

**TRANSFORMATION OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY:  
A CASE STUDY OF JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT  
PARTY ERA**



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**TRANSFORMATION OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY:  
A CASE STUDY OF JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY  
ERA**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
PHD, Department of Politics & IR, Faculty of Social Sciences,  
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## FINAL APPROVAL

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*I certify that the research work presented in this thesis is to the best of my knowledge. All sources used and any help received in the preparation of this dissertation have been acknowledged. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in whole or in part, for any other degree in this or any other institution.*

Muhammad Zahid Iqbal

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

All praise be to Allah Almighty who gave me the strength and ability to complete this work. Allah says in the Holy Quran; “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted” (Surat no 49 Ayat no. 13). The division of human beings into various tribes is, in the long run, the foundation of the state system and also the foundation of International Relations, therefore, I consider this verse of the Holy Quran, the founding notion of IR. And may Allah Almighty’s countless blessings and infinite peace be upon His last and most-beloved Messenger sent for the entire mankind—Muhammad ﷺ

Truly, the present effort in the form of a research thesis would not have been completed without the special help, guidance and steady backing of my research supervisor Assistant Professor Dr Noor Fatima. Indeed, her valuable supervision was worth for me to muster ample inspiration and confidence to accomplish this work.

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Muhammad Zahid Iqbal

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research work to my Parents who suggested me to study  
International Relations as a subject

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AKP:</b>	<b>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (eng. Justice and Development Party)</b>
<b>ASALA:</b>	<b>The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia</b>
<b>CENTO:</b>	<b>Central Treaty Organization</b>
<b>EU:</b>	<b>European Union</b>
<b>GNA:</b>	<b>Grand National Assembly</b>
<b>HLCC:</b>	<b>High-Level Cooperation Council</b>
<b>IAEA:</b>	<b>International Atomic Energy Agency</b>
<b>IMF:</b>	<b>International Monetary Fund</b>
<b>JDP:</b>	<b>Justice and Development Party</b>
<b>NATO:</b>	<b>Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization</b>
<b>OECD:</b>	<b>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</b>
<b>OIC:</b>	<b>Organization of the Islamic Conference</b>
<b>OYAK:</b>	<b>Ordu Yardımlasma Kurumu (eng. Army Mutual Assistance Association)</b>
<b>PKK:</b>	<b>Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (eng. Kurdistan Workers Party)</b>
<b>USSR:</b>	<b>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</b>
<b>SEATO:</b>	<b>South East Asian Treaty Organization</b>
<b>TRACECA:</b>	<b>Transport Corridor Europe – Caucasus- Asia</b>

## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgment.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Tables .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>Figures.....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>CHAPTER 01.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.2 Statement of the Problem .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.3 Objectives of Study.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.4 Research Questions .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.5 Significance of Research .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.6 Literature Review.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.7 Research Methodology.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>1.8 Research Design.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>1.9 Research Strategy for Data Collection .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1.10 Sources of Data .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1.11 Data Analysis .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1.12 Organization of the Study .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>1.13 Theoretical Framework .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>1.13.1Levels of Analysis in International Relations.....</b>	<b>26</b>

<b>CHAPTER 02.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>2.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>2.2 Reforms Initiated by Mustafa Kemal.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>2.2.1 Republicanism .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>2.2.2 Nationalism.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>2.2.3 Populism .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>2.2.4 Etatism.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>2.2.5 Secularism .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>2.2.6 Revolutionism.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>2.2.7 Critical Review of the Reforms .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>2.3 Islamic Movement Emerges in Turkey .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>2.4 Foreign Policy of Turkey Influenced by Internal Changes .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>CHAPTER 03.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY AND TRANSFORMATION PROCESS.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>3.1 Emerging Foreign Policy Principles of Justice and Development Party: A Swerve from the West.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>3.2 The Turkish Foreign Policy: An Inclination to the East .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>3.3 Ahmet Davutoglu and the Concept of 'The Strategic Depth' .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>3.4 Neo Ottomanism.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>3.5 The Balance between Freedom and Security.....</b>	<b>72</b>

<b>3.6 The Policy of ‘Zero Problem’ .....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>3.7 The Middle East and the Turkish Foreign Policy .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>3.8 The Victory of the Justice and Development Party .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>3.9 The Iranian Nuclear Case and Turkish Foreign Policy.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>3.10 Stance on Syria and the Foreign Policy of Turkey.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>3.11 The Justice and Development Party and the Challenge of the Arab-Spring .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>3.12 Turkey Israel and Palestine Conflict.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>3.13 Turkey-Israel Relations and Freedom Flotilla .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>3.14 The South Caucasus and Turkish Foreign policy .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>3.15 Azerbaijan-Armenia War and Turkish Role.....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>3.16 Why Turkey Played the Vital Role.....</b>	<b>116</b>
.....	118
<b>CHAPTER 04.....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY .....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>4.1 Turkish Foreign Policy and Confrontation on National Level .....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>4.2 Kurdish Uprise in Turkey .....</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>4.3 National Economy .....</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>4.4 Turkish Foreign Policy and Problems on International Level .....</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>4.8 Turkey after Downing Russian Warplane.....</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>4.9 Turkey-Russia Again Cold War Alliances System .....</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>4.10 Challenges for Turkish foreign policy in 2021.....</b>	<b>134</b>

<b>4.11 Turkish Russian Deal of S-400 Missile Defence System .....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>4.12 Settlement of Refugees .....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>4.13 Enhancement of Military Capabilities .....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>4.14 The Decline in the Turkish Economy .....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>4.15 Growing Nationalism .....</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>4.16 Military Activeness of Turkey.....</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>4.17 The Stance on European Union Membership.....</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>CHAPTER 05.....</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>FAILED MILITARY COUP IN TURKEY AND INTERNAL &amp; EXTERNAL IMPLICATIONS.....</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>5.1 A Concise History Of Turkish Military Intervention in Turkish Politics</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>5.2 The Failed Military Coup .....</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>5.3 Internal and External Implications .....</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>5.4 External Implication .....</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>CHAPTER 06.....</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>176</b>

## **Tables**

Table 1: November 3, 2002, General Election Results.....	56
Table 2: Party and Seats Won.....	56
Table 3: July 22, 2007, General Election Results.....	57
Table 4: June 12, 2011, General Election Results .....	58
Table 5: Political Parties and Representation in National Assembly/Senate.....	148
Table 6: Political Parties and Seats Won .....	153
Table 7: Timeline of Military Coup in Turkey .....	157

## **Figures**

Figure 1: Number of international agreements ratified by Turkey .....	12
Figure 2: Election June 2015 .....	59
Figure 3: Election November 2015.....	60
Figure 4: General Election 2018 .....	61

## **Abstract**

*In 2002, in Turkey, the Justice and Development Party became the ruling power. Soon after its rule, The Justice and Development party started to reshape Turkish Foreign Policy. Tayyip Erdogan's advisor, Ahmet Davutoglu devised the Foreign Policy according to new principles to protect the interests of Turkey. Under the new trend, Turkey, for the first time reshaped its relation giving more importance to the eastern world rather than the west. Instead of the USA, Turkey started to show an inclination towards China and Russia. Turkey, very clearly expressed that she will not depend for its interests, entirely on Europe. The world is shifting its political and power axis, and to face the new challenges and changes, Turkey should also reshape its relations internationally. Formerly, Turkey tried to adopt the doctrine of Zero-Problem-Policy, but the Arab Spring and the USA's and West's interference in this matter, made Turkey revisit its Zero-Problem-Policy and drift away from the USA and the West. Neither the West nor the USA, but an Independent Turkey became the prominent trend in Turkish Foreign Policy. Under the emerging trend, Turkey has been facing difficulties and challenges on the national as well as international levels. Even the unsuccessful military coup d'état galvanized the policy of Dewesternization in Turkish Foreign Policy. The current research encompasses the changes and challenges in adopting the new trend in Turkish Foreign Policy.*

## **CHAPTER 01**

### **INTRODUCTION**

# CHAPTER 01

## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

In late 2002, the nascent regime in Turkey changed its foreign policy to revive its relations with the world. The AKP government formed the foreign policy according to the policies worldwide. Because of the changing interest of Turkey, it also modified its foreign policy to keep pace with the world. Over time, Turkey began to move from the Western to the Eastern world, especially towards the Muslim world. So it could be called Neo Ottomanist foreign policy of Justice and Development Party (AKP), with the sole purpose of becoming, influential and playing an important role in the Muslim world. Ahmet Davutoglu was appointed Turkish foreign minister on May 1, 2009, and chief advisor to the Turkish prime minister since 2002 is known as the intellectual architect of Turkish foreign policy under the Justice and Development Party. He shaped the foreign policy of Turkey based on the notion of Strategic depth. It meant to contribute a special role in every field and every territory of Europe, Eastern Balkan, Caucasia, Central Asia Caspian and Gulf and the Black Sea as a regional power.

The multi-polar regional identities, as well as Turkey's history and legacy, demand a foreign policy that is multifaceted with the main goal to promote good relations with all neighbours. It is necessary to resolve disagreements instead to increase cooperation to seek innovative mechanisms and channels to resolve regional conflicts to encourage positive change in the region, and to build cross-cultural bridges of dialogues and understanding (Murinson, November 6, 2006).

Ahmet Davutoglu and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan resolved to maintain Turkey's relations with Europe and the Muslim world. For the Western world, Turkey's geographic location has increased its importance. It is just because Turkey is situated in the nucleus of the Middle East, Balkan and Middle Asia. Turkey's role in this region is of much importance. Davutoglu's point of view states that Turkey must be the epicentre for the surrounding events. Its major aim is to incorporate solid economic relations with the neighbouring states (Davutoğlu, 2008).

Not only did the AKP regime improve the commercial links of Turkey with the neighbouring countries but it also created bilateral relations with Greece, Russia, Iran and Syria.

All these moves show that AKP is seeking its Zero Problem policy with the neighbour. Now it has strengthened its connection with the Islamic world and non-Islamic governments as well (Kanat, 2010).

"The Foreign Minister has clarified that the foreign policy of Turkey is not biased, he clearly stated that a balanced is needed in the relations with the states of international level" (Hale, 2009).

Turkey has been centring its attention on Europe and Asia to better its relations with the states in the region and especially with the Islamic world without leaving the West and Europe (Onis & Suhnaz, 2009).

Several factors changed the foreign policy of Turkey. The main elements in this regard are the changes at the national and international levels in politics. The government focused its attention on history and culture to maintain its identity. The government is strengthening its identity along with secularism. "It will be an

interaction of domestic factors that will determine the critical equilibrium and path of new activism in Turkish foreign policy" (Cagaptay, April 2007).

"In the earlier period of the AK Party government, i.e., 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2002 to 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2007, Turkey transformed its foreign policy from hard power to soft power. That is why the present national and international developments are indebted to Ankara's soft power" (Oguzlu, 2007). The most striking feature of this period (2002 to date) is the relations between the army and the government. In the process of desecularization, the government is acting on the policy of consensus for settling various issues, which the previous government had ignored.

It was Soviet pressure that forced Turkey to improve relations with the West and the US. But after the end of the cold war, Turkey changed its foreign policy which is why AKP refused to help US and UK against Iraq in 2003. It was a clear message that Turkey wished for a better connection with the neighbouring states following the national sentiments of the Turkish people.

Furthermore, Turkey wants to have a better connection with the European Union to bridge the gap which had widened because of opposing the US attack on Iraq. At the same time, the increasing concerns about the Turkish future relationship with European Union increased the need for a multidimensional foreign policy (Hale and Ozbudan, March 2011).

Turkey is rising as an economic power in the area and it will save its interest with the Western world at the regional and international levels. According to some scholars, the EU gives weightage to Turkey for its prime geographic location in the region and for being a strong democratic country (Hale and Ozbudun, 2011).

Turkey is playing an active role in Middle East politics. Some scholars suggest that AKP has hidden Islamic agenda and that Turkey is deepening its ties with Muslim countries. When the AKP won the election in 2007, a professor of International Relations Ahmet Davutoglu became the foreign minister who changed the foreign policy of Turkey. Turkey was criticised for not playing a significant role at the time of the Arab Spring. In Egypt when the Mursi government was removed through a military coup, Turkey again could not play its role. Furthermore, Turkey also could not get membership in the EU. All these factors heavily affected Turkey's foreign policy.

As a result, Turkey started to contact the Asian states and the Muslim world. Slowly, Turkey's trade with the EU began to fall for example, in 2000 trade with the EU was 57.7 per cent and at the same time with Asia, it was 10 per cent, while with Latin America 0.9 per cent and with non-European states the trade was 9.7 per cent. The trade partners of Turkey were the same in 2012, but the ratio was changed. Turkey's trade with the EU was 37.6 per cent, with Asia 15.4 per cent, with Latin America 1.6 per cent and with Africa 1.7, while with the other states, this ratio increased by 13.7 per cent.

In July 2016, the army's rebellion was strongly resisted by the public, which consequently created tensions between Turkey and the United States. After this coup, the Turkish President visited Moscow to revitalize relations with Moscow.

The Turkish administration blamed the US for this political disturbance, further Turkey asked Washington to help Turkey arrest the famous Turkish religious leader Fatah Ullah Gulin who was supposed to be responsible for the political upheaval but the US did not respond positively to the Turkish government's demand.

Turkey who had been against the Russian policy over the Syrian crisis suddenly normalized its relations with Russia. Turkey shot down a Russian jet on its border with Syria on 24 November 2015 (BBC News English 24 Nov 2015), due to this matter relations between Turkey and Russia became worse. Russian President Putin said that a plane that had two crew members was flying at an altitude of 6,000 meters when it was hit by an air-to-air missile. The Russian jet was crashed in the mountainous area of the Syrian province of Latakia, while one pilot and one marine were dead. On the other side, Turkish officials claimed that two warplanes of unknown nationality had violated the Turkish air space near the town of Yayladagi in Hatay province and planes were warned 10 times and asked to change their direction. But the planes disregarded the warning and then the Turkish Air Force had to hit those Jets.

Even afterwards, Russia favoured the Turkish government while on the other hand, the US and the West did not appreciate the Turkish president's visit to Moscow after the failed military coup.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The vital transformation in Turkish foreign policy is one of the most debated issues in the research field. In regional politics Turkish role is of great value. Based on Turkey's role in the Middle East the phrase 'Neo Ottomanism' is emerging as a new term in the field of Political Science. The foreign policymakers of Turkey are searching for political roles in the East. This change is not favourable for the US and its allies. The military action of July 2016 has distorted the relations of the Turkish government with the US and Europe. This shift in foreign policy is not only important for international politics but also possesses great value in regional politics.

Since 2002, Turkish foreign policy underwent vivid transformation and that change attracted several researchers to explore the phenomenon, its causes and effects. “The transformation of Turkish foreign policy under the rule of the Justice and Development Party has opened a large debate in the literature, resulting in a vast number of studies conducted to explain the different aspects of this transformation” (Çakır & Akdağ, 2016).

After reviewing the related literature it was found that the researchers have individually identified and explained this transformation on various levels. To take a leadership role among the muslim nations was supposed by several researchers to be the cause of the change. There were other researchers who noted the personal motives of the leaders of the AK party who initiated the alteration and there were also the researchers who attribute this change to the national interest in the altering international scenario. The current research tries to fulfil the gap of an inclusive explanation of the transformation in the Turkish foreign policy. This research has attempted to elaborate the change on a wider range covering from individual level of the party leaders to the international level.

### **1.3 Objectives of Study**

- This research work highlights the transformation aspects of Turkish foreign policy and the hurdles foreign policy experts of Turkey faced in this regard.
- Transition in international politics or international relations and their sound impact on the new Turkish foreign policy are thoroughly discussed in this study.

- The main objective is also to present a view about changes of governments and administration in the world politics and their impacts on the politics of other states keeping in view the fact among the countries on the international level that the relations are not permanent, they kept on changing from time to time. One time enemy may be the next time friend. The government changes from time to time, so relations do. The permanent thing in this change is the national interest.
- The core theme of the doctrine of Zero Problem Policy and the concept of Strategic depth is analysed from the perspective of new foreign policy and its challenges in the region.
- The study aimed to identify the transformation process and the anti-West sentiments in Turkish foreign policy.
- This research work also inspects the failed military coup in 2016.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The current research searched out answers to the following questions:

1-How a paradigm shift in Turkish foreign policy is occurring under the AKP administration?

2-How has Turkey transformed its foreign policy from the West to the East?

3-What are the opportunities and challenging factors in the transformation process?

## **1.5 Significance of Research**

This study analyzes Turkish foreign policy with special reference to the government of the AK Party. The study highlights new changes in Turkish foreign policy and also focuses on the significant factors in the foreign policy of Turkey.

This research work is noteworthy to bring forth changes that occurred in Turkish foreign policy. The most significant debate of this time is that Turkey is the main opponent of the policies of the US and the Western states. Turkey likes to participate in the role of game-changer in the region of the Middle East however, the US and the Western policymakers are a hurdle in this regard. The current research is significant because it gives information and facts about Turkey's De-Westernization policies and the country's search for new military, economic and political interests in Asia.

After the 1990s, a great change was observed in the foreign policy of Turkey. This change was accelerated in the early period of AKP. After 1923, liberalism prevailed in Turkish society, due to Mustafa Kamel Ataturk and his co-partners. They blamed that the main hindrances in the path to the progress of Turkey were conservative Islamists. However, they preached liberalism in politics. This party brought modernism and Europeanism in their political ideas and social dealings and ignored the Islamic world while paving relations with the West. After the Second World War (1939-1945) Turkey showed its complete inclination towards the West, ignoring the Islamic world especially the Middle East region.

At the end of the cold war in 1991, an abrupt and drastic change was seen in the foreign policy of Turkey, when Turkey shifted its mind from Europe to the Islamic world and gave more importance to the Middle East. Turgut Ozal, the Prime

Minister of Turkey since 1983 and the President (1989 to 1993), made an effort to have good relations with the West and the entire Muslim world which consequently led Turkish foreign policy to change practically. The Foreign Minister Ismail Cemin (1997- 2002), played a key role in improving relations with Greece, the EU and the OIC.

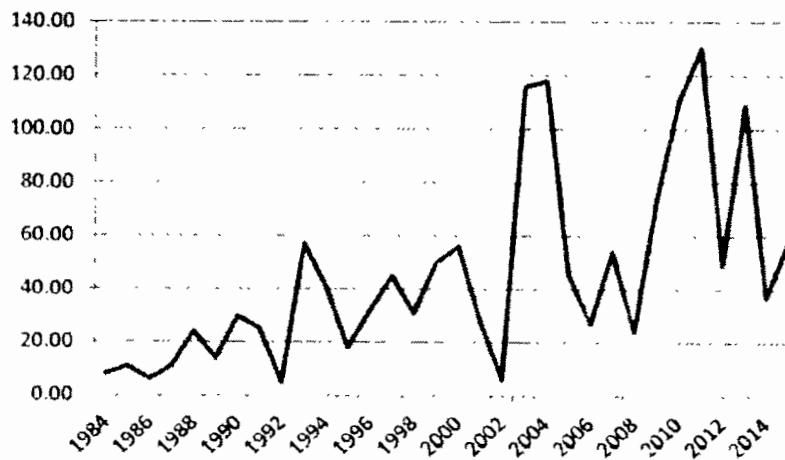
The policy of the current ruling party, AKP is showing a complete shift as the de-westernization attitude is dominant. Now AKP is forced to play its active role in the politics of the Middle East because there is a complete shift in international politics especially in the Middle East. These are all important factors that increase the significance of this research.

## 1.6 Literature Review

After 2002, Turkey's politics changed altogether. After going through several ups and downs, Turkey's modern Islamist party AKP succeeded in gaining the helm of affairs. Murat Yeşiltaş and Ali Balcı claim that changes and transformations in Turkish Policy have been a very evident reality, especially in the era of the AK Party era. The mentioned writers said; "One of the rare academic issues on which almost all Turkish foreign policy scholars agree is that the traditional language of Turkish foreign policy has changed conspicuously during the AK Party era" (Murat Yeşiltaş & Ali Balcı, 2013). Leaving from past international strategy talks, which couldn't utilize the benefits presented by Turkey's rich verifiable and topographical roots, the essential profundity idea is a hypothetical structure that mostly looks at the social, geological and spatial parts of Turkish international strategy.

