emergence of a peace environment with the initiation of the Madrid

Conference was a significant development that also indirectly paved the way for

rapproachment between the two countries. It was a great relief for Turkey, which

had for long years tried hard to balance its relations with Israel and the Arab

countries, that finally the foundations for peace between the sides had been laid. The

belief was that the balance politics, which it had pursued during the Cold War years,

had been effective in the formation of a phase of diplomacy and dialogue between

the two sides and that for the first time Turkey had really got a chance to contribute

both to the peace of the region, as well as to its own future security.[430] While the

---

[427] Guvendiren, Ekrem. A Concise Report on Turkish-Israeli Relations. (1999). Istanbul: A Basim ve Reklam Ltd. Sti. 9-10

[428] Guvendiren, Ekrem. A Concise Report on Turkish-Israeli Relations. (1999). Istanbul: A Basim ve Reklam Ltd. Sti. 10

[429] Arıboğan, Deniz Ülke. (2000/01, Annual). The Role fo Turkish-Israeli Alliance for Maintaining Security in the Middle East. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 130

[430] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000). Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemi Ortadoğu'sunda Türkiye'nin İsrail'e Karşı Politikası 1991-1998. (Turkish Policy Against Israel in the Post-Cold War Era Middle East 1991-1998). Istanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayınları. 3

Arabs themselves were normalizing their relations with Israel at the time, it would

have been unreasonable for Turkey to not do the same thing. What is more, "the

peace process had made such relations acceptable and thus public" [431], because the

> "Turkish officials had become immune from domestic Islamic reaction and
> fierce Arab criticism. Stating that there was no need to be 'more Arab than
> the Arabs', the Turkish officials gained the luxury of constructing their
> policies without the restrictions of popular demands."[432]

One month after the initiation of the Madrid Peace Conference, diplomatic

relations between Turkey and Israel were upgraded to ambassadorial level.

However, it was also obvious that Turkey still continued her traditional policy of

caution and balance. It upgraded its diplomatic relations to ambassadorial level with

both Israel and the PLO at the same time. Secondly, Hikmet Cetin, the foreign

minister at the time, cancelled its visit to Israel in July 1993, when the Israeli forces

attacked southern Lebanon.[433]

Right after the diplomatic relations were upgraded, important developments

took place. First of all, Turkish Minister of Toursim, Abdulkadir Ates made a visit

to Israel in June 1992, becoming the first Turkish minister visiting the country since

the last 27 years. After this visit, during which an agreement on tourism had been

signed, the two countries initiated the mechanism of political cooperation in

September 1992. The goal behind this initiation was to use the potential for

cooperation, which had arisen out of the peace process and the two countries'

Western and democratic orientation, in order to prevent common threats such as

terrorism, fundamental Islamic movements and the weapons of mass destruction.

Especially after the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles, Turkish foreign minister

---

[431] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era.
[Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 174
[432] Arıboğan, Deniz Ülke. (2000/01, Annual). The Role of Turkish-Israeli Alliance for Maintaining
Security in the Middle East. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 137
[433] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 175

Hikmet Çetin made a visit to Israel in November 1993, becoming the highest

ranking Turkish official to visit Israel, since its creation in 1948. This visit was

probably the most significant turning point in the history of Turkish-Israeli relations,

not only due to the framework agreements signed on economic cooperation, tourism

and educational exchange programs, but also because relations kept improving in

many other areas, from then on.[434]

The visit of an Israeli delegation headed by the Defence Ministry Director,

General David Ivry to Ankara in 1993 was the next meaningful development, since

it had been planned to pave the way for military cooperation.[435] This era of

'reticence', which had started with the Madrid Conference, ended with the visit of

Hikmet Çetin to Israel on 13-15 November 1993.[436]

Moreover, general disappointment and dissatisfaction with the Arab

governments since the Cold War years made Turkey more inclined to develop

bilateral relations with Israel.[437] During the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, Turkey had

not been able to find the support it hoped for, from the Arab governments with

regard to Turkey's foreign policy problems such as Cyprus. Besides, due to such

issues such as the use of the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris and the Kurdish

problem, Turkey's relations with her Middle Eastern neighbours, especially with

Syria, had been seriously strained. The only consequence of Turkey's pro-Arab

policy was the improvement in economic ties and that was unfortunately limited

only to the oil producing states of the region. Even that could not prevent the

decrease in the attractiveness of Turkish businesses in the region as oil revenues

---

[434] Yavuz, Hakan. (Autumn, 1997). Turkish-Israeli Relations through the lens of the Turkish identity debate. [Electronic version]. Journal of Palestine Studies. 5
[435] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). Changing Relations: Turkish-Israeli-Arab Triangle. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1i, 5 of the article.
[436] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000). Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemi Ortadoğu'sunda Türkiye'nin İsrail'e Karşı Politikası 1991-1998. (Turkish Policy Against Israel in the Post-Cold War Era Middle East 1991-1998). Istanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayınları. 2
[437] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000). 1

started to decline during the mid-1980s.[438] "The percentage of Turkey's exports to the Middle East dropped from 27 per cent in 1987 to 14 per cent in 1993. Imports, on the other hand, decreased from 19 per cent to 11 per cent in the same period."[439]

As a result, during this first half of the 1990s, diplomatic relations were upgraded to ambassadorial level and there were frequent high level visits between Israel and Turkey. What is more, the volume of trade increased exceptionally between 1992 and 1994 along with flourishing cultural and educational relations. However, Turkish diplomatic and military sources were denying the existence of strategic cooperation, "declaring that Turkish-Israeli relations did not involve anything of a military nature and that Turkey is careful to balance its relations with Israel and the Arab world."[440]

The real change in Turkish-Israeli relations took place in 1994, starting first with Prime Minister Çiller's visit to Israel. The event stands out as highly noteworthy not only for being the first visit by a Turkish Prime Minister to Israel, but also due to the signing of cooperation agreements in the fields of telecommunications, postal services and the fight against drug trafficking. The visit was at the same time a big gesture, pleasing the Israelis, because Tansu Çiller had also openly praised Zionism, by even comparing Ben-Gurion and Atatürk.[441] The fact that Ankara showed a different approach by not refraining from openly increasing its political and strategic ties with Israel, has both domestic and external reasons, which are highly related.