In useful unfamiliar policymaking, in any case, the idea of key profundity alludes to the social, verifiable and geological "centrality" of Turkey in the local and global framework. In a way that would sound natural to Davutoğlu, "the nearby land, ocean and mainland bowls encompassing Turkey comprises the geological focal point of the world and generally covers the regions where the fundamental supply route of the historical backdrop of mankind was framed" (Davutoğlu, 2001). Scholars have noted that the concept of geopolitics, is the legitimization instrument in the historical construction and reproduction of Turkish foreign policy built on various foundations that can be seen in the AK Party's political discourse" (Duran, 2013). The shifts in the Turkish Foreign Policy started to emerge soon after the cold war but the AK Party further enhanced and intensified it. The same fact was noted by scholars Aylin Aydin Çakır and Gül Arıkan Akdağ in the words, "While the end of the Cold War resulted in significant changes in TFP orientation in the 1990s, the single rule of the AKP

government in the 2000s has transformed it further" (Çakır & Akdağ, 2016). Some of the scholars note clear religious influence on Turkish Foreign Policy for example Ahmet Sözen says, "A large number of studies examined the 're-Islamization' and 'Middle Easternization' of TFP through the discursive analysis of the AKP leaders' speeches" (Sözen, 2010). Quoted by Alin and Akdag another scholar Onis says, "Although many scholars have acknowledged the shift in TFP's regional orientation, they have also argued that Turkey's Western orientation has not been entirely reversed during the AKP era given the intensification of relations with the United States and the EU" (Çakır & Akdağ, 2016). It is also argued that instead of one eighty-degree shift in the TKF, there was only activism i.e. the shift does not mean fully moving from west to east, rather it means that the Turkish government became very active to improve its relations with the whole world, especially during the AK Party era. Aylin Aydın Çakır and Gül Arıkan Akdağ have shown that fact through the following table:



**Figure 1: Number of international agreements ratified by Turkey**

Source: (Çakır & Akdağ, 2016).

The incident of 9/11 affected the world's politics dividing it into two halves. This polarity had its impacts. Al Qaeda took the responsibility, however, on religious grounds, a trend of Islamophobia started to emerge. The emerging trends could be considered important elements that started to modify the foreign policy of Turkey.

Hasan Kosebalaban, a famous scholar expressed his views about the foreign policy of the country in his work, *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism and Globalization* published in 2011 in these words, "Liberalism can be a major factor in the fate of Turkey" (Kosebalaban, 2011). On the contrary, some scholars associated Turkish Foreign Policy activism with the historical background and Ottomanism giving rise to a new debatable terminology ie Neo Ottomanism. However, scholar Eşref Kenan Rašidagić noted, "Thus, if neo-Ottomanism is deployed by Turkey, it seems to be only one of many foreign policy instruments and appears to be used only in countries where Turkish officials believe they can build upon a cultural sameness" (Rašidagić, 2020).

It is supposed that the US and the West are no more beneficial for Turkey. Turkey should play the role of a leader. Turkey wants to establish its relations with the Eastern European countries and the emerging power of China. Another article by Kibaroglu expresses. "Is the Westernization Process Losing Pace in Turkey: Who's to Blame? Written by Tarik Oguzlu and Mustafa Kibaroglu in 2009 presents valid details regarding the changes in the foreign policy of Turkey. (Oguzlu, Kibaroglu, 2009).

In the same way, T. Oguzlu's article written in 2008, "Middle-Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West" is an excellent approach to comprehending the foreign policy of Turkey. The Foreign policy of Turkey is Middle Easternized and deadlock of relations with the West (Oguzlu, 2008).

Valeria Gienmotta a PhD scholar wrote in 2010, “Turkey Is Turning its Face from the West.” The writer has openly declared that Ahmet Davutoglu's dictum is Zero Problems with the neighbours and Turkey is setting up better relations with the surrounding states.

Ziya Onis has presented a true picture that is quite alarming for the West in his work ‘Recent Foreign Policy Attitude in Turkey: How to Reverse the Gradual Shift away from Europeanization’. Turkey’s relations with the EU are near deadlock (Onis, 2008). On the other hand, Turkey is strategically important and NATO’s ally. Now AKP government is giving weightage to the Eastern world and other powers like Russia, China and African regional powers. It seems that the foreign policymakers of Turkey are making factual decisions avoiding blind faith in the West.

International politics is changing rapidly and at the same time, Russia and China are emerging as powerful states challenging American hegemonic behaviour. The recent upheaval in Eastern Europe created by Russia, against Crimea and Ukraine are considerable examples, while the crisis in Syria and the Russian role is another quotable example. In the case of the Civil War in Syria, both US and Saudi Arabia had to pass through a cold conflict.

Bülent Aras, a Senior Scholar at Istanbul Policy Center and the academic advisor to H.E. Prof. Dr Ahmet Davutoğlu, writes that Davatoglu’s strategic depth is an outcome of self-confidence, good relations with neighbours and balance at home. (Aras, 30 April- 2 May 2010).

Kemal Kuprulu in his work published in 2011, titled “*Paradigm Shift in Turkey Us Relations*” said that decline in relations grew between Turkey and US

before 2003 but in the US- Iraq war Turkey did not favour the US, developing a wide chasm between the countries and the world media highlighted it.

Ariel Cohen in his article published in 2011, writes; that the decisions of the KP administration are producing conflicts between the US and Turkey. From the very beginning, AKP is favouring Hamas which is a militant organization in Palestine, while disturbing its relations with Israel. Turkey is aligning its relations with Sudan and Iran while both states are the ally of an anti-US block. Such a shift in the Turkish mood clearly shows that Turkey is distancing itself from the US while seeking an alternative for military interests.

Another critic Ibrahim Kalun in his work "*Is Turkey a Model for Arab World*" stated that Turkey has been considered an active actor and emerging power in the Middle East. The belief that was propounded by the secular school of thought is that religion and history is the biggest hurdle in the progress of Turkey. So, this dogma is going to be abolished that historical and religious identity is the sound reason for the backwardness and chaos in Turkey (Hakan, Yavuz 2013).

Transformation in Turkish foreign policy is being noticed since 2002 just after the AK Party came into power. The AK Party transformed almost every local as well as international facet of the country. E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu noted, Under AK Party rule, Turkey witnessed structural transformations in education, health education, transportation, and infrastructure fields; and in democratization, regional integration with foreign policy activism" (Keyman & Gumuscu , 2014).

Cenk Saracoglu and Ozhan Demirkol explored trends in Turkish Foreign Policy and noted shifts in it. The most commonplace target of foreign policy is to put

into the structuring of national distinctiveness and the upholding of nationalism by considering every aspect to portray and protect the wellbeing of the nations. Foreign policy in a country is in the main supposed to be an expansion of the country's official ideology, and the ruling party's ideologies which are more pragmatic and stretchy according to the anticipation of the majority nation. The AKP's nationalistic concepts and its neo-Ottomanist concepts at the international level are three facets. Firstly, the AKP's nationalist place has worked as the main frame of the ideology. Secondly, the new foreign policy course plays a fundamental function in the configuration of the AKP's nationalist-hegemony. Thirdly, as a result of the first two points, the 'future' of neo-Ottomanism at the international level is not only contingent upon the course of inter-state relations and balances of power in global politics but is also highly reliant on the success or failure of the nationalist project at the domestic level. Cenk Saracoglu and Ozhan Demirkol conclude, "The new foreign policy orientation and official foreign policy discourse adopted during the AKP period in the last decade have been a crucial component and instrument of building a new nationalist hegemonic project in Turkey. Through a neo-Ottomanist foreign policy outlook AKP has attempted to reconstruct the conception of the nation in Turkey" (Saracoglu & Demirkol, 2015).

As mentioned by Seckin Kostem, in the post-Soviet era has been greatly influenced by the idea of the 'Turkic World'. The chance of "Turkic World" has obtained an uncontested place in the Turkish global system since Turkey's Turkic person was really reincorporated into its various characters — Western, Islamic, European, Central-Eastern and of Balkan. Turkey's relations with the "Turkic World" subsequently shed light on how considerations can transform into undefined bits of global system goals and works on expecting they fit into the changing public

character. “The idea of the “Turkic World” corresponds to the belief in cultural, societal, economic, and political unity among the Turkic-speaking peoples of Eurasia” (Kostem, 2016).

Scholars like Emel Parlar Dal and Gonca Oğuz Gök have used the term ‘post-Westphalian’ to describe the latest trends in Turkish foreign policy. The post-Westphalia is the state-centric trend. It assumes the authority of a state as highest except when the state gives consent otherwise. “In the article entitled ‘Turkey’s Quest for a New International Order’: The Discourse of Civilization and the Politics of Restoration, Murat Yeşiltaş argues that the most important effect of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) in Turkish foreign policy has re-opened Turkey’s understanding of “international order” up for discussion on the basis of a “new representation of civilizational belonging” (Dal & Gök, 2014). Formerly Turkey had been playing the role of bridge between the West and the East but the Arab spring influenced Turkey to modify that role. Emirhan Yorulmazlar & Ebru Turhan express this role in the words; “Turkey has served as a strategic interconnector between the West and the Middle East. The popular uprisings that have come to be known as the Arab Spring have significantly challenged Turkey’s role as a strategic interconnector” (Yorulmazlar & Turhan, 2015). The religious elemst that is why was used by the politicians to win favour of the people during the lection of 2015. “The foreign policy factors occupied Turkey’s national agenda between the two parliamentary elections held in June and November 2015 respectively” (Oğuzlu, 2016).

Keeping up with the modern trends and the international community is the requirement of the time but ignoring the local culture to meet the international standard cannot be possible. It is party policy and the obligation of the decision-

makers to balance the local culture and the modern era. Efe Sevin in his book *Public Diplomacy and the Implementation of Foreign Policy in the US, Sweden and Turkey* mentions, “Turkey uses Turkic culture to engage with Central Asian Republics” (Sevin, 2017).

Apart from culture the religious values have been a great influential force in shaping the Turkish Foreign Policy. The examination of the related researches confirm that the mounting significance of Islam in the language used in national politics appears in the activities of the Turkish state abroad. With its hegemonic position in Turkish politics, AKP has succeeded in integrating a religious discourse in various fields of policymaking” (Öztürk, Erdi & Sözeri, 2018).

And it is an undeniable fact that national events influence international affairs and vice versa. “The domestic and the international are still constructed as coexisting and interacting, but separate realms of politics. It is suggested that populist parties and leaders pursue a specific foreign policy reflecting their domestic identities” (Kaliber, 2019). Turkey’s interest in Balkans is reflection of its active role in the regional issues especially when such issues have cultural connections with the nation. “The foreign policy of the AKP has maintained this focus on achieving influence through regional stabilization efforts, economic and strategic investment, and cultural diplomacy” (Hesova, 2020). Along with religious beliefs and cultural ties economy also influences the national and foreign policies of the states. Andreas Stergiou & Christos Kollias state that economical strength is one the the important factors if a state aims at becoming influential in the region. “As a matter of fact, Turkey subsumes in the category of countries that are expected to play an important role in the 21st century world politics not least because its economy” (Kollias, 2021). No matter what are the

historical ideologies or cultural and religious modifiers of the foreign policy, the most important is the fact that “Erdoğan does not want to subordinate Turkey’s national interests to the demands or preferences of Western or US-led institutions. Meanwhile, Ankara is more prone to use the military to realize its foreign policy goals in the eastern Mediterranean, Syria, Iraq, Libya, and in the Caucasus” (Yavuz, 2022).

## **1.7 Research Methodology**

In social sciences, qualitative and descriptive research methods are commonly used. This research has also incorporated these two methods. Literature written in the light of Turkish foreign policy is used reasonably while making the research study concise, valid and reliable with facts and figures. Data for the current research was collected from various sources. For the purpose of data collection, survey and other means including scholarly books, journals and articles concerning Turkish foreign policy, and some primary and secondary sources were consulted. The researcher has exchanged views with Educationists and scholars. During this phase, research institutions were visited for data collection.

## **1.8 Research Design**

Research design always occupies a central position in any research project. This is the base for every potential research. For the present research, qualitative design and case study is the most important method. Turkish foreign policy is a case study that gives an overview of Turkish foreign policy during a specific period. Furthermore, through this research, the transformation process in the foreign policy of Turkey is discussed in detail.

## **1.9 Research Strategy for Data Collection**

To complete this research and make it useful, various strategies and resources were utilised.

## **1.10 Sources of Data**

At present, the foreign policy of Turkey is a widely discussed topic because in the last two decades, there has been a drastic change in Turkish foreign policy. Being a powerful country in the Muslim world and having an active role in the Middle East, Turkey has earned much importance in the research field.

For this research work, valid and reasonable data is required as data is fundamental for any research. Whatever the kind of research may be, reliable data will be of prime importance.

Two types of data will be used in this research i.e., Primary data and Secondary data.

Primary data means the first-hand data collected through reliable sources and for this purpose senior professors and academicians were consulted. In this research, the second important source is secondary data which comprises published printed sources like books, different political journals/periodicals and newspapers. Besides these, published electronic sources like E-journals, general websites and weblogs are also included. Secondary data acts as the backbone of this research.

## **1.11 Data Analysis**

After data collection, comes the stage of processing and data analysis.

Data Categories include;

- Interpretation of data
- Generalisation of data
- Organization of data

## **1.12 Organization of the Study**

This thesis consists of five chapters: The first chapter encompasses the introduction of Turkish foreign policy with special reference to the East under the AK Party. Further, this chapter gives a concise description of the transformation process in Turkish foreign policy. The second chapter presents the history of Turkish foreign policy while the third chapter narrates the change in the foreign policy of the new government of the Justice and Development Party. The third chapter also focuses on the changing relations of Turkey towards the foreign world and new concepts as well. In a nutshell, the change in the foreign policy of Turkey is the main purpose of this chapter. Chapter four summarises the internal and external challenges being the main hurdles towards the transformation process in Turkish foreign policy. Chapter five covers the detailed points of military interventions in Turkish politics, failed military coup, and its effects on Turkish internal politics and international politics as well. The last chapter presents an overview of the entire discussion and the political scenario of the transformed Turkish foreign policy.

The work at hand contains six chapters.

- Introduction.
- Historical Background of Turkish Foreign Policy.
- Turkish Foreign Policy and Transformation Process.
- Challenges for Transformation in Turkish Foreign Policy.

- Failure of Military Coup in Turkey and its Implications on Domestic and International Politics.
- Conclusion.

### **1.13 Theoretical Framework**

A theory is a paradigm that aims at understanding explanations, analyses and predictions of the international events which influence overall policy and international politics. A close critical examination shows and reveals the influence of complex interdependence. Through various studies, it is easy to comprehend the roots interrelated with the main body of foreign policy of a country and their connection with the body of world politics (Hudson, 2013).

The famous theorists Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye presented The Complex Interdependence Theory in 1977, which states that countries are interconnected with one another. Before these researchers, Richard N. Copper propounded the theory of economic interdependence. But the political scientists, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye analyzed how international politics is transformed by interdependence (Crane & Amawi 1997: 107-109).

In 1924, Turkey adopted realistic thinking and created a close connection with the US and the western world. That is why Turkey's behaviour was neutral in the Second World War (1939-1945). This decision shows the deep insight of Turkey. After the Second World War in 1945, the world was divided into two halves, led by the US and by the Soviet Union. In strictly political terms, this period was named the cold war era and world affairs were steered by the cold war for a long period (Calvocoressi, 1991).

During the era of the cold war, Turkey identified itself with the Western block because this block was monetarily strong and the US developed as a strong power in terms of both military and economy. As compared to the US, the communist block of the then-Soviet Union was weak in every respect. The second reason for this inclination of Turkey was that the Soviet Union had been threatening Turkey over territorial and regional issues. And the air of misunderstanding had been prevailing for a long time. Keeping in view all the circumstances, Turkey took a momentous decision and joined NATO. It was an excellent choice of the then-foreign policymakers of Turkey. Turkey completely shifted towards the Western world. It also recognized Israel just to gain the confidence of the US and the West. During that time the whole Muslim world was passing through various crises both internally and externally. Even then Turkey ignored the Muslim world, while the Muslim world could do nothing for Turkey.

In the decade 1970, many political changes and political incidents took place that changed the international political scenario. In the year 1979, the crucial phase for the cold war started with three major incidents that took place Viz.

- There was an Islamic revolution in Iran.
- Drastically confrontational relations between Iran and Iraq.
- The Soviet Union attacked Afghanistan.

At this time the US was anxious about better diplomatic relations with China. At the same time, China and Russia were not on good terms with each other. So the US availed the chance and maintained its political relations with China. During that time there was a nuclear weapon race going on in world politics which consequently

affected the nature of world politics. During this crucial period, the states of the world felt insecure (Calvocoressi, 1991).

At that time Turkey acted as a Western state and had economic and military help from the United States and the western states. As a result, Turkey became a powerful state both in the economy and military fields. And Turkey as a regional power started to play as a hegemonic state in the region. In this way, Turkey got relief from the Soviet threat.

When the US forbade Turkey to intervene in the Cyprus issue, the US president informed the Turkish government not to entangle itself with Greece in any dispute. At this stage, the US and NATO clearly warned not to help Turkey. Such a situation warned the policymakers of Turkey to pay attention to the Eastern world. As a consequence of such a state of affairs, a wide chasm of disbelief was created between Turkey and the US.

The Justice and Development Party made the government in Turkey in 2002. They visualized the fact that they could progress only through good relations with the neighbouring states. Turkey desired to play an active part in the affairs of the Middle East. Turkey wanted the leadership of the Muslim world that is why she began to raise an active voice against Israel, and its aggressive policies in the Middle East. Even on the issue of the Freedom Flotilla Turkey's way of solving the problem was highly appreciated morally in the civilized world.

During this process, Turkey showed its calm and peaceful nature. At this juncture, the complex interdependence theory stands valid because on the one hand Turkey and Israel were entangled in this core issue, while on the other hand, both states had mutual trade interests.

In such a situation each state focused its attention on the fact that their respective economies are more important than their issues and conflicts. The complex interdependence theory practically proved right. People and countries get affected by whatever action is taken by their counterparts in other states. It means that upheaval in one state disturbs globally the other state and the people as well. Such a complex situation raises the level of complex interdependence.

There are three bases of complex interdependence:

- 1) The role of the transnational element has increased in the political system.
- 2) In such a situation military force is not useful rather economic and institutional strategies work better.
- 3) Economic security is more important than military security. There is no doubt about the fact that complex interdependence binds nations together around the globe.

Because of Turkey's common commercial interests, the AKP is following the principle of Zero Problem with the neighbouring states. Turkey is extending its trade relations with the Middle East and also desired to solve the Cyprus dispute at the table. The steps taken by the Turkish government can be analysed in the light of the complex interdependence theory. Turkey has already invested capital in various neighbouring states. So she is diplomatic in its relations with other states of the region keeping in view its commercial interest too. Internally, Turkey is giving priority to welfare projects in the state. This policy would normalize the Kurdish problem. This strategy is turning Turkey into a stable bigger economic power. The Justice and Development Party is following the footprints of economically stable states and these

policies of this party may be viewed in the light of the model of the complex interdependence.

### **1.13.1 Levels of Analysis in International Relations**

Transformation in Turkish Foreign Policy can also be explained on the basis of Level of Analysis Model. This model examines the relations of the states by segmenting the relations into three levels i.e domestic level, state level and international level.

The model of The Levels of Analysis was deployed to analyse the transformation in the foreign policy of Turkey. The Levels of Analysis is a concept presented by Kenneth Waltz to break a phenomenon into levels and the study more elaborately. “The relationships and interactions between nations are complex. Since the publication of Kenneth Waltz's *Man, the State, and War* in 1959, scholars have found it useful to break relations into different levels of analysis i.e individual, state and international” (Alt, 2018). The international or systemic level of analysis proposes that all foreign policy can be understood by the international systems which lead nations to behave in specific ways. The state-level analysis considers the type of government, economic performance, geography, history and cultural values as the most important factors in shaping the foreign policy of a country and the individual-level analysis considers the great leaders and individual personalities who make foreign policies.

#### **1.13.1.1 Domestic Level (State-Structure) Analysis**

Transformation in Turkish Foreign Policy can be analysed at the domestic level. Since the Ozal Administration; the decision-making political authorities have incessantly highlighted the inheritance of the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic

characteristics of the country and the nation. This transformation in the discernment of the past upturned the nation-building principles of the initiators, who not only cast off the Imperial background and Islam as the essential elements of society but faithfully favoured Western values and structures. Muftuler and Bac suppose that the transformation in the power balance among internal actors with unlike worldviews is fundamental to comprehend the renovation of Turkish foreign policy (Muftuler Bac, 2011). Fuller proposes that the mounting societal and financial influence of the old-fashioned Anatolia's business community, who mostly supports Justice and Development Party (JDP) and branded themselves as the descendant of the Ottoman Empire, has accelerated this tendency. He emphasized that their supremacy over the Western-centric upper class make possible the founding of a bond with Turkey's historical past and its religious practices (Fuller, 2008; Kirisci, 2009; Tezcur & Grigorescu, 2014). The advocates of neo-Ottomanism as the elucidation for the alteration in Turkish foreign policy have created numerous points of view to clarify why Turkey has started detaching itself from the West. Fuller describes this first version of neo-Ottomanism as a growth of a Turkey-centric view, in which it stays in the middle of the reemerging world "rather than at the tail-end of a European world" with "a renewed interest in the former territories and people of the Empire" (Fuller, 1992).

#### **1.13.1.2 Individual Level (Characteristics of Individual) Analyses**

Promoters of the Individual Analysis highlight the authority of several political leaders on Turkish foreign policy. Their points of view spotlight the leaders who move away from traditional West-oriented strategy and publicized a fresh national character that interconnects with the multiculturalism of the Ottoman past and Islam.

Advocates of this stance value the authoritative power of Turgut Ozal, Abdullah Gul, Ahmet Davutoglu and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who have Islamic backgrounds. They consider that the traditional beliefs of these leaders have led to their enacting active policies in the former Ottoman space and shaped an adversarial position with the West. In addition, the new course of Turkish foreign policy has been recognized as the growth of Islamism in the country and its attractiveness in the state. According to the supporters of this analysis, since the originators of JDP (Justice and Development Party) are well-known members of political Islam, which unsurprisingly has some anti-West outlook and it should not be surprising to observe a substantial shift of axis. Recently, most of the critics consider Recep Tayyip Erdogan, responsible for the major shift in Turkish Foreign Policy. Some scholars emphasize that President Erdogan's inclusive control over the Turkish state limited the U.S. manipulation in decision-making through previously practiced strong institutional ties. "Consequently, the decrease of institutional share in the decision-making resulted in a more centralized state structure which prioritizes the President's worldview and domestic political imperatives" (Hoffman, Makovsky, & Werz, 2018). Another researcher Stein found that the disrespect of Western institutions like NATO and the EU in the Turkish patriotic general public has galvanized Erdogan use the public's anti-Western sentiment and offensive attitude of the U.S. and EU as a basis for gaining public support. "In this view, Turkish politicians are accused of using foreign policy as an instrument for populist political gain (Stein, 2018).

#### **1.13.1.3 International Level (State System) Analyses**

Some scholars associate the transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy to the changing preferences of the country's increased material needs; their analyses associate the

growth of GDP with the transforming behavioural pattern. For example; Kirisci argues that “the growing export-oriented industries have encouraged leaders to develop stronger relations with potential markets in the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa” (Senturk, 2019) On the other hand, Aslan gives another explanation for the changed foreign policy. He presumes that because of the mounting material capabilities, Turkey wants self-sufficiency with the least dependency on the west and active participation in the international system. Thus, the country’s recent preferences prioritize national interest instead of being perceived as a blind follower of the West (Inat, Aslan, & Duran, 2017).

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**CHAPTER 02**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TURKISH**

**FOREIGN POLICY**

## CHAPTER 02

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

#### 2.1 Introduction

Foreign Policy is the tactic through which a country obtains its targeted objectives. By using common principles, a country establishes its ties with other countries. The foreign policy of a country is directly related to its prime ambitions.

Turkey is a transcontinental Eurasian country and also possesses a rising economic power in world politics. The new foreign policy of Turkey took its start after the First World War (1914-1918). Kemal Ataturk was the founder of its basic principles. Among all other principles, the chief principle was the viability of Turkey. This policy is aimed at the survival and strength of Turkey. “It is grounded on the defensive and responsive standard because the main objective was the survival of the State” (Aras, March 2009).

Now even in this time, the AKP government adopted a strategic policy that kept Turkey away from all conflicts. There has been a hot debate on Turkey’s policy in the West that Turkey is sharply divided between two groups; one who thinks that Turkey is showing repulsion from the West and bending towards the Middle East and Islamic world.

After Kemal Ataturk, his successor Ismet Inonu continued his policies and determined not to involve in the conflicts and affairs of the neighbouring states. The chief aim of this policy was to keep away Turkey from enmity and conflicts.

To a greater extent, Turkey remained successful in achieving these goals. The Turkish government brought about new reforms in its politics and altered its foreign affairs at the international level. After the Second World War (1939-1945) world became bipolar and two blocks came into being. On one side there were the US and Western Europe and on the other side the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Turkey sought interests in the West. The second cause of the joining was the geopolitical factor that forced Turkey to develop closer ties with the West. As a result, Turkey joined the US-supported block. During this time, USSR demanded to fulfil the territorial claims. This action or demand separated Turkey and USSR creating a wide gulf between the two states. As a result, Turkey joined the West to get military and economic help (Aras, March 2009).

In 1947, Turkey was successful enough to get aid from the US under Truman Doctrine. The US fabricated circumstances that forced Turkey to join NATO in the 1950s. After joining Balkan Treaty and Baghdad Pact, Turkey became a defender of the Western interest in the region. The Communist Block considered such steps as a threat to their interest in the region. In 1956, Turkey favoured Britain and France over the Suez Canal crisis and ultimately accepted Israel. The diplomatic relations of Turkey with the Muslim world especially with Saudi Arabia were not ideal.

After the 1960s, the dependency of Turkey on the West gradually reduced. Further, the Cyprus issue brought a great change in Turkish foreign policy. The US president warned Turkey not to use US military aid in Cyprus and told it strictly not to

intervene in the issue. And in case Turkey does not take this warning seriously then she must not expect any aid, help or shelter from NATO if any aggression comes from the Soviet Union. Such circumstances forced Turkey to review its foreign policy.

The intensity of the Cold War began to lessen because of Soviet president Kurshev's policy of Detent (1967-1979). Turkey benefited from such developments and began to improve relations with the USSR and the Eastern European states. It was noted that Turkish foreign policy started to change in 1979.

These factors once again had a deep influence on the Turkish Foreign Policy as a result Turkey again went to the US and the West. In 1991, Iraq invaded Kuwait and thus the Gulf war began under Saddam Hussain's government. The US and its twenty-four allies also attacked Iraq; however, during this war, Turkey supported the US policies.

A complete change was seen in Turkish foreign policy after the closure of the Cold War in 1991. Turkey started to consider the regional states for its attachment. After the AKP came into power, Turkey included other options and choices. The process of de-westernization in the foreign policy of Turkey started in the early 1990s and this process was accelerated during the AK Party. Turkey believed in the need to develop economic and trade relations with the Asian states and they did so in reality.

Turkey's foreign policy can be viewed in the frame of four challenges i.e.:

- i. In the Middle of 1920, Turkey became modern.
- ii. World War II (1939-1945).
- iii. The challenge of the Cold War era (1945-1991).

iv. The end of the bipolar division after the disintegration of the Soviet Union (1991) (Robins, 2003).

When Justice and Development Party came into power, Turkey changed the foreign policy to enhance the state power. In 2007 after winning the election, the AKP's Ahmet Davutoglu was assigned the office of the foreign minister. He started to reshape the entire foreign policy. However, the political peace conditions were not ideal internationally, for example, the tragic incident of 9/11 and the start of the war against terror by the US, the US attack on Afghanistan, and the aggression of the US and Britain against Iraq.

The Turkish foreign policymakers had to face multiple difficulties when Arab Spring appeared on the scene because the countries of the Middle East experienced political instability. In several countries, a civil war had started, so much so the relations between Turkey and Syria were affected badly in 2011 and Turkey had to deploy NATO as a defence shield on its border area. This was the unilateral decision of the Turkish government with special reference to the Syrian government. This shows the dual and complicated behaviour of Turkey because, on one hand, she wanted to act like a Western ally when she sought NATO's defence shield, while on the other hand, Turkey wanted to play an active and effective role in the Middle East as a Muslim state maintaining its separate identity (Ulgul,2017). But the Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoglu promulgated a clear announcement to the world that Turkey will support the oppressed and overridden nations of the Middle East. And will not stand with authoritative regimes. He further added that Turkey will only work for national interests, not for the flattery of the West.

All these steps show that Turkey was changing itself according to the changing scenario especially that of the Middle East. Turkey-based its foreign policy on the zero problem principle, ironically facing many problems in its path, for example, Turkey and Syria enjoyed good relations but unfortunately, in 2011 there started a civil war in Syria and Basharul Assad the president of Syria started uncontrolled use of force against his public to secure his regime. As a reaction, Turkey condemned this behaviour and quit its relations with Syria.

There is a debate at the international level that it is the hidden Islamic agenda of Turkey that their military leadership wants membership in the EU while the political leadership is working on the de-westernization process and is busy gaining its political interests rapidly. The leadership of Turkey had to take the greatest and most risky steps ever. In this connection, Turkey conducted many army operations in Syria and supplied military aid to the fighting rebels of Syria.

On one hand, Turkey is giving much importance to Islamic ideology but on the other hand, it is also a solid fact that secular ideas get a prominent place in Turkey. For Turkey, its interests are of much value. It can be said that Turkey has good relations with Israel. Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognize Israel on March 28, 1949. Even Israel had not joined UNO at that time while they developed civil and military relations between both countries in the coming years. Furthermore, Israel remained a prominent country to supply heavy weapons to Turkey.

Some scholars opine that the changing behaviour of Turkey towards The Middle East is only due to commercial and economic interests. In 2008, there was a wave of an economic crisis in Turkey and the power of the economy is as important as that of the military.

On the other hand, Turkey wants to resolve the issue of the Kurdish activities of freedom movement peacefully which is more active in Turkey and northern Iraq. The US and the Western world could not fulfil the desires of Turkey in many ways. The politics of the Middle East has affected the entire region. Turkey and Syria were not on good terms, and due to the military regime, relations of Turkey with Egypt were also disturbed. The civil war in Libya also affected negatively relations with the West.

## **2.2 Reforms Initiated by Mustafa Kemal**

After the second Grand National Assembly election held on October 29, 1923, Mustafa Kemal announced Turkey as a democratic country. He changed the old capital of Turkey from Constantinople to Ankara and he was elected the first president of Turkey while Mr Asmat Inonu was the first Prime Minister of Turkey. Both these presidents and Prime Minister first intended to end the Caliphate of Turkey. At last, they succeeded and the Caliphate of Turkey came to an end in 1924.

After this great change, the Grand National Assembly had much power in legislation and the executive. Moreover, this institution got much responsibility and it was the first step of Turkey towards modernity and the Western world. The new establishment of Turkey laid a foundation for modern and secular Turkey. Even the foreign policy of Turkey had started to favour Western trends in international politics. “The administration initiated to refurbish Turkey into a modern and Western democratic country, even the foreign policy also started to prop up the pro-western trends” (Bacik, Aras 2004).

The Republican Peoples Party of Turkey accepted the six points agenda of Kemal Ata Turk to make Turkey a modern democracy. This way, modern Turkey

came into being. In 1937, these points were approved by the law-making body of Turkey for the constitution (Zaheer, 2001). The later governments in Turkey could replace these six points or principles. No one could transform the fundamental principles because the agreement of Sevres made harmful impacts on Turks (Jung, 2003). These points are discussed below:

### **2.2.1 Republicanism**

It was meant to make democratic traditions stronger in Turkey. After the end of the Caliphate, it became imperative to take the state and its public to modern trends so that Turkey may progress rapidly. According to the founder of modern Turkey Mustafa Kemal, it was necessary for the progress of Turkey to bring about political reforms and to rebuild the political system on new foundations.

Republicanism was entirely against the alternative of the Caliphate institution. In this modern time, there was complete freedom of expression and freedom of speech in Turkey to bring newness to society. According to Kemal Ata Turk, the Caliphate institution was not beneficial for Turkey and was not according to modern standards. Especially after First World War (1914-1918), the Caliphate was considered a complete failure.

### **2.2.2 Nationalism**

The second major point was “Nationalism” which was based neither on religion nor racism. The main aim of nationalism was to excite the passion of faithfulness for Turkey among the young generation. Recently, Western thinkers like Eric Hobsbawm, Hans Kohn, Elie Kedourie, John Hutchinson, Ernest Andre Gellner, Anthony David S and Stephen Smith have discussed nationalism in detail. And with the passage of time this concept got much fame and affected world politics. Mustafa

Kemal, for the same reason, used this concept in Turkey for political and social progress and it happened that Turkey progressed immensely.

### **2.2.3 Populism**

Populism means a practice in politics to present the common people in politics to stop class distinction. So that the citizens may enjoy equality and they may get equal rights on equal terms and they may get all the chances and benefits to progress.

### **2.2.4 Etatism**

The fourth main point was the Etatism which means the complete control of the government over the citizen. But in Turkey, the government announced the interference in the economic affairs of the public. So that economic affairs run smoothly. It did not mean that the government would interfere unnecessarily in economic affairs. The interference if possible would be made in unavoidable circumstances.

### **2.2.5 Secularism**

It means that the state would not interfere in religion and religious affairs. Religion will not be discussed in Turkish politics. This point was important for Turkey and remained under discussion for a long time under the clade of Secularism; Turkey tried to get favour and achieve its interests from the US and the West. Even though Turkey felt pride in being a Western state, Secularism faced a lot of resistance.

### **2.2.6 Revolutionism**

In Turkey Revolutionism meant to end conservatism in Turkish society and to take such revolutionary steps. Turkey's new leadership thought that conservatism was a big hurdle on the road to development (Groom, 1986). The second reason was that

after the First World War, Turkey had to face various complications in and outside the country such as political complexities which could only be solved through such revolutionary steps. The changing scenario of the outer world also demanded such change.

The above-discussed points played a vital role in the politics of Turkey and affected Turkish foreign policy greatly. These points provided the constitutional and ideological basis for Turkey. These points played a role to bring reforms in Turkey.

These points were meant to convert Turkey into a modern state which could have the recognition of a secular state in the West. Further, these points paved a path to end the religious and conservative traditions. The basic step was to end the institute of the Caliphate. After it, time demanded an alternate system.

These basic points were also used against religion. The founder of modern Turkey Kemal Ata Turk also viewed that religious restrictions and conservative traditions were the biggest hurdles that have ceased Turkish society badly. Without quitting these worn-out traditions, the progress of Turkey will remain a dream only.

The Ottoman Empire presented Islamic values in a better way and gave weightage to these points for foreign policy affairs. In this period, Turkey gave importance to the making of relations with the Muslim world and connected in the bond of reverence. Moreover, Mustafa Kemal Pasha brought a revolutionary change that completely transformed the political structure of Turkey. It was a big change in Turkish politics. Even the educational curriculum was also changed and the religious material was deleted. After bringing reforms in the educational system, basic education was declared compulsory. The education system was moulded on Western patterns. This change in education was to end religious passions from the minds of the

new Turkish generation. The secular leadership of Turkey used education as a tool to make the secular basis strong so that the world could recognize secularism in Turkey because mere pride in the glorious time of the Ottoman Empire was not sufficient for modern progress.

This time was favourable for secularism in Turkey because secular leadership controlled the affairs of Turkey. The government of Kemal Ata Turk also introduced reforms for the national economy. For being involved in international conflicts and disputes and especially being a part of the First World War (1914-1918), the economic condition of Turkey was unstable. So, the new leadership of Turkey focused much attention on the economic challenges. They adopted the policy of Nationalization and took such steps which could flourish investment. Turkish government wanted to convert Turkey into an industrial state to decrease poverty. In this connection, the economic policy was devised so that economic progress may be ensured. For this purpose, the Turkish government provided chances to Western companies and they were provided with maximum facilities. After such steps, Turkey inclined towards the West and the Western world also considered Turkey their part. As all the steps were being taken on a secular basis, new reforms were also introduced.

### **2.2.7 Critical Review of the Reforms**

These reforms initiated progress in Turkey but along with these steps there started an unending criticism on Mustafa Kemel's reforms. All the steps and reforms brought about by secular leadership were criticised badly (Aykan,199).

The first criticism was raised from religious groups against Mustafa Kemal when he announced to end the Caliphate system. This Caliphate institution was the

emblem of unity for the whole Muslim world. Along with the Turkish nation, the entire Muslim Ummah also remained faithful to the Caliphate even a common man in the street opposed this step.

Mustafa Kemal disturbed religious matters and encouraged secularism. His actions created many opponents of Mustafa Kemal because, for the Turkish public, it was hard enough to swallow these revolutionary changes.

In this regard, a lot of resistance and opposition were raised. The famous scholar and religious Islamic leader Saeed Ul Zaman Sheikh Noorsi strongly challenged secularism in Turkey. He resisted the ideas of Mustafa Kemal on a strong footing. He struggled hard for the survival of Islam and Islamic ideology and became the symbol of a rising star of resistance against the secular leadership of Turkey. After this resistance, Islamic ideas began to flourish and grow rapidly amongst Turkish Muslims.

Mr Saeed Noorsi was born in 1873, in Eastern Anatolia in a Kurd family. He rendered several services for Islam in Turkish society. He united the religious school of thought against the ideas of Kemal Ata Turk and secularism. In this connection, he did not show leniency and continued his struggle against Kemalism. In this way, the new state had to face many internal complexities and challenges; “the new modern state faced internal challenges, religious fundamentalism and ethnic separatism” (Sozen, March 2006).

The second resistance came from the business community. The capitalist and business community criticised all the issues especially the economic reforms of Kemal Ata Turk. They also criticised the nationalization policy as this policy endangered their business interests. They also criticised taxation policy because the

Kemalist government levied heavy taxes upon the business class. This community raised many objections that the Ata Turk government influenced economic affairs negatively. According to the business community, the government wanted a monopoly in the economy.

But up till now, the government became very strong and it had changed the social and political structure of Turkey completely. Turkey began to set up the new foreign policy and under this policy; they also began to cultivate relations with the US and the West. Along with this policy, they started to establish friendly relations with the other states in different regions. In this regard, the relations with the Soviet Union and Great Britain got much preference. Good relations with Britain were the biggest challenge because Britain caused a great loss to Turkey in the First World War. Great Britain promoted Arab Nationalism and weakened the Ottoman Empire, occupied Turk territory and favoured the Kurds against Turkey. These were the basic factors that created hurdles for foreign policymakers in the promotion of relations with Britain. But Turkey wanted to proceed further for its interests.

In 1930, the entire world saw greater changes in the field of international politics and international relations. At that time new powers were making their blocks and world politics began to enter new crises. Italy is the best example of such changes which favoured Allies in the First World War, afterwards Italy was ignored completely and was not allowed to be involved in political affairs. Italy was also not much satisfied with the victorious powers' division of captured territories. That's why Italy started to search for new ways and majorly focussed on Balkan and Africa.

In 1935, Italy invaded the Ethiopia and captured it which created turmoil in world politics. Even this incident was the biggest reason for the failure of the League

of Nations (1920-1946). The League of Nations was framed after the First World War with the sole purpose to maintain peace. The idea of the League of Nations was presented by US President Woodrow Wilson.

Italy by continuing its aggressive policies struggled hard to increase influence in the Balkan region. Due to this step, Turkey, Britain and Greece came closer to getting interests in Balkan before the spreading influence of Italy. Turkey got membership in the League of Nations in 1932 and flourished its friendly manners with the other states. Especially Turkey played an effective role in the Balkan region for the maintenance of peace (Kilic,1959). Turkey was fearful about the imperialistic policies of Italy in the region which could be harmful to peace in this region.