[438] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 174
[439] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 174
[440] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 175
[441] Yavuz, Hakan. (Autumn, 1997). Turkish-Israeli Relations through the lens of the Turkish identity debate. [Electronic version]. Journal of Palestine Studies. 5

It was apparent that the peace environment which had been created with the Madrid Peace Conference did not last long and that the Middle East region was left with many unsolved problems, some of which posed a threat to Turkey's territorial integrity and security. The Kurdish Question and later Islamic fundamentalism became the two core issues that affected Turkish foreign policy decisions during the second half of the 1990s and within this context the Turkish elite put emphasis on relations with two neighbours: Syria and Iraq, both of which were related to the Kurdish issue. Thus, it might be implied that Turkey's strategic priority shifted to the Middle East during this period. On the other hand, Tansu Çiller's more hawkish attitude towards the PKK and the increasing role of the military establishment in the policy making process were two catalyzers for the development of close ties with Israel. The development was particularly in security issues, because the struggle with internal threats, securing the regime and protecting Turkey's territorial integrity had become the major concerns of the foreign policy makers.[442]

In 1994, two agreements, which need to be pointed out with regard to the overall military cooperation, were signed. There was first of all an Agreement on Security and Secrecy in May 1994, according to which security information should not be transferred to third parties. Secondly, there was the Memorandum on Mutual Understanding and Co-operation in November 1994, the aim of which was countering terrorism.[443]

---

[442] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, 82), 176-7
[443] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). Changing Relations: Turkish-Israeli-Arab Triangle. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 5 of the article.

Before going on to a discussion of how and why Turkish-Israeli relations developed so significantly, it is necessary to analyze the regional atmosphere and Turkey's relations with Iraq, Syria and Iran during that period.

The fact that the future of Iraq was left unresolved after the Gulf War, was a major concern for Turkey, since there was a power vacuum in northern Iraq, from where, Turkey feared, the PKK would launch its cross-border attacks to Turkey. Besides, the ideas of disintegration and the formation of an independent Kurdish State, were totally unacceptable for Turkey. Increasingly during the mid-1990s, Turkey engaged in launching large-scale incursions to the Kurdish part of northern Iraq, in order to weaken the power and end the activities of the PKK. On the other hand, Turkey was highly discontent about economic losses due to Iraq's ambiguous condition. That is why the central point of Turkish foreign policy towards the Iraqi issue became the reestablishment of Iraq's territorial integrity; however, Turkey's formulation and implementation of policy toward Iraq was really hard and it lad left little room for manoeuvre, since both the United States and Israel were content with the status-quo in Iraq, even if they did not openly give support to the Kurdish nationalists.[444]

At the same time, Turkish-Syrian relations were deteriorating since the elites linked the Kurdish issue with Syria, whom they believed aided PKK's terrorist acts against Turkey. There was also an additional concern that the United States was particularly accomodating towards Syria, since it wanted to conclude peace at the end of Syrian-Israeli negotiations. Turkey was fearful that in case of a peace deal, Syria would become more aggressive, due to the relief of its overriding engagement with Israel and of having to redeploy part of its troops to its Iraqi, as well as Turkish

---

[444] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 176

borders. Turkey was also worried that the water problem with Syria could become a
bargaining point in Syrian-Israeli talks.[445]

There were specific events during this period, which made Ankara highly
alarmed and at unease. First of all, Hatay was already a sensitive issue between the
two countries, since Syria, even though only in rhetoric, challenged the legitimacy
of Hatay by never accepting its accession to Turkey in 1936. In 1995, there were an
increasing number of reports which showed PKK's incursions in this province.
Secondly, Syria was continuously, in this period, trying to internationalize the water
issue and to bring it to the attention of the Arab world. It might have worked, since
the Arab summit in Damascus in December 1995, criticized Turkey's attitude
towards the water issue.[446] Finally, there was growing concern among Turkish elites
with regard to the developing relations between Greece and Syria.

> "In 1995, it was reported that Greece and Syria signed an agreement in
> which Syria agreed to allow Greek aircraft to use Syrian air bases in case of
> conflict with Turkey...In June 1996 there were growing tensions on the
> Turkish-Syrian border. Responding to the news that up to 40,000 Syrian
> troops were being moved towards the border, a state minister told the press
> that if they (Syrians) go too far, they will get a slap."[447]

Another point of concern for the Turkish Government was the establishment
of close ties between Syria and Iran, because Turkish authorities were also accusing
the Iranian state for providing shelter for the PKK militants. Even though this was
denied by the Iranian government, Turkish worries nonetheless continued and there
were even rumors that Ciller Government would attack and destroy the PKK bases
in Iran in May 1996.[448]

---

[445] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 177
[446] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 177
[447] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 177
[448] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 177

The change of goverment in June of 1996 brought questions to many people's minds especially with regard to Turkish foreign policy. Even though Necmettin Erbakan was the Prime Minister, his Refah Party had to make coalition with the True Path Party in order to form the new government (Refah-Yol), still the Islamic orientation of Refah was well-known by many, who were most concerned about how this orientation would affect Turkey's relations with other states and thus its position in the international arena.[449]

It has been seen, first of all, that due to the different aspirations and policies of the two parties, there have been ambiguities and fickleness in Turkish foreign policy during this period.[450] As well as differences of approach to many issues, the Refahyol Government also showed similarities in its policies to those of previous governments of both the Cold-War and post-Cold war period.[451]

In many aspects, principles of traditional Turkish policy such as a balanced approach to foreign relations, continuing close ties with the West as a Nato member and aspiring for a full-membership to European Union, while trying to develop multilateral relations with many states, endured. This was not necessarily because Erbakan and his team did not want to change anything, but rather because Refah was not the only party in power. As Oguzhan Asiltürk, the Secretary General of the party had stated, their position, as a coalition partner was not suitable for implementing the programs they had in mind.[452]

For instance, Necmettin Erbakan, even though he was strictly critical of Turkey's relations with Israel before coming to power, was not able to change the

---

[449] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 178

[450] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). Refahyol Policy toward the Islamic World and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: Continuity, Change and Implications for the Present and the Future. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 81

[451] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). 82

[452] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). 82-3

course of relations. What is more, there was even more consolidation of relations when the agreement for military and defence cooperation was signed. Another issue, which Refah had opposed beforehand, was the close ties with the United States and Western governments during the Gulf War and especially the Operation Provide Comfort. Ironically, however, Refahyol Government, shortly after coming to power, has renewed the mandate of the Operation Provide Comfort II. The only difference it showed from previous governments was that, it brought the issue to the agenda of the Turkish Grand National Assembly for the first time.[453]

In terms of its approach to certain issues both in domestic, as well as foreign policy, The Refahyol period shows commonalities with the Ozal Era, both when Turgut Ozal was Prime Minister and President. Both leaders criticised the foreign affairs bureaucracy for not being active enough and for not taking brave initiatives, as necessitated by the new post-cold war conditions. Similarly, neither refrained from acting independently, bypassing the bureaucracy and thus antagonising the armed forces. In addition, both tried to develop relations with the Islamic countries, not only to benefit from the economic gains, but also to strengthen its position in the international scene, including its relations with the West.[454]

Despite these similarities, the foreign policy during Refahyol Government also showed sharp differences with the former Turkish governments. Even though its official rhetoric seemed to be in line with Turkey's traditional policy, The Refah Party did not refrain from taking some bold measures as well. The most significant characteristic of their ideology, manifesting itself in foreign policy, was the party's efforts to contribute to the unification of the Ummah. The major goal was to develop as close ties with the Islamic world as possible, while at the same time

---

[453] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). 83
[454] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). 84

opposing Israel and the American hegemony in world politics. In conformity with this policy, Erbakan's first foreign visit was to Iran, during which he announced his initiative for a defence cooperation agreement with Iran. The first foreign visit he received was the Syrian ambassador to Turkey. "After the visit, Erbakan declared to the press that he did not believe that Syria supported the PKK and he dismissed these accusations and called them propaganda by the West."[455] Beside visiting states like Pakistan, Libya, Sudan, Egypt and Nigeria, Erbakan also made contacts with some radical leaders of the Islamic world. Among these were the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Kurdish leader of the Islamic Kurdistan of Iraq, who was hoped to help Turkey, by convincing such countries like Syria and Iraq to end their support of the activities of the terrorist groups against Turkey. What is more, Rasit el Gannuşi of Tunisia was reported to have been given financial assistance from the special fund of the Prime Minister's Office. As is typical of fundamentalist ideology, Refah Party's actions undermined the national interests of the state for the sake of a transnational solidarity of Muslim believers.[456]

Even though the Refah Party seems to have commonalities with the Ozal Government in terms of taking unprecedented steps that were not necessarily backed by the Council of Ministers and by trying to improve relations with the Muslim states, still there were significant ideological differences behind these actions. While Turgut Özal, for instance, criticised the Foreign Affairs bureaucrats for not being active enough, Erbakan was complaining about the fact that the Turkish diplomatic cadre, with its Western type of education, did not represent the Islamic traditions of the Turkish people. " A Refah Party parliamentarian urged the

---

[455] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 179
[456] Aykan, Mahmt Bali. (2000/01, Annual). Refahyol Policy toward the Islamic World and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: Continuity, Change and Implications for the Present and the Future. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 85

Turkish diplomats appointed to Germany to engage in intimate contact with Nurcus

and Süleymancıs (Muslim Brotherhoods).[457]

As mentioned previously, Turkey's foreign policy decisions during this

period were increasingly being formed by the Turkish military and elite's fears and

perceptions of threat. As a result of this security-based foreign policy in the Middle

East, the relative weight of actors in the policy making and implementation process

changed, with the military becoming highly prominent by means of interventions

through the National Security Council.[458]

In 1997, there emerged a new concept,which the Turkish public came to hear

for the first time: national military strategic concept. It was heard during the

briefings given by the joint chiefs of staff to different segments of the elite such as

academicians, journalists and representatives of civil society organizations. It was in

a way a consequence of these briefings that developing close ties with Israel became

so crucial for policy makers and that it drew so much support from a broad segment

of Turkey's body politic, including, as far as the parties concerned, the Democratic

Left Party on the one hand and the National Action Party on the other. The national

military strategic concept defined two major internal threats for Turkey: Islamic

fundamentalism and irredentism, which, as argued, were mostly fed by Iran and

Syria respectively. The military and the other policy makers counted on establishing

a close strategic cooperation with Israel, which they assumed, could work efficiently

in solving Turkey's problems in this region, by being a deterrence to the countries

mentioned.[459] It was in a way a foreign policy result of the restlesness of the Turkish

Armed forces and its discontent with the Refahyol policies, that Turkey's relations

---

[457] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). 86-7
[458] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era".
[Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 177-8
[459] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 178

with Israel reached new heights. "According to Turkish military commanders, the danger came from both secessionist terror and Islamic fundamentalist activities directly encouraged and participated in by the Refah party."[460]

What is more, Turkey's desire to obtain technology and military hardware came at a time when the Western allies were most critical of Turkey for its human rights violations and when Turkey's relations with Greece were rather poor.

> "In 1995 the U.S. Congress gave the first signals of an arms embargo. Ankara applied to several European states for modernization of its F-4s but was turned down. Israel, on the other hand, was a manufacturer of top grade missiles, tanks, and aircraft, used the same US technology and standards and most importantly, was happy to sell without such scrutiny."[461]

Both countries had also economic issues on their agenda. While Israel wanted to penetrate Central Asia by means of Turkey, Turkey seeked Israeli support for getting U.S. backing for the routing of oil pipelines from the Caspian Sea to the port of Iskenderun.[462]

Besides, the change of government in Israel was influential in paving the way for stronger cooperation in security issues between the two countries. Unlike Itzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, Netanyahu openly stated that the PKK was a terrorist organization and that Israel did not give support to the establishment of an independent Kurdish State.[463]

In sum, the Refah party, despite the anti-Western and anti-Israeli rhetoric it used in the past, could not help but watch the intensification and development in Turkish-Israeli relations. First of all, an agreement on Defence Industry Co-

---

[460]Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). Refahyol Policy toward the Islamic World and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: Continuity, Change and Implications for the Present and the Future. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 96

[461] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2), 178

[462] Arıboğan, Deniz Ülke. (2000/01, Annual). The Role fo Turkish-Israeli Alliance for Maintaining Security in the Middle East. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 143

[463] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 178

operation, which had been previously initiated during the True Path coalition government, was completed in August 1996 and Turkey held joint military exercises, upgrading the level of its military cooperation with Israel.[464] This agreement "provided the framework for the two 'upgrading deals' signed in 1997 and 1998, for the modernization of Turkish F-4s and F-5s."[465]

According to an argument, this strategic allignment with Israel has been the manifestation of Turkey's major aim in the 1990s, which was generating a new role in the Middle East. Some Arab countries viewed this development as Turkey's second betrayal of the Arabs in the last fifty years. After the recognition of the Israeli state in 1949, this was the second time when Turkey acted in a totally anti-Arab way.[466] It was interpreted as "the partnership between the old oppressor and the modern usurper."[467]

The Turkish-Israeli Free Trade Agreement was finally ratified by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in April 1997. It was also in April that, the Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy visited Ankara, while the Middle East Peace Process had come to a halt, because of the decision of the Israeli government to etablish new Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem. Finally, in May 1997, Turan Tayan, Refahyol's Defence Minister, made a visit to Israel, during which Israel and Turkey became ready to sign agreements on several areas. Among these were, Israel's modernization of Turkey's F-5 planes at a cost of $300 million; Turkey's purchase of Arrow missile defence system from Israel and also the making of joint plans by the two countries, in order to create a joint strategy against terrorist groups backed by Syria and Iran. In a most paradoxical way, as can be seen from these