The major success of Turkey was to resolve the issues about sea routes in this regard and this issue, at last, was resolved in favour of Turkey under the Montreux Pact in 1936. Later Turkey set up military installations on these sites (Millman,1995).

After this step, Turkey shifted its focus to the other Western states. In the First World War, the French army captured various Turkish territories and included them in Syria. But Turkey incorporated its diplomacy and solved the issue in its favour successfully in 1938. This is counted as the biggest achievement in Turkish foreign policy. In 1939, Turkey signed a treaty of non-aggression with France, according to that treaty; all the issues will be solved on the table.

It was the time when the world was moving towards the destruction of the Second World War. Turkey cleared out many issues before the advent of the Second World War. It developed its friendly relations with the West already.

This was the prime time for Mustafa Kemal and he availed the chance successfully. Turkey altered the political scenario internally and externally. Through its successful policies, Turkey got to the table which she could not get on the battlefield. Various issues in Turkey were solved without using power. Through such policies, Turkey remained neutral in Second World War (1939-1945) which was started when the German army invaded Poland on the first of September 1939.

However, Turkey adopted a neutral policy and continued its struggle for political and economical development. Overall this achievement was due to the successful foreign policy of Kemal Ata Turk. This was the continuation of that successful policy which paved good relations with the US and the Western states. So that Turkey may get benefits in the field of economy, science and technology and in the defence sector.

### **2.3 Islamic Movement Emerges in Turkey**

The glorious Empire of Turkey which was known as the Ottoman Empire in history has promoted Islamic traditions for a long time. This Ottoman Empire kept its influence on the Western states for years and subjugated the Eastern European states for a long time.

But over time this empire lost its vigour, and the ups and downs in the world politics had a deep impact on this empire. In the era of Sultan Abdul Hammed, who had a modern vision and ideas, the young generation started a new movement under the caption “Young Turks.” The motive of this movement was to promote secular ideas in Turkish society. It was the time when the religious class was losing power and grip over political matters.

At that time Mustafa Kemal proved to be equal to the occasion who nullified the Ottoman Empire and declared Turkey a democratic state in Western-style. The religious sect could not defend the falling sultanate. Because the religious class was also experiencing degeneration as they had lost their influence in the public. This religious class used religion to gain political interests. The religious heads could not “acclimatize” themselves according to the changing political atmosphere. Even this Caliphate ignored the transitional scenario of Europe and its increasing power. The Western civilization became powerful with time and the Turks could not comprehend it all.

The Kemal pasha of Turkey gave Turkey a secular image and chalked out new policies for Turkey (Gole,1995).

After the death of Mustafa Kemal, his political party Republican Peoples Party governed Turkey. This ruling party walked on the footprints of Kemalist ideas. After the end of the Second World War in 1945, Cold War started through which world politics entered into a new phase that divided the entire Globe into two parts. One part consisted of Western European states which were headed by the US called the Capitalist block while the other part consisted of Eastern European states headed by the Soviet Union called the Communist block. During this period, Turkey decided to join the US block to gain its political interests.

Political changes continued to appear in the domestic politics of Turkey and along this Turkey kept on progressing. The other political parties emerged on the scene in Turkey. The Democratic Party won the election in 1950 and set up a new government. This party criticised the Republican Peoples Party especially their policies concerning religion were bitterly criticised. Due to such a policy, this political

party was applauded very much. And in reaction, the Turk public supported this party. However, this political party could not do something for religious sections according to the expectations. Even the prime leadership of this party President Jalal Bayar, could not satiate the religious class. In satisfying the public, his political compulsions and interests became the biggest hurdle. On the other hand, secularism in Turkey was deeply rooted.

In 1960 martial law was imposed in Turkey. Secularism again got strength because the military leadership in Turkey was considered to be the guardian of secularism and Kemalism. While at the same time, the secular image of Turkey became very strong in the outer world and Turkey bent completely towards the US and the West. That is why the US and the Western states seem to support the Turkish military governments, as to them only secular Turkey is acceptable. Any other option besides secular Turkey will be alarming for them.

In 1965, the Justice Party won the election and established the government. This party had a soft corner for religious affairs as compared to other political parties like Republican Peoples Party and Democratic Party. But Justice Party was compelled to run the government according to the constitution of 1961. This constitution and its amendments gave much protection and safety to both Secularism and Kemalism. This was the only reason that this party had limited religious freedom, as secular ideas and traditions were more important than religion.

Turkey was passing through a transformation phase which affected political activities too. This changing scenario put the West into conflict. For the West, this was not a healthy change because the US and the West were passing through an important phase of the cold war. The US and its allies were facing the invasion of

communist ideology. It was the time when the US and the West were not in favour of such changes in Turkey.

But a wave of change from secularism to Islamic ideology started in Turkey. The most important development of this continuity was that professor Necmettin Erbakan laid the foundation of a new political party called the National Order Party to cope with secular elements. Its second aim was to erase the Western influence from Turkey.

Necmettin Erbakan famous Turkish leader was born in 1926 in Turkey and played an important role in the political history of Turkey. He aimed to struggle for the bright future of Turkey. This leadership had a religious bent of mind which is why religion got a prominent position in the agenda of this party. He was the one in Turkish history who discussed religion very boldly (Ozdalga, 2002).

This party criticised the US and the Western interference in Turkish political matters bitterly. This leader viewed that the US and the West interfered the Turkish politics under the cover of trade and capitalism. In this connection, he was in favour that his party would chalk out such a performance that will give economic progress to Turkey, while the stronger economy of Turkey is the warranty to stop foreign interference. This way dependency of the US and the West could be brought to end.

The political party's view was that the unequal division of assets and sources of Turkey has rendered Turkey and Turkish society, vulnerable. It was the opposition of US imperialism in a straightforward way which was committed in socialist-style". (Yesilada, 2002).

The changing scenario of Turkey was not favourable for the secular powers of Turkey, the US and the Western world. The National Order Party got fame overnight and became popular among the youth of Turkey. But suddenly after the start of this party, the court declared it null and void. But till then this party became popular among traders, investors and religious classes. It has been the tragic aspect of Turkey that its army and Judiciary have misused powers against the democratic institution. But without losing hope Erbakan altered his policy and laid the foundation for a new political party on 11 October 1972. The name of this political party was National Salvation Party. The political interests of this political party were to bring out economic, social and educational reforms.

This newborn political party laid much stress on basic individual rights. This party emerged strongly and rightly represented the Turk nation. This party discussed the problems of an average man; its result was that at the time of the election in 1973, this party won forty-eight seats which was a prominent success because it was a newly established party. It was an indication of the fact that the foundation of change was laid down in Turkey.

The result of this election was an indication that the Turkish nation started its journey from secularism to Political Islam. It was a turning point for the entire Turkish nation in the political history of Turkey. This change was against the interest of the supporters of secularism.

Necmettin Erbakan and his political party became so strong that they began to influence Turkish foreign policy; even they started to play their role in the foreign policymaking process.

In the year 1980, new unrest again rose in Turkey, when General Ahmet Kenan Evren imposed martial law and suspended all political systems. The political setup was suspended with sanctions on political activities. It was not a valid step rather it was meant to provide support for the falling secularism and was backed by the US and the West.

National Salvation Party's leader Necmettin Erbakan was put behind the bars. He was accused of using religion as a tool and he was found guilty of making a plot against secular values. According to the Act of 1961, nobody can use religion for political gains.

In this way, the army and secular powers tried to strengthen themselves in Turkey once again. The fact was that the National Salvation party was gaining popularity in Turkey; furthermore, this party was against Western interference. While the Turkish army considered secularism as a necessary tool for Turkish development.

## **2.4 Foreign Policy of Turkey Influenced by Internal Changes**

Turkey began to face sudden political changes and these changes affected Turkish foreign policy very much. The political insight of Necmettin Erbakan changed the political face of Turkey.

Turkey played a pivotal role in the Cyprus issue and this, in turn, changed Turkish foreign policy. The Cyprus issue was a long-standing issue between Turkey and Greece. This was aggravated over time. The Islamic ideologies got strength due to this conflict. And Islamic elements began to dominate in the political atmosphere of Turkey. Turkish people became too curious to know more about Jihad. The cruelties of Greece on the Muslims of Cyprus gave much fame to Necmettin Erbakan's political

views. US did not support Turkey over the Cyprus issue. Consequently, the liberal and secular in Turkish society were disappointed and this way Necmettin Erbakan got the chance to gain the favour of the general public in Turkey.

On this occasion, Necmettin Erbakan became popular among the Youth of Turkey. At the time of crisis in Cyprus in 1974, Turk forces held operation successfully as Erbakan was the ally of Bulet Ecevit. This way Necmettin Erbakan played a key role in the success of the Turk armed forces. When the US announced to stop its military aid to Turkey, In reaction, Turkey also announced to close US military bases in the country. This unexpected and bold step of Turkey shuddered the US administration in surprise because such action from Turkey was quite unnatural and unexpected.

An urgent meeting of Muslim foreign ministers was called in Istanbul in May 1976. This meeting reflected Turkish foreign policy transformation. Turkey started preferring the Muslim world because Turkey considered it unscrupulous to rely on the US and the West only because on the Cyprus issue, America had not supported Turkey as they had expected.

After the 1980s, the Turk public openly started to criticize secularism, and US and Western policies in the Middle East. That is why in the 1980s, once again martial law was imposed by the Turkish army. But Necmettin Erbakan established once again a new political party named Welfare Party in 1983, the main objective was to develop Turkey economically and this party also gave importance to religion. "The National Vision is a vital part in the doctrine of the religious parties in Turkey" (Carkoglu and Rubin, 2006).

In 1991 Welfare Party (Refah Party) contested the election under this manifesto that the US and the West will give importance to Turkey when the Islamic world will stand by Turkey. While the Islamic world can only favour Turkey when in return Turkey gives favour in the field of economy and security.

During the 1995 elections in Turkey, pro-Western and secular powers once again united so that Necmettin Erbakan and his political party should not make government. Sulyman Demirel, the then president tried his best to keep the Welfare party away from making the government. But on the other hand, this party was at its climax and Mr Erbakan was famous for his leadership all over the world. Moreover, Erbakan wanted to gain government through a legal way and to establish unity among all the Muslims of the world. In this way, the foundation of political Islam was laid down in Turkey at that time and that may be termed as the Revivalist movement which is now considered the substitute for Ottomanism (Karpat, 2001).

The ideology of Necmettin Eurbakan was deeply favoured and liked by the Turkish public and now they were including their ideas in external affairs. Necmettin Eurbakan was of the view that the entire Muslim world should design a military organization just like NATO founded by the US and its Western allies to stop Communism and for the protection of Capitalism. Besides this, he proposed that the Muslim world should also work for making an economic organization like the European Union of the European states.

These policies were the only way to protect the interests of the Muslim world in the field of economy and security and the Muslim states will get benefits mutually. Necmettin Eurbakan stressed a third organization whose aim was to make cooperation

in the field of education, culture, science and technology. So that the Islamic world may progress in the above fields (Duman, 2010).

The Welfare Party designed their program on the patterns of the West. "It was the indication of pan-Islamic ideology which also suggested two methods i.e. to create a single Muslim state and to create a union of Muslim states" (Landau, 1990).

During the 1995 elections in Turkey, the Welfare party won the majority of the seats but remained unable to form the government. The other parties formed a coalition government but could not run the political affairs.

At last Necmettin Erbakan took oath as the Premier of Turkey on 28 June 1995 and made the coalition government with True Path Party. This government took decisions on a rational basis. They adopted the policies of the Western world, based on the principle of equality. This government gave priority to developing relations with the Islamic world.

Such bold policies resulted in unveiling the biased behaviour of the European states on the issue of Turkish membership in the EU. The foreign minister of Holland Hence Wence Marlow clearly expressed his views about the issue of Turkish membership in the EU, in the European Union Parliament, that time has come to declare that Turkey cannot get membership of the EU because Turkey is a Muslim state and it is intolerable to see a Muslim state as a member of EU.

It was an open secret for Turkey to express its views clearly and not to show any leniency for Europe just only to gain its interest. The Turkish government declared clearly that Turkey will not beg for membership of the EU just for gaining its

interests. The Turk government further added that they will search for their interests in states other than the West, and they will search for the best alternate.

The transformation process started in Turkish foreign policy afterwards, while Justice and Development Party enhanced this transformation process. In this way, Turkey started to move from West to East. This transformation process was termed as de-Westernization. In this connection afterwards, Justice and Development Party's leadership emerged in the form of Tayyip Erdogan. He started his political career with an anti-communist movement named National Turk Student Movement. After this, he joined Eurbakan's National Salvation Party and became the president of the Youth wing.

Afterwards, he started to struggle against those political parties who had communist and secular bent of mind. After the 1980's martial law, Eurbakan formed Welfare Party because all other political parties were banned completely. In this political party, Tayyip Erdogan played a key role.

In 1994 he was elected the Mayor of Istanbul. After taking the charge of his designation, he worked day and night to resolve the basic issues of the city. And he struggled hard to minimize the problems of an average man. It was the result of Erdogan's devotion and hard work that the same Istanbul which was once a central place of issues became the centre of interest for tourists.

The government of Necmettin Erbakan was dissolved unlawfully by the Turkish military elite on 28 February 1997 after the meeting of the National Security Council. This political crisis is called Post-modern coup in the political history of Turkey. Against the step of ending the ruling of the successful government, Erdogan resisted very much. He created a political sense among the youth with his effective

and impressive speeches and earned much fame. Even during his political address, he was arrested for reciting an Islamic poem. He was also blamed for inciting the public and was politically banned.

Now Erdoğan emerged as a big challenge for secular and pro-Western elements in Turkey. Not only this he also became a challenge to the Turkish military and dummy judicial system. On the other hand, the famous Turk leader Abdullah Gul was also facing such a crisis due to his Islamist views. At this time both leaders jointly stressed new planning. They struggled to get the favour of the liberal class of Turkish society.

They considered a Political party to make Turkey strong politically and economically and to get rid of judiciary and military interference in Turkish politics. They supposed the necessity for revising the current constitution. To ensure the safety of the secular constitution, the Turkish army imposed martial law several times.

On August 14, 2001, these leaders raised a new political party whose name was Justice and Development (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi abbreviated AKP) for the achievement of their targets. They ran a campaign to introduce this party as a liberal one. In the beginning, it was confused for the forward block of Eurbakan's Welfare Party. While the Secular leadership ignored this political party altogether and thought this party to be their easy opponent. According to them, it was a baseless party that has no deep roots in the public and it is not in a sound position to win elections. Further, they assumed that this party will not grow in Turkish society and politics.

Surprisingly, this party won the general elections in November 2002 with a heavy mandate. On July 22, 2007, this party continued its political success and won the elections again. This success showed that the Turkish public concedes the motif of

this newly established political party internally and externally in the field of politics.

Now the Turkish public was showing less interest in secular and pro-Western ideas.

In 2011, Justice and Development Party again got a memorable success in the elections and now it was the time when this party showed its influence in internal and external political matters openly and boldly. Up till now, they were supported by the public to such an extent that military interference was not easy as ever before. It became the common practice in Turkey that the army got the freedom to put martial law whenever desired or by misusing the judiciary to end any democratic government.

During the 2014 Presidential elections in Turkey, Tayyip Erdogan was elected as the president of Turkey and Ahmet Davutoglu became the Premier. The party got much fame throughout the country. Besides, they got the victory in other elections. This Turkish political party made the state very strong in political and economic affairs.

On July 15, 2016, the Turkish army once again made a plot and then rebelled against the elected democratic government. But the Turkish public very courageously failed this coup. After this, Tayyip Erdogan as the president of Turkey dealt with the nefarious elements with iron hands. Even he demanded the US to hand over Fethullah Gulen who was also involved in this issue. But the US administration showed cold behaviour and their relations were affected very much.

Indeed, this situation strengthened the democratic government and the Justice and Development party emerged as a successful modern Islamist political party. The success of the Justice and Development Party can be judged through different elections and referendum results.

Table 1: November 3, 2002, General Election Results

Registered Electors	41,407,027
Voters	32,768,161 79.1%
Valid Votes	31,528,783

Table 2: Party and Seats Won

Party	Votes	%	Seats
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	10,808,229	34.3	363
Republican People's Party (CHP)	6,113,352	19.4	178
Independents	314,251	1.0	9
True Path Party (DYP)	3,008,942	9.5	0
Nationalist Action Party (MHP)	2,635,787	8.4	0
Young Party (GP)	2,285,598	7.2	0
Democratic People's Party (DEHAP)	1,960,660	6.2	0
Motherland Party (ANAP)	1,618,465	5.1	0
Felicity Party (SP)	785,489	2.5	0
Democratic Left Party (DSP)	384,009	1.2	0
Others	1,614,001	5.1	0

Source: <http://www.electionresources.org/tr/assembly.php?election=2002>)

**Table 3: July 22, 2007, General Election Results**

Registered Electors	42,799,303		
Voters	36,056,293 84.2%		
Valid Votes	35,049,691		
<hr/>			
Party	Votes	%	Seats
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	16,327,291	46.6	341
Republican People's Party (CHP)	7,317,808	20.9	112
Nationalist Action Party (MHP)	5,001,869	14.3	70
Independents	1,835,486	5.2	26
Democrat Party (DP)	1,898,873	5.4	0
Young Party (GP)	1,064,871	3.0	0
Felicity Party (SP)	820,289	2.3	0
Others	783,204	2.2	0

(Source: <http://www.electionresources.org/tr/assembly.php?election=2007>)

**Table 4: June 12, 2011, General Election Results**

Registered Electors	52,806,322		
Voters	43,914,948 83.2%		
Valid Votes	42,941,763		
<hr/>			
Party	Votes	%	Seats
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	21,399,082	49.8	327
Republican People's Party (CHP)	11,155,972	26.0	135
Nationalist Action Party (MHP)	5,585,513	13.0	53
Independents	2,819,917	6.6	35
Felicity Party (SP)	543,454	1.3	0
Others	1,437,825	3.3	0

(Source: <http://www.electionresources.org/tr/assembly.php?election=2011>)

PARTIES	TOTAL	TURKEY	ABROAD
AK PARTY	40.87%   258	40.68%	49.88%
CHP	24.95%   132	25.13%	11.21%
MHP	16.29%   80	13.45%	9.25%
HDP	13.12%   60	12.96%	20.29%
SAADET	2.06%	2.07%	1.58%
INDEPENDENT	1.08%	1.00%	0.30%
VATAN PARTY	0.35%	0.34%	0.62%
BTP	0.21%	0.21%	0.14%
DSP	0.19%	0.19%	0.18%
DP	0.16%	0.17%	0.05%
TURK PARTY	0.16%	0.15%	0.38%
KURTULUS PARTY	0.15%	0.13%	0.17%
HAK-PAR	0.13%	0.13%	0.15%
IDYP	0.06%	0.06%	0.13%
ANA PARTY	0.06%	0.06%	0.06%
LDP	0.06%	0.06%	0.04%
MEP	0.05%	0.05%	0.03%
M. L. ET	0.04%	0.04%	0.02%
KP	0.03%	0.03%	0.00%
YURTEP	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%
HAP	0.01%	0.01%	0.06%
OTHERS	0.00%	0.00%	0.01%

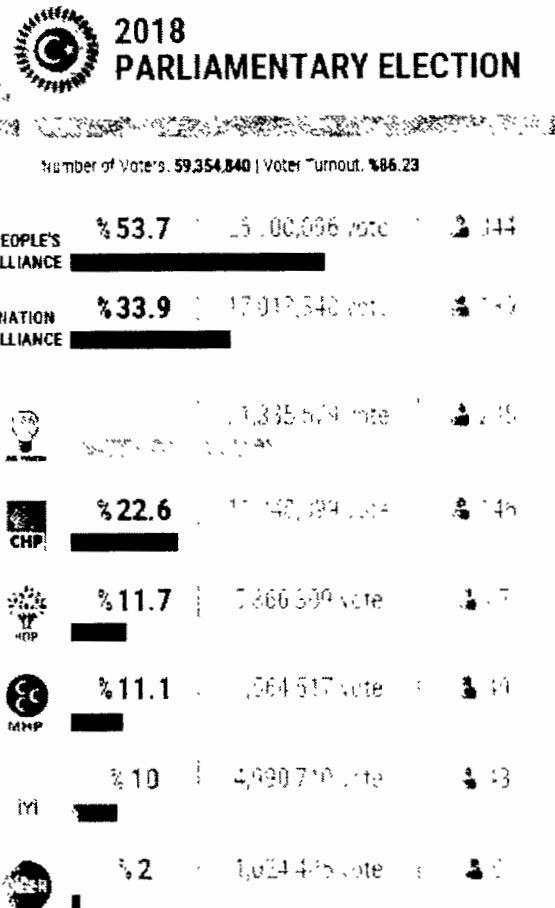
**Figure 2: Election June 2015 (Source: Sabah, 2015)**

PARTIES	TOTAL	TURKEY	ABROAD
 AK PARTY	39.44%   217	40.30%	26.21%
 CHP	26.31%   134	26.68%	16.34%
 MHP	11.93%   10	12.03%	7.27%
 HDP	10.76%   59	10.55%	10.10%
 SAADET	3.68%	3.69%	0.50%
 BBP	3.24%	3.55%	1.13%
 VATAN PARTY	1.35%	0.26%	1.51%
 HAK FAR	0.25%	0.20%	0.18%
 KURTULUS PARTY	0.16%	0.18%	0.15%
 DP	0.15%	0.15%	0.04%
 KP	0.11%	0.11%	0.03%
 INDEPENDENT	0.11%	0.00%	0.00%
 BTP	0.11%	0.11%	0.08%
 DSP	0.07%	0.07%	0.02%
 LDP	0.06%	0.06%	0.13%
 MILLEI	0.04%	0.04%	0.02%
 DYP	0.03%	0.03%	0.04%

**Figure 3: Election November 2015 (Source: Sabah, 2015)**

Number of Voters: 59,354,840 | Voter Turnout: %86.23

### PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE



**Figure 4: General Election 2018 (Source: Sabah, 2018)**

In the elections of 2002, 2007, 2011, two times in the years 2015 and 2018 the Justice and Development Party won the election, while the secular leaders could not compete with a party, which was new in politics.

This party won the general elections, made the government and continued the policies and the process of economic development. The Turkish public supported the

government policies for internal and external problems. These results show that the public like the policies of the Justice and Development Party.

After the establishment of the government, the Justice and Development Party worked with full confidence to achieve the desired goals and interests. They took a firm stand against the Western world regarding the major issues. It was a clear shift in the Turkish foreign policy as it was the time when they could work on their foreign policy principle. The Turkish people were giving favour to the policies which can develop the economy of the state and resolve the problem of the common people in the society. The results also showed to the secular and pro-Western powers that they would have to change their behaviour against the Islamic ideology in the state if they want to survive in politics.

The AK Party kept on winning the election again and again. They continued their journey of success and policies. This time, the secular forces and the Army could not go against the government because the AK Party had become so strong and popular among the people that there was no place for the military ruler in the state so the seculars could not repeat their policies as they had been doing in the past.

Whenever the government of the Islamic party came into power, the secular forces not only imposed martial law and demolished the government of that party, but even they banned several parties. Whoever tried to act against secularism, had to face powerful resistance, every time the courts gave decisions against the Islamists to favour the secular and military dictators. The results of general elections 2002 to 2018 in Turkey are a clear message for such secular powers. The above figures indicate the trend of the people through the results of the general elections.

**CHAPTER 03**

**TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY AND**

**TRANSFORMATION PROCESS**

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### **TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY AND TRANSFORMATION PROCESS**

#### **3.1 Emerging Foreign Policy Principles of Justice and Development Party: A Swerve from the West**

The Justice and Development Party six times embraced victory in the elections held in 2002, 2007, in 2011, two times in 2015 and then in 2018. The continuous success of the party indicated that the people in Turkey agreed with the ideas of the Justice and Development Party.

The foreign policy, after winning the 2002 election, was revisited and there was a noticeable and evident modification in it. The main revolutionary force behind these changes was the struggles of Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who moulded the foreign policy into a new arrangement, as the theory of the Axis Shift turned out to be focused. Axis-shift is the term used in the field of Foreign Affairs for the shift in the foreign policies to reach the extent of repossessing explicit interests of the state. Assuming the dogma of Axis-Shift, a country repositions itself from one notion or system to another. This reshaping trend was surmised in the Foreign policy of Turkey as the country went underway to become an Islamist state. The function of the newly established Turkish government during the clash between Israel and Palestine is one of the examples to note how Turkey started to favour the Palestinians for their rights while in the past Turkey had favoured the Western ideas. Similarly, Turkey transformed its position on the matter of Gaza favouring the government of Hamas.

Turkey's opposition to the US decision of attacking Iraq in 2003 proved to be a decisive time. Post-September 11, the world witnessed American aggression against the Muslims especially against Afghanistan when later was pressurized to end the rule of the Taliban to hand over to America the Saudi national Bin Laden. The US aggressive actions were allied by the west as well. Consequently, a war against terror broke out and Turkey being a member of NATO acted as a partner.

In 2002, the Justice and Development party formed a government. Abdullah Güл a popular leader from the JDP (the Justice and Development Party) became the newly elected Turkish PM. In 2003, the United States and Great Britain accused Iraq of possessing lethal armaments but the accusers could not provide solid evidence of this charge. However in 2003, even against the will of the UN, Iraq was attacked by Great Britain and the United States. At that time, Turkey opposed the aggression of the United States and Britain towards Iraq, and massive protests were held in Turkey. Abdullah Güл's newly formed government had rejected the US request to use its airbases against Iraq.

In Turkey, the Foreign policy devising authorities had foreseen that the Middle East would have to bear the disturbing effects of the US attack on Iraq. The common people in Turkey were also strongly protesting against the American aggression in Iraq. Various poll reports show that 87 per cent of the population opposed the US attack on Iraq while the intention of letting Americans use Turkish airbases was opposed by 94 per cent of the Turkish people. The attack on Iraq was an indirect indication that the act may also prove to be a threat to Turkey. Similarly, Turkey also opposed the sanctions imposed on the nuclear program of Iran.

The West had always been expressing reservations about the Iranian nuclear program. The West feared that if overlooked, it may shatter the balance of power in the Middle East resulting in an arms race. Therefore, the US and the West expressed concerns to discontinue the Iranian nuclear development. The option of demolishing the nuclear sites in Iran is often debated, in the same manner as Israel did in Iraq. However, Russia and China are a great hurdle against such aggressive plans. The neighbouring countries of Iran are also not supporters of aggression against Iran because Iran has friendly relations with the adjacent neighbours i.e. Afghanistan, India, Turkey and Pakistan.

Principally, Turkey had acted as a helper and a go-between to disentangle opposition amongst the Western and Iran; yet, Turkey had the soft corner for Iran. That is why Turkey did not favour the sanction against Iran when moved in the UNO.

### **3.2 The Turkish Foreign Policy: An Inclination to the East**

The incident of The Freedom Flotilla further cleared the emerging trend in the Foreign Policy of Turkey. The Freedom Flotilla was a ship transporting philanthropic aid to the Palestinians in which several Turkish nationals along with the others were killed as a result of Israeli aggression. The Turkish government showed serious concern on this issue.

The events mentioned above exhibited that there is a great and noticeable alteration in Turkish foreign policy. These events were the driving forces behind the argument that Turkey is drifting closer consequently; ‘axis shift in Turkish foreign policy’ found its way to be a significant study area.

Some of the researchers debate that the matter of attachment in the EU is the major root of ‘the Axis Shift’, in the Foreign-Policy of Turkey under the command of the AKP authority. Previously, Turkey was thought to be favouring the West and it had a secular setup of government.

“Mustafa Kemal’s foreign policy was not based on the expansionist policy of the Ottoman Empire” (Aydin, December 2004). Among the Muslim countries, Turkey was the first to recognize Israel. NATO is a western organization that participates in military-related issues but Turkey is an ally in this organization too. This alliance in NATO was intended to be anti-Communist agenda but despite the expression of such intention, practically, the West is not ready to accept Turkey as a regular member state. Many narrow-minded western states have blocked Turkey’s membership in the EU. Such a prejudiced approach of the Western world compelled Turkey to go closer to the East because overlooking the east and the Muslim world for longer would not be in the interest of Turkey. Therefore, it may be considered that the obstructions against Turkey’s membership in the EU proved to be the chief aspect that commenced the axis-shift in Turkish foreign relations.

Many researchers claimed that this drift began with the Justice and Development Party’s government, but became vibrant after the 9/11 crash when the United States launched an open fight against terrorism. Stalemate existed between the United States and Turkey over the US attack on Iraq, because it was against Turkey’s interest.

Some experts accept it as true that the transformation in Turkish foreign policy is a reaction to altering inclinations in international politics. They think that world politics is changing, so Turkey has changed its foreign policy and that shaping

relations according to interests is the main element in politics. These connections may gain variation in time. After the events of 9/11, world politics began to change and with much advancement that occurred; these event developments affected the economy of the states, changing foreign policies internationally. Shaping the new foreign policy of the Turkish nation, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu commented they cannot modify their neighbours, geography and history, so Turkey should go to achieve development with friendship and cooperative relations. Turkey can no longer disregard neighbouring states; similarly, the Muslim world cannot be disregarded. Therefore, the transforming action in Turkish Foreign Policy can be seen after the government of the Justice and Development Party. With the enactment of the new foreign policy of the government, the process of drifting to the East started. However, in the government of the Justice and Development Party, the discernment remained that relations between Turkey and the Western world are strong and that the notion of axis shift in Turkish foreign policy is an impression only. Turkey is still an ally of the United States and in the Syrian crisis; Turkey was with the Western world. Even Turkey and the United States have hurled a combined operation against the Syrian government. Turkey and the United States were organized to go to combat against the Syrian government, but Russia's stance on the matter protected the area from a devastating war, so this example looks like evidence that Turkey still has robust ties with the Western world.

But the truth is that when the Justice and Development Party came to power in 2002, it offered a hand of good gesture to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Turkey has signed more than a few treaties with the Syrian government. The Turkish leader Tayyip Erdogan had particular ties with the Syrian President. When the Arab Spring touched Syria and nonviolent protests from Sunni Muslims began, Bashar al-Assad's

government launched military might against Sunni Muslims. As a result, a type of civil war began in Syria and Turkey started feeling a risk to its interests. Consequently, Turkey curved to the Arabs to protect the Sunni Muslims, who constitute 80% of Syria's population.

The United States and Turkey are closer because the United States too seeks interests in the Middle East and considered the Syrian situation a threat. Moreover, Syria is a risk to Israel's safety, and this point keeps the United States closer to Turkey.

When the drift in Turkish foreign policy began, the perception started to form in the public mind that the Westernization process in Turkish foreign policy had initiated. The Turkish government has started to improve its relations with the United States and the Middle-Eastern countries including Iran, which often opposes Western policies and Israel. However, the Justice and Development party argued that it cannot change its history, geography and neighbours, and this claim shows that Turkey wants to establish friendly relations with the Middle Eastern countries, which is among its foreign policy goals.

Napoleon Bonaparte said. "La politique de toutes les puissances est dans leur géographie," (Spykman, 1938) geography shapes the foreign policy of any state. Kemal Mustafa has changed foreign policy in the past, turned to the Western world and gained attention in both; the fields of military and the economy. Turkey's Foreign Policy is transitioning during the rule of the Justice and Development Party. Turkey faces security trials due to the Kurdish uprising, and if Turkey resists conjoining neighbouring countries, it would have to face multifarious hitches. That's the reason that Turkey upkeeps neighbouring countries as an important consideration in its

foreign policy because the Kurdish insurgency takes provisions from Turkey's neighbours.

Turkey is drifting towards the Muslim world and the Eastern world to sever ties between Kurds and neighbouring states. After 2003, Turkey has improved its relations with Iraq to help her in development because powerful Iraq is beneficial for the national interest of Turkey.

The transformation process of Turkey's foreign policy began with the concept of demand after the Second World War. Turkey stayed nonaligned in the Second World War, but at the time of the Cold War in 1945, when the world was divided, Turkey had to go to the Western world and make its relations with the United States. The aggressive policies of the Soviet Union were also liable so Turkey converted to be a member of NATO. Overtime, however, United States' political views changed. The Cold War ended, NATO's goal changed, world politics changed, while Turkey's interests also altered the progression of the drift to the East. The U.S and the West had concerns about the relationships with Turkey in the future because Turkey was modifying its foreign policy and the interests of the West and the US were not favourable with that of Turkey. Hamas-Turkey associations are intolerable to the US and Israel. The Gaza strip is ruled by Hamas while Israel adopts the policy of blocking the strip. This policy of Israel is criticized by the JDP. The clash aroused by the Freedom Flotilla befell owing to the diffidence of the governments of Turkey and Israel.

The Western policies were opposed by the Turkish government on the ground of the Palestinian's human rights and the act of attack on Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed

Yasin in 2004. The Freedom Flotilla incident heightened rigidities customary in Turkey-Israel relations.

### **3.3 Ahmet Davutoglu and the Concept of 'The Strategic Depth'**

Ahmet Davutoglu, the adviser to former PM Recep Erdogan, formulated the foreign policy of Turkey on revolutionary grounds. His book; "*Strategic Depth*", published in 2008 brought out the principle of Strategic Depth. It means that Turkey occupies strategic depth founded in its historical and geographical location. The position empowers the country to have a dynamic across the border role if a multidimensional foreign policy is implemented. The idea of being a bridge between the West and the Islamic world is rejected by Ahmet Davutoglu.

"He had the view that instead of fulfilling the interests of the other countries why not Turkey achieve its interests by enhancing its relations with the other states and play a vital role on regional as well as the world level. The Turkish Foreign Minister said that Turkey has a great potential to become a powerful state" (Sozen, March 2010). He further said, "Turkey would be a global actor in 2023 at the time of the anniversary of the Turkish republic" (Davutoglu, 2007).

Turkey, as it occupies a distinctive geographical setting e.g. being a doorway between the East and the West is a greater source of welfare. Turkey may utilize soft powers i.e., Turkey can decide its resolve rows with adjacent states for an ultimate fruitful result. In the modern world, the use of hard power to achieve economic and political targets is in no way appreciable. Turkey's geographical position can be used to establish peace and to gain prosperity in the region. This concept is based on the excerpt that a nation's value amongst others lies in its geostrategic position and historical background.

“In real the Strategic Depth of Davutoglu is a unique doctrine based on self-confidence and good neighbourliness and stability” (Aras, 2010).

### **3.4 Neo Ottomanism**

Neo-Ottomanism is an important aspect of Turkey's foreign policy under the rule of JDP. The government of Turkey is often criticized by analysts, as they suppose that the altering policies in Turkish foreign affairs may let imperialism flourish in Turkey. It is also considered a sign that Turkey wants to achieve its splendid past Ottoman Empire which enjoyed authority over several nations.

Neo-Ottomanism speaks of Turkey's vital position amongst the Muslims as a nation. To be an old-styled ally of the US and the West may not allow Turkey to disregard the Muslims. Turkey has the vigour to adopt a leading role of the Muslims while pursuing such targets making Turkey work to establish solidarity in the Middle East and peace in the Balkan region. “Turkey is establishing relations with the Middle Eastern countries, the Central Asian countries. The concept of imperialism on behalf of Neo Ottomanism is the wrong perception because Turkey had already adopted the zero problem policy with the neighbouring countries” (Strauss, 23 November 2009).

### **3.5 The Balance between Freedom and Security**

Many other principles are shaping Turkish foreign policy, along with keeping balance and security concepts. The governments are responsible to ensure for their citizens, security and freedom. The security should be at a level that may not hamper the basic rights of citizens as well as fundamental freedoms. During the post-Cold War era in the 1990s, a greater emphasis was laid on the democratic values and basic rights of the common people. The West and especially the US valued such standards as they may ensure fundamental rights. They provided capital to enhance the

economic system and human rights, however, 9/11, again subverted the position, as the freedom of citizens diminished because the priority shifted to national security. The Turkish FM Ahmet Davutoglu criticised it as it was a step towards the establishment of an authoritarian country. The JDP implored internationally that there should be an established balance of Security vs Freedom.

When the AKP came to power in 2002, it made several reforms that gave citizens more freedom and passed laws that would ensure the freedom of Kurds as a minority, as well as the freedom of citizens. The reforms have been beneficial for Turkey internally. These policies would help overcome the Kurdish Workers' Movement, which could threaten Turkey's security. Turkey's image has become better at the international level and with this, Turkey may gain more importance in the Western world. It may also help Turkey become a member of the EU.

The JDP leadership has successfully carried out many reforms as Turkey faced Kurdish acts of terrorism but did not suspend the freedom of citizens and human rights despite facing numerous provoking challenges, and carry on the notion of a balanced attitude between a state's security and liberty. In the post 9/11 scenario, most of the countries are working to ensure security and execution of such laws restricts the freedom of the common people. The West is also working to limit the liberty of the Muslims in the US. Speaking of people's freedom, the European Union is not accepting Turkey as a formal member state because according to the EU Turkey had not fulfilled the required standards and had not granted the fundamental rights especially to the Kurds. While the fact is that the JDP government is trying to improve the balance between the basic rights of the people and the security of the country.

### **3.6 The Policy of ‘Zero Problem’**

Turkey, through its Foreign Policy, aimed at establishing friendly and peaceful relations with all its neighbours. Turkey went closer to the US and the West after the Cold War. Turkey's relations with neighbouring countries faced difficulties. When the JDP took over the rule, the FM began to adopt a softer attitude towards the adjacent nations, to retrieve the economic interests. Consequently, Turkey moved to adopt the strategy of zero problems with the adjacent countries. “To achieve this purpose, Turkey used its geo-cultural bases i.e. its location and cultural aspects to improve regional linkage for attaining economic development” (Danforth, June 2011).

‘Zero Problem Policy’, facilitated to resolve clashes and enhanced business and trade dealings of the country. As a result, Turkey adopted the role of the negotiator in the Middle East. Turkey struggled to draw closer the US and Iran, to resolve the Palestinian clash by being a go-between for Israel and Palestine. Kemalism had remained an important aspect of Turkey’s policy since 1923, the principle had been leading towards Westernization which resulted in the loss of neutrality, but the JDP adopted the attitude of diminishing clashes with the neighbours. It was a clue that Turkey intends to resolve problems with the neighbours by using the principle of ‘Zero Problem’.

Turkey has improved its relations with the neighbouring countries and its former enemy Greece. It also established friendly relations with Bulgaria and Romania, the two countries in the Balkan region. The trading capacity of Turkey with Ukraine has amplified five times during the previous ten years. Both the states were considering the option of free trade by the end of 2011. Additionally, Turkey was trying to improve its connections with Syria; both countries had set up a council to

deal with the economic and political issues in between. In 2009, Turkey improved its relations with Central Asian countries; Turkey has even signed a protocol with Armenia to resolve the issues. Both countries, in 2008, also tried 'Football-Diplomacy' as a means to stabilize relations. However, the borders between the two were not opened until Armenia handed back Azerbaijan's occupied territory.

The Zero Problem Policy remained unproductive when the crisis in Syria altered Middle East politics in 2011. The Arab Spring affected Syria in the way that 80% of Syria's Sunni population got involved in anti-government protests. The government then started using military force there especially to control the Sunni Muslims. It is also reported that chemical weapons were used against the protestors. A civil-war like situation developed in Syria and Turkey supported the Sunni population. This act was admonished by the Shia government in Syria and Iraq. The Middle East and Lebanese Shia Military group Hezbollah started helping the Syrian government based on sectarian affiliation. To counter the situation, Turkey launched a campaign to attack Syria with the help of the US. Later on, Russia also got involved in the politics of the Middle East. The presence of the Russian naval fleet to protect Syria from the US is proof of Russian interest in the region. Turkey has built its missile sites on its borders with Syria and Iran. The 'Zero Problem Policy' was affected badly because of the unstable situation in Syria. The 'Zero Problem Policy' was also shaken negatively because of Israel's policy towards the Muslims of Palestine. The consequences caused by the incident of Freedom Flotilla are another example of such a situation as detrimental to the Turkish policies because, in the light of ongoing situations, Turkey also desired to set up its image as a 'leader of the Muslims'.