---

[464] Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). 178
[465] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). Changing Relations: Turkish-Israeli-Arab Triangle. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1, 5
[466] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). 1
[467] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). 3

developments, the strategic part of Turkish-Israeli relations has been strengthened during the Refah Party dominated Refahyol coalition government.[468] From time to time the military sources made comments on the strategic implications of close cooperation with Israel. According to those comments, "we are surrounded on all sides by trouble. We are in the hot seat. It is critical for us to jump outside this circle of chaos and find friends in the region. Israel was the perfect choice."[469]

At the same time, water became an important tool for cooperation between Turkey and Israel in the late 1990s. The importance of control of water in the context of Israel's national security doctrine had been made public in a declaration by the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture in 1990. It was stated that, "it is difficult to conceive of any political solution consistent with Israel's survival that does not involve complete continued Israeli control of water and sewage systems."[470] The memorandum signed by Turkey and Israel in July 1999, was a significant sign of the hydrological cooperation aspect of the warm relations between the two countries. With this memorandum, which had been initiated by the then-Turkish President Süleyman Demirel's offer to supply Israel with the water from the Manavgat River, it was clear that Turkey was committed to providing the Israeli state with 50 million cubic meters of water per year[471]. However, there was not a formally signed final agreement until October 2002, mostly due to Israel's doubts, resulting from fears of dependence on extraenous water sources and misreading of the importance Ankara attached to the water issue. As a consequence of this delay,

> "over a six-month period in 2000, Israel lost upwards of $5 billion in
> defense contracts with Turkey- including tenders for advanced attack

---

[468] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). Refahyol Policy toward the Islamic World and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: Continuity, Change and Implications for the Present and the Future. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 96-7

[469] Bengio, Ofra and Gencer Özcan. (2000, March-May). 5

[470] Berman, Ilan. (2002, winter). Water and Turkish Security. Turkish Policy Qurterly. 47

[471] Berman, Ilan. (2002, winter). 47

helicopters and a lucrative $1 billion tank modernization and upgrade program- in a clear manifestation of Turkish displeasure over the stalled hydrological talks between the two countries."[472]

On the other hand, as of 2002, the implementation of the final accord, according to which Israel would purchase 50 million cubic meters of water from Turkey, was still up in the air, due to the difficulties of agreement on both the price and the means of delivery of the water.[473]

Unlike the deteriorating relations of Israel with both Egypt and Jordan, the two Arab countries which had the most peaceful and intensive bilateral relations with Israel, there was no change in Turkey's relations with the Israeli state after the second Intifada. While "Egypt withdrew her veteran ambassador to Israel and Jordan decided to defer sending her intended ambassador to Israel"[474], Turkey sustained its economic, cultural and tourist ties with the Jewish state.

To be more specific, Turkey offered Israel an irrigation project in Southeast Anatolia and it was still committed to providing her with water from the Manavgat river during the Intifada. At the same time, Israeli state still enjoyed the benefits of the contract signed in 1996 to upgrade Turkish F-15 planes; the volume of trade was continually increasing, reaching a level of $1.2 billion in 2002 and the Israeli companies began investing in joint ventures in Turkey[475].

In general, "post-Cold War Turkish foreign policy can be outlined as a pragmatic policy that supports the international community's consensus positions, advocates multilateral cooperation and remains cautious... Turkey's principle

---

[472] Berman, Ilan. (2002, winter). 47
[473] Berman, Ilan. (2002, winter). 48
[474] Liel, Alon. (2003, summer). The Middle East After Saddam and Arafat. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 44
[475] Liel, Alon. (2003, summer). 45

orientation is still toward the West and Europe and an alliance with the United States."[476]

With regard to the Middle East, during the post-Cold War period, as Turkish statesmen have declared and emphasized from time to time, Turkey's traditional policy of 'balance', stood in the way of making an active contribution to the Middle East peace. Being aware of the necessity of preserving the status-quo and balance in its relations with the countries of the region, Turkey always tried to refrain from playing the role of a mediator at any side and facet of the Arab-Israeli conflict.[477]

Even though it may not have been mentioned in Turkish official discourse, it is of great significance to note that Turkish experience in and policy toward the Middle East during the Menderes Era has been an important factor shaping Turkish statesmen's ideas of what kind of an attitude to display in policies regarding the Middle East region, during the post-Cold War period. It was seen that Menderes Government's efforts to play the role of leader and to be active in shaping the developments in the region, the outcome of which was the Baghdad Pact, had been concluded with rather upsetting results in terms of Turkish national interests. First of all, Soviet influence in the region, notwithstanding expectations, had significantly increased. Secondly, it had resulted in Turkey's alienation by the countries of the region, at a time when it was seriously in need of international support. Thus, this experience had been a good sign that there were limits to how much Turkey could shape the foreign policy behaviour of the Middle Eastern countries and these limitations clarified how active Turkey could be in its policies toward the region. Unless it took these into consideration, there would emerge a great deal of suspicion

---

[476] Kut, Şule. The contours of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s. In, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press. 14-5
[477] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000). Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemi Ortadoğu'sunda Türkiye'nin İsrail'e Karşı Politikası 1991-1998. (Turkish Policy Against Israel in the Post-Cold War Era Middle East 1991-1998). Istanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayınları. 2

and enmity among these countries towards Turkey, which could further be the target of anti-Western forces in the region.[478]

Until the 1990s, the basic principles of Turkish foreign policy toward the Middle East has been neutrality in the conflicts among the regional powers, pursuing a rather low focus policy toward Israel and emphasis on developing relations with the Western powers. At the same time, Turkey always gave support to the Palestinian cause, demanding Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.[479]

Especially starting in the 1990s, Turkey has been an advocate of the Middle East Peace Process, since as an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has declared, Turkey "as a facilitator, has tried to eliminate any mutual misunderstanding, promote an atmosphere of confidence and help the Israelis and the Palestinians maintain their channels of diaologue"[480]. Due to the fact that we have good relations with both sides,"we have tried to contribute to be a defusing factor in circumstances that could lead to escalation."[481]

For instance, the former President Süleyman Demirel has participated as a member in the Mitchell Committee and contributed to the Committee report, released in April 2001, which proposed the major steps to be taken, in order to break the deadlock and start the negotiations between the sides.[482] The main objectives were, ending the violence, rebuilding confidence between the sides, and resuming

---

[478] Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000). Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemi Ortadoğu'sunda Türkiye'nin İsrail'e Karşı Politikası 1991-1998. (Turkish Policy Against Israel in the Post-Cold War Era Middle East 1991-1998). Istanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayınları. 2
[479] Gürkan, Ihsan. (2000/01, Annual). Present Situation as of October 2000 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: Causes, Expectations, Possibilities and Hopes. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 58
[480] Ünaydın, Solmaz. (2002, winter). Turkey's Policy Toward the Middle East and the Question of Iraq. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 35
[481] Moralı, Turan. (2002, winter). Turkey's Security Perspectives and Perceptions. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 57
[482] Ünaydın, Solmaz. (2002, winter). 35

the negotiations.[483] What is more, Turkish observers continued to serve as part of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron, regardless of the fact that a Turkish officer had been murdered in a terrorist attack[484].

With the initiation of the second Intifada, attacks by both sides, violence and human losses became the norm in the West Bank and Gaza. As to Turkey, Ankara's policy has been to pursuade both sides to stop acts of violence and to start the negotiation process again. "Concurrently, Turkey maintained her policy to sustain her multilateral relations, without being taken by provocations in the belief that it is the best course of action in the present situation."[485]

However, it seems that, despite arguments with regard to Turkey's new activism in the post-cold war era, Turkish foreign policy, specifically with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has not been more active during this period, compared to that in the cold war era. Turkey has always been in favor of peace, as stated in the declarations of senior officials. It has always supported the Palestinian cause at international platforms, but this support has not gone beyond declarations and voting for the UN resolutions, favoring the Palestinian cause. What is more, Turkey has not taken initiatives on its own, to bring the sides together, so that they could resume negotiations. Neither has it come up with original proposals for solving the conflict and bringing about peace. Thus, similar to its position in the cold war period, Turkey has never tried to play the role of a mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process in the 1990s.

When, for example, Turkey did not take part in the Sharm al-Sheikh Summit which took place with the participation of President Clinton, King Abdullah II,

---

[483] What was the Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Commission led by former US Senator George Mitchell?" Retrieved 6 April 2004, from http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1991to_now_alaqsa_mitchell.php
[484] Ünaydın, Solmaz. (2002, winter). 35
[485] Berman, Ilan. (2002, winter). Water and Turkish Security. Turkish Policy Qurterly. 48

President Husnü Mubarek, Kofi Annan and Javier Solana, it was claimed that,

"Turkey's participation would also be appropriate, for her being the most powerful

and influential arbiter, balancing regional state and contributor to the Peace

Process".[486] Still, PM Ecevit believed that Turkey would be most beneficial in

bilateral talks and head to head consultation, rather than in such large-scale

multilateral meetings.[487] Still, though, Turkey has not been able to play an active

role and has, unfortunately, not been much beneficial during the peace process.

It has been seen that Turkey was a major actor in the Middle East politics

since the beginning of the 1990s, but this involvement was most of the time based

on Turkey's security concerns and threat perceptions from the region.[488]

In the cold-war era, fear of Communism, threat from the Soviet Union in

short, the politics of the bipolar world had been an important factor shaping Turkish

foreign policy. In a similar fashion, threat perceptions have been the dominant factor

during times of decision making. However, this time, during the 1990s, security

concerns mostly focused on possible threats within Turkey, such as PKK terror and

Islamic fundamentalism, and also on threats from the Middle East region, especially

from Syria and Iran, which were believed to aid the PKK and the fundamentalist

Islamists.

It was as a result of this that, relations with Israel, on so many areas

improved immensely during the 1990s, as opposed to bilateral relations in the cold

war years. Regardless of this rapproachment, Turkey does not seem to have changed

---

[486] Berman, Ilan. (2002, winter). Water and Turkish Security. Turkish Policy Qurterly. 48
[487] Gürkan, Ihsan. (2000/01, Annual). Present Situation as of October 2000 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: Causes, Expectations, Possibilities and Hopes. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 11, 58
[488] Altunışık, Meliha Benli. (2001, June-July). The Breakdown of the Post-Gulf War Middle East Order?. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. VI, 2, 6

its attitude and decisions with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is most obvious from its voting patterns at the United Nations.

Between 1992 and 2000, in some 179 UN General Assembly Resolutions with regard to the peace process, Turkey has voted 170 times with the Arab majority. The exceptions were mostly related to issues such as compensation and the right of peoples to self-determination, which is quite normal considering Turkish sensitivities with regard to Armenian, but especially Kurdish claims. Even during times of crisis with Syria, it still did not refrain from voting for UN GA resolutions, calling for Israeli withdrawal from the Golan to the 1967 line. Again in October, 2000, it voted for the UN GA resolution which condemned Israeli forces for using excessive force against the Palestinians and the Jewish settlers, for involving in illegal acts of violence against the Palestinians.[489]

Thus, it is clear that Turkey improved its relations and cooperation with Israel, independent from its general policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. It is argued that along with Turkey, Israeli officials have also acted the same way, ruling out public support for Turkey, with regard to the Kurdish issue. As Turkey continued supporting the Palestinian cause, Israel refrained from labeling the PKK, as a terrorist organization and from defending Turkey's policies towards its Kurds.[490]

In sum, considering the declarations and policies made by the presidents, foreign ministers, prime ministers and the military, it is obvious that the basic change in the post-cold war era has been in Turkey's relations with Israel. However, with regard to Turkish foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there

---

[489] Makovsky, Alan. "Turkish-Israeli Ties in the Context of Israeli-Arab Tension". Washington Institute. for Near East Policy. Policy Watch. No:502. November 10, 2000. Retrieved from, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/
[490] Makovsky, Alan. (November 10, 2000).

seems to be continuity in the 1990s. Turkey continued to support the Palestinian cause, in a similar fashion, at international platforms, but the much-disputed conflict and the peace process never became a high priority issue on the agenda of foreign policy makers. Domestic politics has always been more dominant than regional developments and changes in the international system, in influencing Turkey's foreign policy decisions with reafrd to the Middle East. In a similar fashion, Kemalist identity and the role of the foreign policy establishment and the military elite have been more strongly felt in policies than the attitude of the conservative and Islamist elite.

When it comes to the public perceptions of the Palestinian question, it seems that unlike policy makers, who consciously chose to ignore the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a large majority of the Turkish people have always followed the developments in the peace process, and supported the Palestinians in their hearts. For them, the basis of the question is the status of Jerusalem and who will get to control the holy sites.[491]

Even though the majority of the Turkish people will support the Palestinians when asked, it is dubious how much interest people have with regard to developments in the peace process, during the recent years. Though it is really sad, it seems that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is both a very important, as well as a very standard issue. It has been important because, for long years it had been a sensitive issue for the Turkish public, who have closely followed the developments in the conflict. At the same time, however, it is trivial since the conflict, not having been solved since years, has become almost everyday and routine.[492] As it is the case for a common Turkish citizen, this also applies to our leaders and policy

[491] Aras, Bulent. (5 April, 2002). "Filistin Sorunu ve Turkiye". (Palestinian Question and Turkey). Zaman. Retrieved from, http://www.zaman.com.tr/2002/04/05/yorumlar/
[492] Çubukçu, Mete. (2002). Bizim Filistin. (Our Palestine). Istanbul: Metis Yayinlari. 31

makers. When the issue of the Palestinian question is brought up, when we are made to watch it, read and talk about it, it is a subject we feel most strongly about and which we are highly sensitive to. Still, it seems that we usually tend to push it aside and indulge ourselves with issues we find more important to talk about. The duration of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seems to have made it, unfortunately, trivial in the eyes of the people.