Following are some of the salient features of the Foreign Policy of Turkey:

1. New Principle Discourse:

Turkey aims at setting up cordial relations with other states to play a leading role in the region.

2. Multi-Track and Multi-Dimensional Strategies:

The policies should be multi-facet so that they may adopt easily according to the altering scenarios.

3. Rhythmic Diplomacy:

This principle targets that Turkey is to have a role in matters worldwide through international organizations.

### **3.7 The Middle East and the Turkish Foreign Policy**

Under the governance of the JDP, Turkish foreign policy set up fundamental concerns with its win-win strategy values and a proactive approach to the principle of stability and interest. The ongoing conditions in international politics as well as the instability and the Arab Spring in the Middle East demand the alteration in the foreign policies of Turkey. The up rise in the Arab territories made Turkey modify the strategies so that the country may tackle the economic as well as the security issues. Turkish foreign policymakers aimed at developing policies that may help the country in securing a prosperous and stable environment within and outside the country.

The US attack made Turkey show its cards, on international politics, more clearly. The Turkish stance on the US attack got clear as the AKP authorities forbade the US military to use the airbases of Turkey against a Muslim country. A kind of deadlock was created with the US but the JDP won popularity amongst the masses especially in the Muslim world and particularly in the Middle East. Turkey had been

fair with the Kurds, however, after the end of Saddam Hussein's government, the Kurdish movement strengthened in Iraq that is why the JDP authorities could not consent with the US' plan of the military. Turkey, therefore, opposed the US offence against Iraq because they believed it would create unrest in the Middle East. After all, the problems could not be solved by force. Therefore, there was a protest against the US attack on Iraq.

During the period of JDP rule, the authorities in Turkey especially emphasized seeking ways to end up clashes in the neighbourhood, therefore, Turkey found decent associations with others in the region. Improvement in the ties with the Middle East and Iran was the consequence of such strategies. It was against the will of the West as it had been the policy of the West to keep Iran an isolated state.

Being abundant in natural energy resources, the Middle East is a significant region for powerful players internationally. Therefore, the states in the Middle East have been facing problems because of the oil resources, especially after the fall of the Ottoman Empire the other powerful countries look at the area greedily, to fulfil their needs of oil. "This region is the centre of the power politics for the global powers and a tug of war started to increase their role or influence in the region" (Owen, 1992). That is why, "this region is considered the most problematic region in the world" (Milton, 2006).

The Middle East became complex in the post-WW-I era, as the territories were divided by the captivating forces to utilize the area for the strategic interest of the dominating powers. The undivided region was balkanization, divided on a religious and ethnic basis, and therefore Arab-Israeli rivalry began in the region, and the Palestinians were problematic for world peace. While the Palestinians demand the

right to self-determination, this demand was disregarded by Israel and the West. Other powers were playing their role in this region because the Middle East is politically and strategically significant with ample natural resources, i.e. oil. The US and the West target access to the black-gold. Against the modernization process in the area, the Socio-political background, cultural aspects and historical trends hindered such processes and gave rise to destabilization. The development and progress processes were hindered in this area because of the arms race and technological dependency.

In the Middle East, internal politics was also the root of uncertainty. For example, Jamal Abdul Nassir, in Egypt, took over with the help of the armed forces, while Arab nationalism was used as a tool for politics. The same sentiment of the nation was also used against Israel, imperialism, and the West. “As a nationalist leader, Jamal Abdul Nassir affected the politics of the Middle East and became a hero for the Arab world” (Aburish, 2004). Arab nationalism was favoured by the Soviet Union. During the Arab Israel wars, the West and the US aided Israel while the Arabs were backed by the USSR. Later on, to set back communism in the Middle Eastern states, the US signed pacts with states in the region; CENTO and SEATO were the outcomes of such struggles of the West. The US activities in the region also activated Russia and the USSR came forward in favour of Syria and Egypt and these countries joined the Russian alliance against the US. “Turkey signed with Iraq Kirkuk-Ceyhan oil pipeline deal with the help of the United States and Europe” (Kumins, 2003).

The Islamic revolution, under the command of Imam Khomeini in Iran and the increasing Shia influence, removed the Western-supported government in Iran. The post-revolution Iran went into closer ties with Russia, however, such new relations were not acceptable for the US and the West. Apart from this international development, internally in Iran, Sunni Shia clashes worsened and these clashes started

to impact the politics in the region, A cold-war like condition developed in the region because of the sectarian clashes of the Sunni and Shia. Other internal problems in the Middle East, like the Arab Spring, burning Palestine and the nuclear plans of Iran are a hazard for the whole region.

“The Ottoman Empire of Turkey was an influential actor in this region but that empire ended after the First World War” (1914-1918). Turkey and its allies could not win that war and later on had to face the grim consequences. The unstable weaker economy and weaker military were the utmost results of that defeat. The weakness of the Ottoman Empire encouraged the Arab regions to demand independence from the empire. The Arab-Nationalism in the region developed sentiments against the Turks and they started to consider Turkey an imperialist occupier who had turned Arab into a colonized region. “The Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria are the regions with Anti Turk sentiments, the emerging elite declared Turkey an imperial state that is exploiting the Arab nations for its development and using their natural resources” (Bengo and Ozen, 2000). The Arabs developed hate sentiments against Turkey being the major cause of the issues in the area. The West aided the Arab elite which rose for the disintegration of the Turk Empire. Among the Western countries, France and the UK were more active to help the Arabs when they were trying to overthrow the Caliphate system in Turkey because, in the past, the Ottoman Empire was a threat to the West. A modern Turkey emerged after the elimination of the Caliphate rule in 1924, the democratic state renewed its foreign policy, and turned to the Western world. It was the territorial conflicts that caused Turkey to reduce its relations with the Middle East state both in the economic and military fields due to development and other reasons. Meanwhile, on March 28, 1949, under western influence, despite the opposition of the Muslims, Turkey recognized the Jewish state of Israel. The Arabs

have strong reservations regarding the creation of Israel and its occupation of Palestinian territory but Turkey did not regard such Muslim sentiments. The Arabs and Israel had been at daggers drawn since the creation of Israel, due to which recognition of Israel by Turkey was strongly disapproved by the Muslims and particularly by the Arabs. Turkey tried to achieve its interest through a modified foreign policy with an attitude of indifference towards the Middle East. Especially during the era of the Cold War, Turkey, instead of the Muslims, was closer to the West. “The USSR’s threat also made Turkey develop closer ties with the West and for that Turkey joined CENTO and the Baghdad Packet” (Yesilbursa, 2005). That is the reason that Turkey remained at a distance from the Middle East. “Such strategic actions could not bring these states closer to each other because, in 1960, Ankara started to utilize the water resources from the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers” (Bolukbasi, 1993). Furthermore, against the will of the Muslims and the Middle East, Turkey became a part of NATO, while the Suez Canal clash in 1956, further parted Turkey and the Muslims. However, the USSR was supporting the Middle East on that issue.

To safeguard Muslim interest, in 1969 the OIC was set up, the organization also aimed to work for the betterment of the political and economic well-being of the Muslim states. Turkey was also part of the organization, as it has started to focus on the Muslim world. They wanted to establish business relationships with these states that had been disregarded for decades. “It was the time of Turgut Ozal when Turkey became active in the Middle East for political and economic interests” (Sever, 1990). In the post-Cold War time, the Middle East became the centre of interest for Turkey because Turkey was having problems with the Kurdistan Workers Party (KWP). Kurds live as a minority ethnic group in Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Turkey and with the

neighbouring states Turkey had not been on good terms, however, the JDP began to turn to the east and the policies towards the Middle East.

### **3.8 The Victory of the Justice and Development Party**

In 2002, the Justice and Development Party won the general elections and took office. The west and the US started aggressive actions in the post 9/11 era. Even this aggression was termed as the Crusades. To eliminate the Taliban control, the US attacked Afghanistan considering Bin Ladin and Al-Qaida were responsible for the 9/11 incident, resultantly the West turned against the Muslim world. The aggression of the West did not cool down in Afghanistan, so the UK and the US turned to Iraq with an accusation of Al-Qaida being aided by the Saddam regime. Iraq was also blamed to have accumulated the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), along with Biological and Chemical weapons which were not only a threat to the US but the Middle East as well.

The JDP started to play an active role in the politics of the Middle East. In the first Gulf war, Turkey had a vital role but later the JDP aimed at establishing a peaceful environment in the neighbourhood instead of wars. The JDP supported the effective role of the UN in solving all types of clashes, due to this Turkey did not upkeep the US intention of attack on Iraq instead Turkey tried to coax Saddam's government to conjoin with the UN. Turkish Trade Minister also visited Iraq in an attempt to induce in the Iraqi leadership an attitude of cooperation with the UN. This act showed his intention to invest in Iraq. Such attempts are proof that Turkey sought to stop imminent devastation in the region.

The JDP leadership anticipated the consequences of war in Iraq and Turkey has repeatedly asserted that the development process will end up in the Middle East region and there will be security issues in the area.

Turkey had the idea that because of the US hostility in the Middle East, the Kurdish insurgents would be robust in northern Iraq. Turkey also feared that refugees from Iraq would arrive in Turkey after the war, so it was a hard task for Turkey to handle these issues. The US and the UK invaded Iraq but the action was not supported by the UN. To end quickly the unrest in the region, the support of Turkey because of its geostrategic position was very valuable. The US had the plan of attacking northern Iraq from Turkey's side using its air, land and sea. The United States has asked Turkey for cooperation and has even invited Turkey to join the military action against Iraq from the northern. Turkey might have been interested in this war, but the use of force against Iraq was not supported by the JDP and it was also not approved by the parliament of the state. This resistance might be the first instance that Turkey acted contrary to the US intentions and a condition of caginess started to develop between the two.

In 2003, The US forces detained 11 Turkish soldiers, this action of the US forces enhanced anti-Americanism in the Turkish public and stress on the JDP amplified imploring the government to express a reaction against the detention of Turkish soldiers. The Kurds' cooperation, with the US, in northern Iraq, was annoying Turkey, while the Kurdistan Workers' Party strengthened and began military activities against Turkey. Now the nationalist party and opposition parties in Turkey demanded firm action against the attacks on the JDP. Consequently, the Turkish army was mobilized against the Kurdish insurgents, in northern Iraq, because they were threatening Turkey's security. Kurdish authority in the United States and northern Iraq

opposed Turkey's point of view. The United States claimed that it would damage regional peace and the war on terror, and this issue would increase the distance between Turkey and the United States.

In the post-Saddam regime, the development started in Iraq while Turkey was a major role player in that process. The establishment of the Kurds in the area adjacent to Turkey was not acceptable for Turkey therefore; the government of JDP developed friendly ties with Iraq. Turkey intended to restrict diplomatically the formation of a state for the Kurdish, that is why Turkey became the supporter of a strong central government in Iraq that may control the natural resources lest these resources might become financial support for the Kurds who would use their power against Turkey.

As a result of the election in 2007, the JDP formed the government. This victory of the JDP was a kind of public consent to the government's policy of not always being at the beck and call of the US. On the other hand, the JDP's success was the cause of more confidence for the policymakers. The JDP made it clear that even if they use force following international law to protect themselves, they will do everything possible for their safety. Turkey started negotiations with the powers in the region along with the EU to handle the hazards that may initiate because of the KWP. To win the support of the local Kurds, the JDP also worked for their welfare; moreover, a broadcast channel in Kurdish was also aired in Turkey. The government initiated other reforms to reduce the PKK's favour in the Kurdish population, but the Turkish government threatened to impose an embargo on the Kurds of Iraq.

To play a vital role in the region it needed that Turkey must have good relations with the neighbours and the policymakers in the country have started

working on it. In post-war Iraq, the US seeks to set up developmental works, and such works would not have been realized without the help of Turkey. Such need of the day bring the US closer to Turkey, and to express their intentions Bush declared PKK an enemy of Turkey as well as the US. Turkey and Iraq were kept strained by the Kurdistan Workers' Party. Both states began to play the blame game. Turkey accused Iraq of not liaising with Turkey in reducing the terrorism of the Kurds in northern Iraq, while Iraq also accused Turkey of adopting imperialist policies against Iraq. Iraq accused the Kurds that Turkey wanted to invade Iraqi territory. Turkey opposed the US attack on Iraq because it is not in the interest of the Middle East or favour of Turkey. Those responsible for Turkish foreign policy knew that after Saddam Hussein's rule in Iraq, the environment in the region could go against Turkish interests.

During Saddam Hussein's regime, the Kurds weren't that strong. After Saddam's power came to an end, the new government weakened. Post-Saddam Iraq has become a threat to Turkey. Leader of the Kurdish controlled territory; Kurds have an important role in Iraq as several prominent officials in Iraq like Hisver Zebari (former PM), Mesut Barzani (former President) and Jalal Talabani come from the Kurd tribe. The influence and powerfulness of Kurds in Iraq alarmed Turkey as the authorities in Turkey suppose powerful Kurds to be a threat to the security and stability of Turkey. Meanwhile, a dead-end emerged between these two states. The United States has adopted a hypocritical policy; she was not honest in treating these problems well. The only interest of the United States was to overthrow the Saddam Hussein regime, which was an obstacle to Israel. The US also aimed to use Iraq's natural resources. The US did not take seriously the problems posed by Turkey's security issues and its hostility against Iraq. Other states in the region, e.g. Syria, Iran

and their neighbours, felt threatened by the presence of the US, which increased anti-Americanism among the Turkish public.

Maliki (The Iraqi Prime Minister) visited Turkey intending to minimize the unfriendly situation between the two states. The tension was relieved to some extent and both agreed upon working jointly against the threats of terrorism. However, the closeness could not be made effective because some of the leaders in Iraq did not consider the KPP to be a terrorist organization, that is why Maliki, conditioned that the cooperation with Turkey depends upon national consent through approval from the Parliament of Iraq. Turkey kept on imploring the Iraqi government and as an expression of goodwill, in March 2008, the Iraqi President Jalal Talabani was invited on an official visit to Turkey, by Abdullah Gul the Turkish President. On July 10, 2008, the President of the JDP and the PM of Turkey, Mr Erdogan, also visited Iraq and signed leadership and strategic cooperation agreements, including economic and security issues, while border security and trade issues were also taken into account.

A Strategic Cooperation Council was set up by the governments of Iraq and Turkey. With the establishment of the council, it was agreed upon that the PMs will hold meetings yearly and further frequent meetings would be arranged amongst the ministries of both sides. According to the PM of Turkey, close relations between the two states would help eradicate terrorism; such goodwill was spoken by the Turkish PM during a media talk. He also said that the PKK is an enemy of Turkey as well as Iraq, its presence is a threat to Iraqi integrity. The Turkish PM, during his visit, did not meet Kurd leaders. The Turkish prime minister's visit was a success because he clarified his position on the Kurds. Following this visit, in March 2009, the Turkish President visited Iraq. A breakthrough that occurred in the visit this time was the meeting of Nechirvan Barzani, a leader of the Kurds with Abdullah Gul.

Subsequently, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu visited Iraq and an agreement was signed for both states to fight terrorism and solve problems through negotiation and cooperation.

The initiative taken from the Turkish side started to show a positive outcome. In response to Turkish leaders' visits to Iraq, the Iraqi leaders expressed the same gesture and a popular Shia leader Muqtada Al-Sadr paid an official visit to Turkey. Leaders from both sides talked on regional issues. Several other top leaders like Jalal Talabani, Maliki, Atheel Nwayfi, National Security Chief Shirwan Al Wali, and Defence Minister Abdulkadir Muhammed Ammar al-Hakim and Tariq Hashmi also visited Turkey. The meetings made both sides agree upon several common interests of which terrorism was very important. Apart from the security issues, the leaders also discussed trade relations, in particular, the transport of Iraqi oil from Turkish territory to the west, and the permission for Turkish companies to explore oil reserves in northern Iraq were mainly focused on. The positive attempts on both sides normalized the relations between them. The connection, between Turkey and Northern Iraq, which had not been good in the past, started to improve after Barzani (a leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party) visited Turkey.

Despite an environment of mistrust prevalent in Turkey-Iraq relations, the frequent visits of the leadership turned a new page in relations between the two states. The JDP has always tried positively to set up ideal relations with Iraq. In the general elections 2010 in Iraq, Turkey extended its full cooperation with Iraq. As a result of that election, Ilyad Allavi's Al Arabia Party formed the government. After the election, the Turkish government invited Ilyad Alavi to which the Iraqi leader responded positively. But with the stagnation created by weak Iraqi institutions and the government, political instability began to emerge. Meanwhile, Turkey's Foreign

Minister visited Iraq and met with Iraqi political leaders because any development in Iraq in favour of strong Iraqi Turkey relations, would directly affect Turkey.

### **3.9 The Iranian Nuclear Case and Turkish Foreign Policy**

Modern Turkey emerged after the Ottoman Empire. The new democratic state inclined secularism because the founder of democratic Turkey himself was the leader of secular ideas. In the meanwhile, Iran, under the monarchy of Raza Shah Pahlavi, had been flourishing secular trends. The Kurds have settlements in both countries i.e., Iran and Turkey and both adopted the same policy to handle this minority group. The imperialist design of the USSR may be a motive for both countries and it made them cooperate on several common interests. It was the commonness of the national interests that Iran and Turkey worked jointly in the Middle East.

In the post-WW-II, the world found itself segregated into two blocks and most of the countries allied with one of the two leading countries i.e., The USSR and the US. Practically, these two groups were not fighting against each other but in reality, they were in a state of tension i.e., there existed a cold war between the US and the USSR. The United States was the head of Western Europe and the Soviet Union was the head of Eastern Europe. The Middle East and the nationalist Arabs had become allies with the USSR while Iran and Turkey, despite being Muslim states did not follow the rest of the Arab world instead they supported the West and the US. Being in the Western block, Turkey and Iran got economic and military support from the other powerful states in the western block. Iran and Turkey considered communism a threat to their nationalism, that is why they became members of the Central Treaty Organization and other such packets of the West. Turkey and Iran were in closer ties, as they began to cooperate in the economic and military fields until a great

development in the Middle East politics, that is, the Islamic revolution in 1979 which came under the leadership of Imam Khomeini.

The politics of the Middle East was enormously impacted by the revolution in Iran in 1979. Theocracy in Iran was anti-US, resultantly; the US started to segregate Iran from the rest of the Middle East. The US and the whole West intended to keep Iran isolated from the rest of the world so that it may not flourish socially, politically and economically until it has anti-West ideas. Turkey despite being in the western block did not follow the West's anti-Iran policy rather Turkey wished to set up good relations with Iran because Turkey had the concept that the isolation of Iran would push it towards the Soviet bloc. Meanwhile, a war started between Iraq and Iran, for Turkey, it was a critical time to decide its policy regarding the war and it was rationally considered by the Turkish policymakers that Turkey should remain indifferent instead of helping any of the countries. However, the condition of war in the Middle East had a direct impact on the interests of Turkey so, Turkey tried to lessen the conflict between the two fighting nations. The Turkish-Iran friendship, however, was not acceptable for the West so Turkey found itself between the West and the Islamic state. "The relations between these two states were a mixture of conflict and collaboration" (Centinkaya, 2003).

The Soviet Union could not retain its existence after the cold war and after 1991 the USSR disintegrated into several states. Turkey and Iran had the intention of enhancing their strength amongst the newly emerged countries of central Asia. But Iran could not tolerate the mounting influence of Turkey because it was dangerous according to the policymakers in Iran. "When Justice and Development Party came into power, they shaped their foreign policy on the concept of zero problems with neighbours and they started to cooperate with the neighbouring countries to achieve

the desire goals" (Kosebalaban2001). Turkey has the major objective of boosting up its power. "The government of Turkey started to work with the neighbouring countries on the economy, trade, energy and security issues" (Kardas, 2010). Iran also needed to be economically stable. And there are many areas of common interest where Iran and Turkey may collaborate for the betterment of the self and the area, for example, the US aggression against the Muslims is the common factor that impacts both countries. "It was not in the interest of Iran that United States' forces should remain in its neighbour and both the state were on the same page on the issue of the isolation of Syria at that time" (Yesiltas and Balci,2008).

The instability in the Middle East because of the war impacted the growth activities in the neighbouring countries as well. And both Turkey and Iran are among the nearest neighbours.