Chapter IV: CONCLUSION

It has been decades since the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been waiting to be solved. The disorganization, lack of knowledge of diplomatic tricks, and a leader who has been most obstinate and has lost the respect and faith of both his own people and of the international community, has left the Palestinians at a rather disavantageous position, and led them towards more radical measures. On the other hand, Israel's insistence on bypassing international law, rejectionist attitude at peace talks and unique ambitions of leaders, mostly backed by the United States, have turned the Palestinian Question into the most complex and hard-to-solve conflicts of our time. Arab countries have not done anything more than paying lip service to the Palestinian cause and cursing the Israeli state, either. In a short time, however, they will have to understand the urgency of the problem, because increasingly populations of these countries are being radicalized and starting to protest at their governments for not trying hard enough to liberate Palestine. Since this has turned out to be a problem, disturbing their domestic affairs, Arab countries will, sooner or later, have to face with it.

Until now, Turkish foreign policy has been dominated by the bureacracy and the military elite, who have acted in line with traditionally established principles, such as non-interference in regional conflicts and made decisions mostly reflecting their security concerns. However, if Turkey's so eager with the democratization process, it also has to reconsider tendencies and attitude in the realm of foreign policy. In a democratic country, public sensitivities and societal demands have to be taken into account and at some level, they have to be integrated in the decision making process. The Palestinian question, has been the

major foreign policy issue, where the society and the state have been most at odds with. Turkish people's interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, sensitivities about the status of Jerusalem have unfortunately not been influential on Turkey's previous policies with regard to the conflict. This will hopefully change in the near future, and Turkey will no longer be so distant to the problem. It is also a necessity to root out the opinion that Turkey cannot take an independent action, due to its being almost a puppet in the U.S.-Israel axis.

At the moment, Turkey has a great advantage, which it should make use of without losing any time. The relations with Israel have improved immensely during the last years. Despite the recent attitude of Tayyip Erdogan's government towards Israel and its criticisms of Israeli actions towards the Palestinians, it seems to be a very low possibility that Turkey's relations with Israel will go back to how they were during the cold war years. Both Israel, as well as Turkey are too important for each other in a region like the Middle East. The signing of agreements with regard to water and energy plants, in the spring of 2004, is indeed a major proof. Thus, it seems highly unlikely that they will put this established friendship into risk

At the same time, the Palestinians look forward to Turkey's active involvement in the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Arafat has more than once declared his belief in Turkey and stated his hope that Turkey will finally show more efforts in bringing the sides together towards reconciliation and peace

Considering how American and other initiatives for solving the conflict have been somewhat futile until now; and assessing Turkey's good relations with both sides, knowledge about the dynamics of the region, it would not be

exaggerated to say that there is a lot that Turkey can do with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is arguable, however, whether Israel would welcome such Turkish involvement in the conflict, as it stayed rather distant to Turkey's Kurdish issue and PKK problem, upto now. On the other hand, efforts by Turkey to make Israel come to terms with certain Palestinian demands might result in a favorable attitude towards Turkey by other countries of the region, which look rather suspiciously towards Turkey's close cooperation with Israel, regarding this as a natural outcome of Turkey's being a puppet of the United States.

There is also the problem of the increasing radicalization of the Palestinians. When the authority and control of Arafat over his people is highly questionable, and the influence of radical Islamists and groups like Hamas is ever expanding, it is unforseeable how effective a moderate Turkey can be during the peace process. As it is, the current AKP government, with its more religious and conservative outlook, might be more successful in having an impact on the decisions of the Palestinians towards a settlement, than the previous Turkish governments.

At a time when security and stability are almost the most important things for not only Turkey, but also for other countries of the world, it is of immediate necessity to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When terror has become a standard word in our every day conversations, it is unthinkable to not use all efforts to come up with peace proposals for this ongoing conflict, the consequences of which affect not only the two communities but the whole Middle East region, and indirectly the whole world.

It seems to be time for Turkish elites and policy makers to stop pushing this issue aside, and actually become committed to healing this, perhaps the biggest trauma of international politics.

The findings and analyses in this thesis also bring to mind other important questions, which can lead to further research, the key issues of which may be subjects for future studies. The first among these would probably be the role of outside powers in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this thesis, the main focus has been on the Palestinians, the Israelis and to a lesser extent the Arab governments. Through detailed research and analysis, I have tried to come up with answers as to why the Israelis and the Palestinians had failed to solve their conflict; what mistakes they had done, and what opportunities they had missed.

It is no doubt, however, that actors such as the United States, the United Nations and the European Union had been influential over the fact that there is still no resolution of the conflict. First of all, there has to be careful analysis of U.S.' foreign policy with regard to the conflict, considering that it is the main country behind most of the initiatives for agreements, bringing the sides together and making proposals. For this reason, America's relations with the Israeli state, the role of the Jewish lobby in affecting the decisions of the United States must be the first issue to be examined. Next, would be an evaluation of U.S. initiated peace plans, with their important aspects, as well as failures.

Besides the United States, the United Nations and the European countries are also players in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is important that all the UN Resolutions regarding the conflict should be carefully analyzed, and if there are any, the vague sections should be pointed out. This is significant, because in most of the peace talks, there are references to these resolutions. To what extent these

resolutions could be implemented or not and why, is the main question that should be asked and answered.

Last, but not the least, the study should also examine the peace plans proposed by the European powers. The attitude of the European countries in reaction to specific events, and their relations with Israel and the Palestinians could be evaluated in comparison to that of the United States. How objective they have been, what different proposals they have come up with to solve the conflict, and whether they have been willing enough or not in the resolution of this issue, would be the main questions to be investigated in this section.

Bibliography

Books:

Akın, Kenan. (2002). Filistin Dramı ve Yaser Arafat. Istanbul: Birey Yayıncılık.

Allison, Graham. And Zelikov, Philip. (1999). Essence of Decision: explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis. New York: Longman, Inc.

Aras, Bülent. (1998). Palestinian Isreali Peace Process and Turkey. New York: Nova Science Publishers

Aras, Bulent. (2004). Turkey and the Greater Middle East. Istanbul: TASAM Publications.

Aydın, Mustafa. (1998). Turkey: At The Threshold of the 21st Century. Ankara: International Relations Foundation.

Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000). Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemi Ortadoğu'sunda Türkiye'nin İsrail'e Karşı Politikası 1991-1998. (Turkey's Policy Against Israel in the Post-Gulf War Middle East). Istanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayınları.