The Justice and Development Party, after making government, established stable relations with Iran on its nuclear issue and opposed the United States and Western world policies to isolate Iran. But the government of the Justice and Development Party adopted a cautious policy about Iran (Bilici,2008).

The nature of politics changed after the 9/11 incidents and regional cooperation increased during the second term of the Justice and Development Party's rule. The business deals between the two also improved. It was also a good gesture of Turkish inclination to the East. "After 2002, when Justice and Development Party made the government, the visits of officials started between the two states" (Olson, 2004).

After normalization of relations both the states started to negotiate that Iran should provide gas to Europe through Turkey and both the states would build a gas pipeline between Turkey and Iran and Turkey would increase its role between East and West (Oslu,2008).

This was a breakthrough and it was the demand of the situation as well, rapid industrial growth in Turkey was in demand of more energy resources. Even though Russia and Turkey need each other on several economic and political issues, it is also an undeniable reality that both are competing in Central Asia to have more and more influence. But Turkey has the alternative of the energy supply from Russia. Iran may fulfil such need of Turkey in case of Russia prohibitions it. “It was the way that Iran could make an embargo of the United States and the United Nations ineffective” (Uslu, 2009). There were packets signed among Iran, Syria and Turkey to have fulfilled their economic demands. “In 2009, Turkey, Iran and Syria signed a memorandum of understanding to increase the trade and after that treaty, Turkey and Iran became the big trade partner” (Kardas,2011). Ahmedinejad’s official tour to Turkey, in March 2009, was arranged to discuss such economic and security issues. Later on, the Turkish command also visited Iran to attend ECO’s summit held in Tehran. During this visit “the Turkish president met the high leadership both political and religious and soon both the countries declared 2009, the year of Iranian and Turkish culture’s year. The visit was a very important visit for political and security issues” (Lindernstrauss and Guzansk, April 2011). Such a visit made Iran support Turkey’s stance on the membership of the EU. To express a positive attitude in response to Iran’s goodwill, Turkey started to criticise economic bans on Iran and Turkey also supported the Iranian right of developing its Atomic program for peaceful objectives. The goodwill gestures on both sides brought them closer and they agreed

upon working jointly for the betterment of the region. “The government of the Justice and Development Party tried its best to develop trade relations with Iran at any cost” (Lanciner, 2008).

As a result of the 2009 general election, violence started for the results were contentious for several participating groups. The elections became the topic of debate in the West and the system in Iran was criticised by the Western Media, however, on this occasion Turkey supported Iran and a message of goodwill was sent to Iranian command. Turkey refused to support any objectionable statement considering it Iran’s internal matter. “The leadership of the Justice and Development Party declared Iran a friend of Turkey. In 2009, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan reached Tehran to negotiate different issues” (Larrabee, 2007). By 2009, the diplomatic relations between Turkey and Iran further strengthened. The OIC help in Turkey was supported by Iran and the Irani president toured Turkey officially on that occasion. The two countries agreed to work jointly against PKK, as the PKK was involved in violent activities closer to the borders of Turkey.

During the government of Ahmadinejad, the international community pressurized Iran on its nuclear program, while the relations between Iran, the Western world and the United States became worse. At that time, Turkey fully supported Iran and recognized that to achieve nuclear technology for civil purposes is the right of Iran if it remains on a peaceful track (Kibaroglu and Caglar, 2008).

The West’s attempt of isolating Iran has not been supported by Turkey, instead, Turkey tried to bring closer Iran and the US through diplomatic strategies.

The Iranian government had opposed the United States and the West on several conflicts in the Middle East but Turkey has been trying to release the tension between the two. Turkey also attempted to convince Iran to seek the cooperation and consent of the international community on the nuclear program and force Iran to have a friendly policy towards the US. In other words, Turkey had been trying diplomatically to keep Iran safe from the isolating agenda of the US. Turkey wished that Iran should be closer to the West and should benefit from the offers proposed by NATO, although the West may consider Turkey's attitude a violation of the UN embargos. "Cooperation between Turkey and Iran in the form of petroleum-pipeline, would be the violation of the United Nations sanctions" (Barker and Ward, 2008). While the reality is that Turkey was only trying to be a mediator between the Muslims and the US. "However, in the real sense Turkey wanted to play the role of a mediator between the United States and Iran on the issue of the nuclear programme" (Dymond, December 2009).

Relations between Iran and Turkey were strengthened in 2010 after Turkey reacted rationally against the Israeli aggression on the Freedom Flotilla. Iran naturally reinforced the Turkish stance. When it came to the UN, Turkey was on the side of Iran, instead of favouring its long term ally i.e., the US and the West. Turkey rejected to agree on the act of sanction on Iran, imposed by the Security Council. The Arab Spring in the Middle East posed a threat to the relations between Iran and Turkey, although it affected the relations to some degree, however, the ties have not deteriorated to a larger extent.

### **3.10 Stance on Syria and the Foreign Policy of Turkey**

Syria is one of the countries about which greater changes can be noticed, after 2002, in the foreign policy of Turkey. Before the JDP era, the terms between Turkey and Syria had not been peaceful even they had been on verge of war because Syria was supporting the Kurds which was not tolerable for Turkey. There had been other clashes between them as well e.g the water crisis and the territorial disputes. During the Cold War, they had been poles apart too. The history of the cold war was proof that Syria and Turkey had not been on good terms for ages. To carry on the opposing policy, Syria gave military assistance to the Kurds who were rebelling against Turkey. Further Syria helped Abdullah Ocalan the founding head of the KWP (Kurdistan Worker's Party). In an opposition to Turkey, Syria also helped the secret army of Armenia which was active against Turkey.

Turkey has been warning repeatedly that Syria should not support Kurd rebels who pose a threat to the Turkish territories. The civil population and even the army in Turkey are attacked by the Kurds who are helped by the Syrian authorities. Because of Abdullah Ocalan's support, Turkey had already expressed its annoyance against Syria. The Turkish government pressurized Syria not to help the Kurdish leadership, and both states were on the verge of war, but Iran and Egypt helped to ease the tension.

The Adana Protocol was signed between Syria and Turkey and both agreed to resolve their clashes. Syria as a positive gesture consented not to support the Kurds against Turkey. "Syria agreed to recognize KWP as a terrorist organization and she promised to close all the military bases located in Syria and Syria decided to deport the Kurd leadership from its territory" (Knudsen, 2003).

In 2002, the Justice and Development Party reformed foreign policy with its government and neighbouring foreign ministers with the basic notion of ‘Strategic Depth’ and ‘Zero Problem’. Turkey, with the perspective of the future role in the Middle East, started developing relations with Syria, however, this development was not appreciated by the US. Turkish authorities attended the funeral procession of Hafiz Al-Asad which was criticized by the West. But Turkey did not value the West’s opposing attitude regarding its relations with Syria and the relations between the two countries went on improving. Bashar al-Assad's visit to Turkey, in 2004, was a great breakthrough and a very successful outcome of the Turkish foreign policy devised on new terms. After the visit, both countries contracted to decide the territory and other clashes. “Besides, both the states agreed to open the consulates and were ready to resolve trade issues. For the first time in history Syria recognized officially the borders of Turkey” (Eligur, August 2006).

To respond to the Syrian positive attitude, Turkey also extended cooperation on its part and Tayyip Erdogan, the Prime Minister of Turkey, visited Syria in 2004 and both nations decided, along with resolving land issues, to move towards free trade between them. In the past, both states have challenged each other over water-related issues since 1950. The clashes arose when both states began building dams on the Crontes, Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and the tension increased when Turkey wanted to launch the Project of Southeastern Anatolia to use water resources. Through such development, the two countries arrived at the point where Syria got the right of using the water of the Tigris River, which had formerly been a dispute between them. After that breakthrough, good relations started to surface between Syria and Turkey. “Controversial issues regarding water and the territorial issue of Hatay also got resolved between the two states gradually” (Akdevelioglu and Yesilyurt, 2009).

On the Gaza issue, Syria and Turkey have the same views as both states have been criticising Israeli aggression. This commonly opposed factor also drew Turkey and Syria closer. Syria had been raising its voice on the Gaza clash and after the JDP government was formed, Turkey also set up the same stance as Syria already had. Israel's terrorism, in Gaza, was openly criticized by the Turkish government, and Turkey and Syria were close friends at the time. Turkey has rejected the pressure from the United States and the Western world with which it has developed relations with Syria, and even Turkey has begun to lessen the seclusion of Syria. When the bomb exploded in Baghdad in 2009, the Iraqi government declared Syria responsible for this terrorist act. This accusation disrupted the relations that were developing between Syria and Iraq. During that time, the Turkish Foreign Minister visited both countries and forced them to go to the dialogue table to peacefully resolve the issues. Turkey also hosted the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Syria and Iraq. This positive role of Turkey resulted in easing the tension between the two states. The Turkish government has developed relations with Syria at all stages of economic cooperation, launched the Turkey-Syria Regional Cooperation Program in 2006, and both states started military cooperation. In 2009, the forces of both countries began a combined military exercise. "In the same year, the Turkish Prime Minister presented the idea of the free trade zone between Turkey and Syria" (Kirisci, 2011).

However, with the start of the Arab Spring and reaching Syria, there was a sudden change in Middle East politics. A civil war, based on religion, erupted in Syria. The Suni sect in Syria had turned rebellious against Bashar Assad's regime. The government there belonged to the Shia sect and the government started to use military power against the civil population of the Sunnis. The US and the West did not support the government's use of power against the civilians, therefore, they supported the

protestors. The opposition in Syria also participated against the army. The neighbouring countries that had a Sunni majority population like Qatar and KSA; supported the Sunni protestors in Syria. On the other hand Russia, Lebanon, Iraq and Iran openly supported the Shia regime there. It was reported that the Syrian forces were involved in the act of using chemical weapons to restrain the movement of the Sunnis which was strongly condemned by the West and the US. The West demanded from the government in Syria to immediately abandon the use of chemicals against innocent citizens. The US was on the verge of attacking Syria but in the meantime, Russia stood up to resist the US actions and consequently, the West had to step back from the practical help of the civil population in Syria. The war situation was impacting the neighbours and Turkey being one of the fast-progressing states was one of the most affected by the situation.

Millions of Syrian refugees entered Turkey. Turkey, on one hand, had good ties with Syria while on the other hand Turkey being a Sunni majority country could not support the killing of the Sunni population in Syria. Furthermore, Turkey was also not in opposition to support the use of chemical weapons at the time when that act was condemned by the West and the US. In such a situation, Turkey, tried diplomatically, to convince Syria to stop the military action against the protestors. Seeking its national interest, Turkey rendered its services for settling down the turmoil in the country. But Syria was adamant to handle the situation forcefully, consequently, several warring segments started to gain power and influence in the disturbed state as some groups like Al-Nasar and Al-Qaeda groups were repeatedly cited to have strengthened there. The deteriorating situation in the region would be beneficial for Israel because the fighting groups had been previously anti-Israel. These groups were also the opponents of the US policies and influence in the region.

Turkey, although had sympathy for the civil population in the country, did not participate practically because being a part of the war would hamper its economic growth.

### **3.11 The Justice and Development Party and the Challenge of the Arab-Spring**

Where Arab Spring affected several countries, this movement also severely influenced Turkey. The JDP was taken aback by the revolutionary changes in the region. However, a rational approach was adopted to handle the situation caused by the commotion in the Middle East. Turkey's main focus, during the uncertain situation, was to keep stable its economic development. The policies and ways adopted during that era made Turkey a model for the whole Islamic world. "The Arab Spring started in Tunisia but challenged Turkey as Turkey was not prepared for it" (Rose, 2011). But a rational policy was the necessity of that time so, "the Turkish government adopted the policy of waiting for a good time and not getting involved, in internal matters on a high level" (Kujawa,2011). On the prevalent condition in Egypt, the Turkish government was working with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, but when the Akahwan Ul Musleemeen protesters took to the road against rulers, it was suggested by the Turkish authorities that public opinion should be regarded respectfully. The same was proposed by Turkey when a similar situation developed in Lybia. Therefore, Turkey decided rationally that the public should be supported instead of helping those rulers who have taken over the regime undemocratically and without the will of the public.

An era full of changes in the Arab world and a lack of certainty made Turkey more cautious. The same turmoil was witnessed in Tunisia when the people there

were compelled to leave the country. Later on, a new government was set up there with the consent of the civil population. The newly set up government had the support of the public and that is why the government of Turkey also supported the democracy in Tunisia. Such a rational decision made by the foreign policymakers in Turkey won the favour of other countries. As a positive response to Turkey's support, the Tunisian leadership also started to support Turkey, even Rashid Ghannusi declared the leadership of the JDP to be a model for them. The conflict in Tunisia was resolved in a way that was acceptable for Turkey. The same policy was adopted to respond to the disturbance in Egypt. Turkey had always been raising its voice in favour of the general public instead of supporting unlawful occupiers. Although Egypt and Turkey had been on good terms, Turkey did not support the government against the will of the public. That is why Turkey favoured the protesters in Egypt who had been against the government.

Hosni Mubarak's government was abolished as a result of the protests and Hosni Mubarak was jailed pending trial. After winning the elections in Egypt, the pro-religious Akahwan Ul-Muslimeen set up the government. Mohammed Morsi took the oath as the new President of Egypt. The new government was favoured by Turkey. The development of such friendly ties between Egypt and Turkey was not tolerable for the US and especially for Israel. Another major factor in opposition to Israel was that Hamas, a Palestinian freedom fighter, also belonged to Akahwan Ul Muslimeen.

Akahwan Ul Muslimeen won the elections; the Israeli Jewish government considered it hazardous for the Jews. Before this change, the victory of the JDP in Turkey was also a strengthening move for the Muslim religious elements in the Middle East as well as in the West. Such developments which prove to be favouring the Muslim world could not be acceptable of the West. Morsi's government set on to

develop friendly relations with Iran too and it was against the will of the US and Israel. Establishing relations with Iran was a message and a sign that Egypt is in contradiction of the international community about Iran. The government of Egypt took another daring step as it freed the Gaza border which had been blocked by Israel, further Egypt considered it an act of terrorism when Israel attacked Gaza.

The Egyptian government went to great lengths to persuade world leaders, with the help of Turkey, that Israeli policies were damaging the peace in the Middle East. Egypt also raised questions on the lower tariffs that Israel had been paying for natural gas. An environment unfavourable for Israel was not acceptable for the US and the same was developing in Egypt which turned the West against Egypt. The West and Israel intended to roll back the Mursi rule as early as possible because a stable and powerful Mursi was a threat to the interests of the West and Israel in the Middle East. Turkey had understood the value of a strong Mursi regime so Turkey started to support Egypt. A stable Egypt was in favour of Turkey as both Turkey and Egypt had the same objectives and shared opponents in the region. On the other hand, the West has also sensed the adverse effects of Mursi so the West and Israel set on the plan to eliminate Mursi.

### **3.12 Turkey Israel and Palestine Conflict**

Since Israel's establishment on Arab territory by the victorious powers in 1948, Turkey has become the first Muslim country to recognize Israel and establish diplomatic relations with the disputed state in the Middle East. Both states worked together during the Cold War. Even during the 1950s turmoil, when Israel and the Arabs were indulged in what is known as the Six-Day War, Turkey did not support the Arab cause fully. This negative character of Turkey supported Israel. Israel's

hostility against Arabs was not condemned by Turkey. At the same time, Turkey denied the idea of Israel's boycott prearranged by the Muslim world. "Turkey rejected the proposal of the Islamic Conference to finish the diplomatic relations with Israel" (Waxman, 1999).

"In 1990, relations between two states got better very quickly and these relations became the important element of the politics of the Middle East and Mediterranean region" (Inbar, 2001). Turkey-Israel relations had many reasons. Firstly, Turkey's relations with neighbouring Iraq, Syria, and Iran were worse relative to the Kurds, Turkish administration was opposing the Kurd separatists and it used martial force to tackle their deviance. Secondly, Turkey desired to enhance its positive image in front of the West. Thirdly, Turkey had the basic objective of gaining membership in the EU. The above-mentioned objectives enforced Turkey to develop good associations with Israel.

Israel, as a state, has never been a favourite country amongst its neighbouring countries because of its negative character in the area. Even the Muslim world does not consider it a legitimate state. Muslim countries denied having any diplomatic relations with antagonistic Israel. The US's unconditional love for Israel also augmented the animosity of Israel. Israel found the opportunity to reduce its isolation and established relations with Turkey. Israel began to cooperate with Turkey in the military and other fields. "Turkey and Israel signed several agreements about the military, intelligence sharing, tourism and bilateral development. The military and civil officials visited each other and joint military exercises were started" (Nachmani, 1992). In the phase when Israel and Turkey were cooperating in every shared concern, the Israeli lobby in America inclined in the favour of the Turkish act of the Armenian massacre. "Some of the scholars considered these relations as special and others

considered these relations between Turkey and Israel as abnormal" (Belgio, 2005). "Another element, which enhanced friendship between Israel and Turkey, was that the United States was also supporting these relations to maintain the balance in the Middle East" (Kuttler, May 2007).

Before the Justice and Development Party's command, relations between these two states began to deteriorate due to aggressive Israeli policies towards the Palestinian nation. Turkey opposed Israel's genocide action against Palestinian Muslims. History witnessed a declination in the relationship of Israel and Turkey during the reign of the JDP and the main cause of this deterioration was the success of the JDP in elections. The Jewish extremists campaigned against the Islamic party's victory in Turkey and accused the JDP is trying to endorse Islamic programmes in the area. The JDP was accused by the Jew radicals to promote Islamization in the region. Tensions and disagreements began to emerge as the nature of the Middle East politics changed with the US attack on Iraq and the strengthening of the Kurds in northern Iraq. "The situation was a great tension for the government and the military of Turkey" (Kibaroglu, 2007). The news disseminated by the Turk mass media added fuel to the fire that Mossad, the Israeli intelligence, is vigorously working in Northern Iraq. "However, on the other side, Israel claimed that she informs Turkey about all the activities in Northern Iraq" (Kibaroglu2002).

In 2004, the popular Islamist leader of Hams, Sheikh Ahmed Yasin, was martyred by Israeli forces when Turk PM Tayyip Erdoğan professed the act as terrorism and his government took a very strong and clear stand against the terrorist act by Israel. The government strictly condemned the strategies of Israel as being harmful to the peace of the Middle East. Relations between the two states began to collapse. A meeting was held between the Turk- Israel leaders when the Turkish PM

visited Israel in 2005. Israeli leaders included President Moshe Kansan, Arial Sharon, and Israeli opposition leaders. The Palestinian regions were also visited by the Turk PM during his visit. This official visit had great importance as ever since the JDP formed their government; there was uncertainty between both countries. This visit also explained to the world that the Turkish government takes peace work in the region seriously and does not have the aggressive policies that Israel adopted after its establishment. This was a breakthrough because relations worsened due to aggressive Israeli policies towards Hamas and the Palestinian public. “The visit of the Turkish PM was a positive step to normalize the relations with Israel so that peace could be achieved in the Middle East. Afterwards, Israeli officials also paid a visit to normalize the relations” (Burcu, 2010). “The year 2006, was the year, which brought a change for both the states, elections were held in Palestine and Hamas won the elections with the majority in the Gaza strip” (Scott, 2007). Palestinian’s strongest political organization, Hamas has Al-Qassam, the armed wing of Hamas. For several times in the strip of Gaza, Al-Qassam has proven itself as the strongest and the toughest challenging power for Israel. During normal situations, Al-Qasam works as a political force normally but when Israel uses its force against Palestinians, Al-Qasam shows its defending power to Israeli forces. “The victory of Hamas in the election was not acceptable for Israel, the United States and the Western world because according to them this military organization is involved in terrorist activities against Israel” (Guardia, 2003). Israel's administration showed its worries about the establishment of Hamas as a successful organization. The Muslim world and particularly the Arab world praised and supported Hamas for its struggle and fight for freedom. Several Muslim and Arab states back Hamas in its struggle against Israeli policies. “When the Israeli government, the United States and the Western world denied accepting the

success of Hamas, the Turkish government cleared its position by saying that the international community should respect the will of the Palestinian people" (Cagatay, 2006). Hamas was supported by the Turk administration openly throughout the election process in Palestine and when both the Israeli and American governments tried to segregate the winning party Hamas. The government of Turkey not only welcomed the victorious Hamas but they requested Hamas leadership to visit Turkey. At this action, Israel and America criticised the Turkish government. Hamas's leadership visited Turkey by accepting the Turkish invitation. "Khalid Mashaal, the famous leader of Hamas met the leader of the Justice and Development Party, Abdullah Gul" (Akcakoca, 2009). "The meetings between Hamas and Turkish leadership were successful and were hosted in the headquarter of the Justice and Development Party" (Kibarglu and Kibarglu, 2009). In reaction to Turkey's invitation to Hamas leadership, the Israeli administration expressed the intention of inviting leaders of the Kurdistan Party. In other words, Israel threatened Turkey to use Kurd separationists to make Turkey agree to Israeli policies. "However, Turkey rejected all types of pressure, she said that to compare the PPK with Hamas is baseless the issue was at the top in the agenda of the Turkish-Israel relations" (Hazbay, 2006). Although Israel and America highlighted the issue, Turkey rejected all the allegations and she did not give any importance to the criticism. "On the other side, the United States also criticized the visit of Hamas to Turkey and meetings with the Justice and Development Party leaders" (Fuller, 2008).