Berberoğlu, Berch. (1999). Turmoil in the Middle East. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, p.96-8

Bickerton, Ian J. and Klausner, Carla L. (1998). A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Bill, James A. and Springborg, Robert. (2000). Politics in the Middle East. New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers.

Bishara, Marwan. (2002). Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid. New York: Zed Books.

Carey, Roane. (2001). The New Intifada. London: Verso.

Chestnot, Christian and Lama, Josephine. (2003). Filistinliler. (The Palestinians). Istanbul: Doruk Yayımcılık.

Chomsky, Noam. (2002). Amerikan Müdahaleciliği. (American Interventionism). Istanbul: Aram Yayıncılık

Çubukçu, Mete. (2002). Bizim Filistin. (Our Palestine). Istanbul: Metis Yayınları.

Demirer, Yücel ve Özbudun, Sibel. (2002). Isyanın Adı: Filistin. Ankara: Ütopya Yayınları.

Frankel, Glenn. (1994). Beyond the Promised Land. NewYork: Simon and Schuster.

Freedman, Robert O. (1991). The Intifada. Miami: Florida International University Press.

Friedman, Thomas L. (1989). From Beirut to Jerusalem. New York: Anchor Books.

Friedman, Thomas. L. (2002). Longitudes and Attitudes. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Fuller, Graham E. And Lesser, Ian O. (1993). Turkey's New Geopolitics. Colorado: Westview Press.

Girgin, Kemal. 1998. T.C. Hükümetleri Programlarında Dış Politikamız. (Our Foreign Policy in the Programs of Turkish governments). Ankara

Güvendiren, Ekrem. (1999, April). A Concise Report on Turkish-Israeli Relations. Istanbul: A Basım ve Reklam Ltd. Şti.

Heyd, Uriel. (1960). Ottoman Documents on Palestine: 1552-1615. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Ismael, Tareq Y. And Aydin, Mustafa. (eds.) (2003). Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century. Burlington, VT:Ashgate.

Jung, Dietrich and Piccoli, Wolfgango. (2001). Turkey at the Crossroads. London: Zed Books, Ltd.

Kirişçi, Kemal. (1986). The PLO and World Politics. London: Frances Printer.

Kozody, Neal. (2002). The Middle East Peace Process. San Fransisco: Encounter Books.

Makovsky, Alan and Sayarı, Sabri. (2000). Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy. Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Ma 'oz, Moshe. (ed.) (1975). Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press.

Mullen, George D. (1994). Peace in the Middle East. San Diego: Ican Press.
Owen, Roger. (2000). State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East. London: Routledge.

Özcan, Gencer ve Kut, Şule. (2000). En Uzun On Yıl. (The Longest Decade). Istanbul: Büke Yayınları.

Özmen, Süleyman. (2002). Ortadoğu'da Etnik, Dini Çatışmalar ve Israil. (Ethnic, Religious Conflicts in the Middle East and Israel). Istanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık.

Robins, Philip. (1991). Turkey and the Middle East. London: Pinter Publishers.

Rogan, Eugene L., and Shlaim, Avi. (Ed). (2001). The War for Palestine-Rewriting the History of 1948. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

Rothstein, Robert L., and Ma'oz, Moshe and Shikaki, Halil. (Eds). (2002). The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press.

Rubin, Barry and Kemal Kirişçi. (2002). Turkey in World Politics- an emerging multiregional power. Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press.

Rubin, Barry. (2002). The Tragedy of the Middle East. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Said, Edward. (2002). Yeni Binyilda Filistin Sorunu. (The Palestinian Question in the new thousand years). Istanbul: Aram Yayincilik

Soysal, İsmail. (1993). Türk Dış Politikası İncelemeleri için Kılavuz: 1919-1993 (Guide for Turkish Foreign Policy Analyses: 1919-1993). Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık.

Sönmezoğlu, Faruk. (2001). Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi. (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy). Istanbul: Der Yayınları.

Toprak, Bedirhan. (Ed). (2001). 11 Eylül. (September 11th). Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

Ülman, Haluk. (1991). Ortadoğu Sorunları ve Türkiye. (Middle Eastern Problems and Turkey). Istanbul: TÜSES.

Vatandaş, Aydoğan. (2003). Armageddon- Türkiye-İsrail Gizli Savaşı. (Armageddon- Turkish-Israeli Secret War). Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları

Articles:

Abramowitz, Morton I. (1993, summer). Dateline Ankara: Turkey after Özal. [Electronic version]. Foreign Policy. 91

Alantar, Özden. (2000/01, Annual). Turkish-Syrian Relations at the Crossroads. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies.

Alpher, Joseph. (1995, winter). Israel: the challenges of peace. [Electronic version]. Foreign Policy. 101.

Altunışık, Meliha. (2000, April). The Turkish-Israeli Rapproachment in the post-Cold War era. [Electronic version]. Middle Eastern Studies. 36, (2).

Altunışık, Meliha Benli. (2001, June-July). The Breakdown of the Post-Gulf War Middle East Order?. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. VI, 2

Aly, Abdel Monem Said. (2001, June-July). Hot Bargaining: The Middle East 2001. [Electronic version]. <u>Perceptions.</u> VI, 2

Aral, Berdal. (2001, January). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Security during the Ozal Decade, 1983-93. [Electronic version]. <u>Middle Eastern Studies.</u> 37, (1).

Aras, Bülent. (2002, Spring). Academic Perceptions of Turkish-Israeli Relations. <u>Alternatives.</u> 1, 1

Aras, Bülent. (2004, Mart). Büyük Ortadoğu, Türkiye ve AB. (Greater Middle East, Turkey and EU). <u>2023.</u> 35

Arıboğan, Ülke. (2000/01, Annual). The Role of Turkish-Israeli Alliance for Maintaining Security in the Middle East. <u>Turkish Review of Middle East Studies.</u>

Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1993, February). The Palestinian Question in Turkish Foreign Policy from the 1950s to the 1990s. [Electronic version]. <u>International Journal of Middle East Studies.</u> 25, (1), 91-110

Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (1996, summer). Turkish perspectives on Turkish-US relations concerning Persian Gulf security in the post-Cold War era: 1989-1995. [Electronic version]. <u>The Middle East Journal.</u> 50, (3)

Aykan, Mahmut Bali. (2000/01, Annual). Refahyol Policy Toward the Islamic World and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold Era: Continuity, Change and Implications for the Present and the Future. <u>Turkish Review of Middle East Studies.</u>

Bengio, Ofra and Özcan, Gencer. (2000, March-May). Changing Relations: Turkish-Israeli-Arab Triangle. [Electronic version]. <u>Perceptions.</u> V- number 1

Bengio, Ofra and Özcan, Gencer. (2001, April). Old Grievances, New Fears: Arab Perceptions of Turkey; Allignment with Israel. [Electronic version]. <u>Middle Eastern Studies.</u> 37, (2).

Berman, Ilan. (2002, winter). Water and Turkish Security. <u>Turkish Policy Quarterly.</u> 43-51

Ergüvenç, Şadi. (1998, June-August). Turkey's Security Perceptions. <u>Perceptions.</u> III, 2

Gölhan, Mehmet. (1993, Annual). Inaugural Speech of the "Water as an Element of Cooperation and Development in the Middle East" Conference(Ankara October 4, 1993). <u>Turkish Review of Middle East Studies.</u> 7, 175-179

Gresh, Alain. (1998, spring). Turkish-Israeli-Syrian relations and their impact on the Middle East. [Electronic version]. <u>The Middle East Journal.</u> 52, (2).

Gruen, Goerge. (1993, Annual). Turkey's Potential Contribution to Arab-Israel Peace. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7, 179-215

Gurkan, Ihsan. (1993, Annual). Turkish-Israeli Relations and the Middle East Peace Process. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7.

Gurkan, Ihsan. (1994/95, Annual). Israel and Turkey in the Middle East Perspective Today. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 8, 19-43

Gürkan, Ihsan. (2000/01, Annual). Present Situation as of October 2000 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: Causes, Expectations, Possibilities and Hopes. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies

Hadi, Mahdi Abdul. (2000, March-May). A Palestinian Perspective on the Peace Process. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1

Inbar, Efraim. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: A Realistic Assessment. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1

Jaber, Kamel S. Abu. (2000, March-May). The Arab-Israeli Peace: A Critical Evaluation. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. V, 1

Kirişçi, Kemal. (1994/95, Annual). Provide Comfort or Trouble: Operation Provide Comfort and its Impact on Turkish Foreign Policy. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 8, 43-69

Kirişçi, Kemal. (1996, March-May). Turkey in Search of Security in the Middle East: The Economic Dimension. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. III, 4

Kohen, Sami. (1996, June-August). On the Future of the Middle East. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. I, 2.

Laos, Nicholas K. (1999, December- 2000, February). International Security in the Post-Cold War Era. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. IV, 4

Liel, Alon. (2003, summer). The Middle East after Saddam and Arafat. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 41-53

Mughisuddin, Oya Akgonenc. (1993, Annual). Perceptions and Misconceptions in the Making of Foreign Diplomacy: A Study of Turkish-Arab Attitudes until the End of the 1970s. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 7, 147-175

Morali, Turan. (2002, winter). Turkey's Security Perspectives and Perceptions. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 51-65

Narlı, Nilüfer. (2000/01, Annual). Turkish-Iranian Relations: Historical Rivalry, Disputes and Prospects for Cooperation in the Post-Cold War Era. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies.

Öniş, Ziya. (1995, winter). Turkey in the post-Cold War era: In search of identity. [Electronic version]. The Middle East Journal. 49, (1)

Rouleau, Eric. (1993, November-December). The challenges to Turkey. [Electronic version]. Foreign Affairs. 72, 5.

Satloff, Robert. (1995, fall). The Path to Peace. [Electronic version]. Foreign Policy. 100

Satloff, Robert. (2000, March-May). Arab-Israeli Diplomacy in 2000: An Uphill Battle For Peace. [Electronic version] Perceptions. V, 1

Sayari, Sabri. (1997, spring). Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s. [Electronic version]. Journal of Palestine Studies. 26, (3), 44-55

Sever, Ayşegül. (1996-97). The Arab-Israeli Peace Process and Turkey Since the 1995 Interim Agreement. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies.

Shlaim, Avi. (1994, spring). The Oslo Accord. [Electronic version]. Journal of Palestine Studies. 23, 3

Soysal, Ismail. (1994/95, Annual). The Middle East Peace Process and Turkey. Turkish Review of Middle East Studies. 8, 69-99

Stone, Leonard A. (1997, March-May). Interpreting the Interpretation: Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. II, 1

Stone, Leonard A. (2001, June-July). Turkish Foreign Policy: Four Pillars of Tradition. [Electronic version]. Perceptions. VI, 2

Ünaydin, Solmaz. (2002, winter). Turkey's Policy Toward the Middle East and the Question of Iraq. Turkish Policy Quarterly. 31-43.

Walker Jr, Edward S. & Jahshan, Khalil E. & Shain, Yossi, & Eland, Ivan (Symposium). (2001, December). Negotiating Middle East peace: can the past be a guide to the future?. [Electronic version]. Middle East Policy. 8, (4), 43

Williams, Daniel. (1993, spring). Dateline Tunis: PLO R.I.P.?" [Electronic version]. Foreign Policy. 90.

Yavuz, Hakan. (1997, autumn). Turkish-Israeli Relations through the lens of the Turkish identity debate. [Electronic version]. Journal of Palestine Studies.

Web sites and documents

www.cnn.com

http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/vGARes (for United Nations General Assembly Resolutions)

http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/vCouncilRes (for United Nations Security Council Resolutions)

http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/qpal/ (for Question of Palestine at the UN)

http://www.un.org/Depts/dpi/palestine/ch6.pdf (for the Intifada UN)

www.haaretz.com

www.palestine-un.org

http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/watch/index.htm:

> Hazbay, Pemra. (May 26, 2004). Political Troubles Between Turkey and Israel?. Peacewatch. No. 459

> Makovsky, Alan and Ian Lesser. (July 29, 1996). Erbakan's Turkey: An Early Assessment. Policywatch. No. 209

> Makovsky, Alan. (April 26, 1996). Turkish/Israeli Cooperation, The Peace Process, And the Region. Policywatch. No. 195

> Eisenstadt, Michael. (July 24, 1997). Turkish-Israeli Military Cooperation: An Assessment). Policywatch. No. 262

> Makovsky, Alan. (December 27, 1996). Turkey: Erbakan at Six Months. Policywatch. No. 230

www.palestinechronicle.com

For articles and documents related to the Taba Talks:

http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/taba2001.htm

http://www.mideastweb.org/taba.htm

http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1991to_now_alaqsa_taba.php

For documents related to the Mitchell Commission and Report:

http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=36

http://www.mideastweb.org/mitchell_report.htm

http://www.israelinsider.com/channels/diplomacy/articles/dip_0032.htm

http://www.metimes.com/2K1/issue2001-19/reg/israel_objects_to.htm

http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/151254.asp?cp1=1#BODY-

http://www.zaman.com.tr/2002/04/05/yorumlar/

http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/nea/mitchell.htm

http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1991to_now_alaqsa_mitchell.php

http://www.palestineremembered.com/Acre/Palestine-Remembered/Story559.html

(for Palestine s Populations)