Through the use of diplomatic measures, the United States shielded Israel's interests. The United States has stipulated that Hamas should stop military activities against Israel, but from now on the process of negotiation and cooperation with Hamas can begin.

The opposition party and the secular party in Turkey also criticized the government's decisions. Rivals of the JDP assessed that Turkey's foreign policy is not realistic but is based on emotions and these strategies of Turkey can harm Turkey's interests in the region. Though the representatives of the JDP excellently safeguarded their resolutions on the issue, they suggested Turkey as a mediator between Palestine and Israel for the betterment of peace in the region. Ankara acknowledged that peace in the region is possible if peaceful relations are set up in the neighbourhood. Peace is very important for the development of the area and to set peace in the region Turkey has to use diplomatic tactics. "The intentions of Turkey were positive, Turkey would maintain the relations with Israel, and that is why Turkey provides millions of gallons of fresh water to Israel after a deal" (Vidal, 2006). After that, Turkey's role in Middle East politics increased. Turkey invited the Israeli and Palestinian presidents to Ankara to resolve the problems. After the convention, the leadership from both sides was optimistic about the establishment of peace. It was a revolutionary step taken by Turkey for Israel and Palestine. Both influentials addressed the Turkish National Assembly after the conference. The Head of Israel addressed the National Assembly of a Muslim state for the first time in the world. These determinations displayed that Turkey's intentions were positive to establish peace in the Middle East countries and she wanted to solve the Palestinian problem peacefully. The role of establishing trust between Israel and Palestine demonstrated that the foreign policy of Turkey is rational, not emotional. The Israeli President expressed: "We may be saying different prayers but our eyes are turned towards the same sky and toward the same vision for the Middle East" (The New York Times, 13 November 2007).

PM of Israel Ehud Olmert came to Turkey to converse about mutual relations and complications with Hamas, Palestine and Syria in 2008, and both countries

conferred economic matters too. The meeting took five hours to end and the focal point of the meeting was Israel's relationships with bordering countries. The situation in the Middle East became standard for the solution of the problems. But in fact, Israel was misinforming both the global community and Turkish headship and meanwhile, they hurled an operation "Operation Cast Lead" against Palestine. Turkish government fully supported the inhabitants of Gaza and openly condemned Israel's inhuman policies. Turkey saw Israeli strategies as a threat to the peace of the region. The Turkish government was not ready to trust Israel because Israel wanted a talk with Syria and at the same time, it attacked the people of Palestinian. Although Turkey was interested in peace in the area, Israel's intentions were not clear. The power politics policy of the Israeli administration was a damaging notion to the area as the use of force can never be a solution to the problems. Turkey launched a movement against the terrorism of Israel in Gaza to condemn the Israeli plans. Ankara stressed the UN to take serious steps against Israel. This action of Tayyip Erdogan and the leaders of JDP made them a favourite in the Muslim world principally, in the Arab world. Both the states became rivals to each other again and the relationships took the worst form when Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey participated in the World Economic Forum. This was a panel debate and the main focus of the meeting was "Gaza's New Model of Peace". The prominent influence of this discussion includes Tayyip Erdogan representing Turkey, Shimon Peres representing Israel, Arab League Secretary-General Amr Mousa and United Nations' Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. "In this discussion, the Turkish Prime Minister criticised Israel for its policy of using power against the citizens of Gaza. In response, the Israeli president said that only Hamas is responsible for this, he said what would Turkey do if every night Istanbul would be targeted by missiles" (Steinvoth, 2009).

“For this statement, the anger of the Turkish Prime Minister reached its peak and he wanted to reply to the Israeli president but he was not given permission” (Disli, 2009). Then Turk PM, Tayyip Erdogan, refused to attend the session because of this twofold standard.

This matter was highlighted by the Turkish media while Arab media also exposed this event. When Tayyip Erdogan landed in Istanbul, he was warmly welcomed by thousands of his countrymen. Contrary to this, international media displayed footage of the Turkish PM’s boycott of the Davis Forum. In his speech at a press conference, the Turkish prime minister said that this reaction was due to Israel’s policies towards Hamas and that the Israeli government should be punished for war crimes against the Palestinian people. The JDP management has gained a prominent place in the politics of The Middle East. According to experts’ opinions, there was a rift between Israel and Turkey. The viewpoint of Israeli media about the issue was that the Turkish PM is using the issue to get the favours of the masses for internal politics and political point-scoring. The Jewish public all over the world, specifically in the US, condemned the Turkish prime minister’s behaviour.

Turk- Israel conflict was a result of a Turkish drama series aired by a Turk media channel dramatizing the Israel-Palestine conflict. Talabib condemned this act of Turkey and expressed its concerns that the drama series will raise Palestinian hatred against Israel. The title of this series was "Valley of the Wolves"; a story of the kidnapping of a Palestinian woman and her son by Israeli intelligence. Showing concern, the Israeli government summoned the Turk diplomat Oguz Celikol to the Foreign Minister's office and the Israeli Foreign Minister's office disregarded the Turkish representative in such a way that they kept him waiting outside the door and were not offered due protocol. “While the Israeli Foreign Affairs vice Minister Danny

Ayalon was seated on a big chair and there was only Israeli flag on the table" (Kardas, 2011), which was against the diplomatic codes.

In response, when Turkish media highlighted this misbehaving, the Turkish government took notice and called the Israeli ambassador and gave him a threat that if Israel did not ask for an excuse, Turkey would call back its ambassador from Israel and diplomatic relations would remain on the lowest level (Sahin, 2011).

To end the crisis, Israel asked for a plea and the Turkish administration accepted the apology because it could cause a disaster for both Israel and Turkey.

### **3.13 Turkey-Israel Relations and Freedom Flotilla**

Freedom Flotilla was one of those incidents which got immense prominence in the chapter of Turkish foreign policy and its relations with Israel. Israel had been adopting the strategy of blocking the Gaza area, even food and medicine supplies to the Palestinians were impassable. Israel was doing this atrocity to avenge the Gaza people for voting in favour of Hamas and opposing Israel. Turkey, on humanitarian grounds, attempted to lessen the crisis in Gaza and set sails towards Gaza consisting of more than six hundred humanitarian aid workers on six ships. "The Humanitarian Relief Foundation of Turkey launched that campaign to provide help to the citizens of Gaza" (Kohlman, 2006-7). "That foundation was declared a terrorist organization after that incident in the United States and the European Union" (Wiesenthal, 2011). 'Free Gaza Movement' led by the ship, 'the Mavi Maramara' set out towards Gaza, which made Israel more aggressive, with zero tolerance and zero flexibility. Israel did not allow Turkey to harbour in its territory to provide humanitarian help to the people of Gaza. Israel aired the propaganda that the helping organization was in ties with

Hamas. Israel won the Western favours against the Movement and even started to accuse Turkey of having relations with Al-Qaida however, Turkey denied all such statements made on part of Israel.

After the ships sailed for Gaza, the Israeli Foreign Minister said that Israeli will handle the situation with its naval force. And the same was done by Israel, the ships were ordered not to move towards Gaza, and after the ships rejected the direction of the Israeli forces, they were attacked brutally. Consequently, there were deaths and injuries on the ship Mavi Marmara. “As a result of Israeli terrorism, nine innocent workers were martyred and twenty people were injured and other workers were arrested by the Israeli forces” (Migdalvitz, 2010). It was demanded from the Israeli government to release all the people arrested from the ships moving humanitarian aid for the Palestinians. This act of brutality was strongly condemned by the government of the JDP. Turkey publically said that “In this entire situation, the behaviour of the United States was hypocritical, she condemned the incident but the US also said that Israel had a right to self-protection. That incident affected the relations between these two states” (Kosebalaban, 2010).

After the aggression on the Turkish ships, Turkey was aggravated a lot because of the terrorism against humanitarian aid. Turkey discussed the case in the UN, in the OIC and in the Arab League. With Israel, the cooperative attitude was suspended on the part of Turkey. An environment of competition appeared between the two states. However, Turkey shunned itself from the use of force instead the government kept limited to winning international support. With time, the relations with Israel recede to the normal state but Turkey kept on supporting Palestine on various international forums. Turkey was keenly interested in the matters of the Middle East and for valuing its opinion regarding the East, Turkey must have good

relations with Eastern, especially the Muslim countries. Most of the Muslim countries have been grappling with the issues of existence. There are growing economic and security hitches in most of the countries. Political instability is another very prominent factor in the Muslim states. Turkey can be a role model for the Muslims because Turkey as a state has gone through repeated experiences of political instability and still has secured steady development and economic betterment. Turkey, because of its geographical position, historical background, military strength and religious ideology has been in the position of leading the Muslim world towards the solution of their economic and security problems. Turkey itself had to face opposition from within the country because the secular forces inside the country are considerably strong and they resist the religious trends and the fact is one of the major internal resistance for the government of the JDP. However, the JDP balanced its relations with the outer world as well as the politics of the national parties.

A prominent change during the regime of the JDP was Turkey's inclination towards the East. In the foreign policy of Turkey, the Muslim and other Eastern countries like Russia and China got more importance. China and Russia are the two traditional rival states of the US. Turkey who had been an ally of the West and a supporter of the US policies started to go closer to rival countries of the US. Turkey's role in world politics increased and its relations with the Arab world and the Muslim world have been strengthened. It could be a journey towards neo-Ottomanism.

### **3.14 The South Caucasus and Turkish Foreign policy**

To better evaluate the Turkish role in the south Caucasus, the demarcation into two phases can be supposed. Iran-Azerbaijan relations were impacted because of Turkey. The Kemalist, policies were different which were reversed by the JDP

government. “The rise to power of the AKP since 2002 in which the foreign policy has been based on new principles, and in academic circles is remembered as a neo-Ottomanism” (Taspinar, 2011).

Westernism and Kamalism had been the major derivatives of the foreign policy of Turkey. Six basic principles which were the foundation of the Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1937 Turkish Constitution are titled:

- Nationalism
- Populism
- Secularism
- Statism
- Republicanism
- Reformism.

“These features first led to Turkey's resignation of regional issues, and secondly, became close to the West to exploit the country's economy due to some needs such as modernization” (Baran, 2010: 106-107). Several new states came into existence after the disintegration of the USSR. Some of the new states were military powers, rich in minerals and geographically important. Turkey was aware of the new states' strategic value and it began to build links with them because the new states would do a lot to fulfil the energy needs of Turkey. For this reason, establishing friendly and bilateral relations with these states is of the highest significance for Turkey. Turkey intended to develop good relations with Georgia and Armenia but Armenia had no territorial clashes with Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan was more important for Turkey because of Turkey's energy needs and Azerbaijan's energy

resources. Turkey had close and deep relations with this area because these areas had been the geographical parts of the Ottoman Empire.

“But disputes between Iran and Azerbaijan in the energy field, and its transfer are other most important issues, which are the underlying disputes between the two countries since the first years after the founding of Azerbaijan” (Blandy, 1998: 15). Turkey is not the single active power in the region because Russia also has several interests in involving the neighbouring countries. Although Russia and Turkey had been in the opposing block during the Cold War era, the two had never been involved in a direct clash with each other. The new strategy, adopted by the JDP was to reshape the foreign policy. The basic pattern involved in the new foreign policy was to resolve the time-long clashes with the outer world. “Nullifying the problems with neighbours is based on some core principles which include; 1. Equal security for all; 2. Economic integration, 3. Coexistence of different cultures, 4. High political participation, and 5. Understand the relationship between security, stability and development” (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013: 13-14). Working on such patterns, Turkey improved the links internationally with the basic motive of progressing economically and socially. “One of the mechanisms of influencing and managing region for Turkey is first, the formation of regional organizations such as the Organization of Black Sea cooperation and TRACECA in the framework of common economic and security interests” (Solat, 2012: 4). The neighbours became more valuable for Turkey and the superiority complex of being a western state was set back, instead, the relationship with the eastern state became more important. Such relations were not at the cost of enmity with the west, instead, the policymakers of Turkey rationally performed so sanely that there had been a kind of balance between the two sides that is the West and the East. Turkish active role in the East was not a plain sail because other states

were the stakeholders too in the region. Iran had clashes on the sectarian grounds and Iran was also not in the good books of the West, therefore, involvement with Iran may ignite the wrath of the West and in that case, Turkey might lose several privileges that it enjoys now for being a Western country. Therefore, it was a tricky matter to be involved with newly emerged states politically and also keep themselves in an economically stable position that depended a lot on the West as well. “Baku - Tbilisi – Ceyhan and Baku - Yerevan – Ankara routes are the lines opposite to the proposed routes of Iran to transport Azerbaijan and the Caspian Sea oil and are supported by the U. S. and Turkey at the same time” (Rafi, Mazloumi, 2012, 93).

Turkey needed to fulfil its energy requirements for steady economic development, because of these prerequisites, in 2005, Turkey inaugurated the project of the ‘Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline’. Through this project, Turkey would have ample energy supplies and the second-end countries would do good business. This pipeline became a pilot project for the Trans Anatolian Pipeline and the Trans Adriatic Pipeline. Such projects were of much value in the energy sector from the business point of view and the political sector. These schemes also reduced Russian energy resources from the European market.

When a conflict arose between Russia and Georgia in 2008, Turkey played a balanced role with Russia even in March 2014. Turkey tried to avoid confrontation with Russia. The policy of stable relations had been adopted by Turkey. The south Caucasian countries regarding the relations had been dwindling especially because of the Russian hostile attitude. But Turkey-Armenia links had not been ideal, especially the past incident of genocide in Armenia is cited with accusations on Turkey off and on. However, after the collapse of the USSR, the issue of Nikarno-Karabakh rose and

Azerbaijan was fully supported by Turkey which developed the relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey.

The other state, Georgia, has a short history as an independent state after the fall of the USSR. Georgia has had a complicated and problematic past since it became independent. At the same time, it is a reality that it is a weak and small country. “It has a difficult neighbourhood position with Iran, Russia and Turkey which are nervous about each other’s activities in the South Caucasus” (MacFarlane, 2012). Turkey as Ottoman Empire had ruled the Armenian territory. At the time of the USSR’s collapse, Armenia came into being as an independent country. At that time it was expected that good relations will develop between Turkey and Armenia and Georgia. Several reasons discussed below made Georgia important for Turkey:

- i. Georgia is the gateway to the Caucasus and Central Asian region.
- ii. The Hydrocarbons (Petroleum products) of the Caspian Sea may be transported to Turkey through Georgia.

Turkey is also unavoidable for Georgia for reasons like:

- i. Between Europe and Georgia, Turkey is the pathway for trade and other development activities.
- ii. Georgia is not on good terms with Russia and in such a situation Turkey can be a good option for mediation between the clashing countries and for the trade purpose also.

The relations between the neighbours of Turkey had not been stable in the past but the policymakers in Turkey, when strived to resolve all clashes with the

neighbours and converged to the ‘zero-problem’ policy, considered that the minor clashes should be disregarded on the way to the greater causes.

### **3.15 Azerbaijan-Armenia War and Turkish Role**

Nagorno-Karabakh became the cause of the clash between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The world had accepted Azerbaijan’s right over that territory but disregarding the opinion of the international community, Armenia was trying to establish its rule over the area with the help of an Armenian ethnic group and it had been happening since 1990. “However, officially, Armenia denies being a party to the conflict” (Kruger, 2010).

Since the government of the JDP, Azerbaijan had been in close ties with Turkey. Their relations have socio-cultural depth. Both nations are supportive of each other in terms of economic and military matters. The leadership of both sides have agreed to consider the people of these two countries as, ‘one nation’. Armenia is one of the common opposite forces for Turkey and Azerbaijan. Since, the time of the Ottoman Empire, Armenians and Turkish had not been friendly. The clash between the two has claimed the lives of about 1.5 million Armenians. After the inception of the JDP rule, Turkey tried to adopt the policy of friendship with all the neighbouring states. It was a great time for the Armenians to establish good relations with Turkey but Armenia could not get the advantage of that time, instead, Azerbaijan went closer to Turkey. The socio-cultural relations between them went to the extent of security cooperation even Turkey started to provide military training to the armed forces of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan also became a great business buyer of weapons from Turkey. Despite the policy of Soft-power, Turkey rose in the military support of Azerbaijan; the same hard-power strategy was adopted by Turkey in its clash with Greece.

The war broke out between Armenia and Azerbaijan over land issues. Turkey became fully supportive of Azerbaijan. Turkey provided training support through military exercises, the F-16 aircrafts of the Turkish army were handed over to the Azerbaijan force and the exports of arms from Turkey to Azerbaijan swelled manyfold. Russia had been one of the supports of Armenia, but unfortunately, at the time of the recent clash with Azerbaijan, the leadership in Armenia was not a favourite for the Russian. So it was a good opportunity for Azerbaijan to fight a decisive war with the help of Turkey and Azerbaijan took full advantage of the situation. Being sure that Russians would not interfere with the clash the Azeri force fought full fledged war.

The conditions for Azerbaijan were very favourable and the country took full advantage of the situation. Azerbaijan secured victory against Armenia and started to control the area closer to the Iranian border. The drone technology of Turkey and Israel was extensively used by the Azerbaijan forces. The Turkish role was criticised by the West as they considered it a dangerous game for the region. According to them, the area may get destabilized as a consequence of such adventures, however, Turkey did not value such opinions of the West and kept supporting Azerbaijanis. The fight had the full support of the Turks and the Azerbaijan public. Because the Azeris especially wanted to fight a decisive war against their traditional enemy on the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Azeris secured a decisive victory.

On November 10, 2020, the peace accord was signed between the fighting nations with the interference of Russia and Turkey as mediators. Azerbaijan took over a larger area of Nagorno-Karabakh and according to the peace treaty, Armenia agreed to hand over the disputed area to Azerbaijan in a peaceful manner. With this agreement, the war ended with the positive role of Russia and the pro-eastern role of

Turkey. Nikol Pashinyan, the PM of Armenia declared the agreement "incredibly painful both for me and for the public".

The Russians assumed the position of peacekeepers in the region to ensure that there should not be any violation of the peace accord from any side, especially the Armenian public was extremely shocked, even the public protested too against the government. In the peace accord, Turkey was also working jointly with Russia but more than the role of a mediator, Turkey played as pro-Muslims and pro-east. The event of the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia again proved to be the rift in the Turkish foreign policy towards the east, towards the neighbours and the Muslims.

According to Masco, both countries will clear all trade and transport agreements and both nations will interchange the combat captives as compelled by the peace deal. The whole nation of Azerbaijan celebrated the treaty. The Azeri head of the state Aliyev considered the agreement to be the victory of the nation and a historical moment. Contrary to this, the Armenian PM said that his resolution was according to the arguments of the field experts. The victory of Azerbaijan was undoubtedly and history will remember the part played by Turkey

### **3.16 Why Turkey Played the Vital Role**

It is a confirmed fact that Turkey helped Azerbaijan a lot and it cannot be denied because Turkey has been favouring Azerbaijan since the Nigarno Karabakh issue came on the scene. At the end of 2020, Azerbaijan got success with the Turkish military cooperation.

But the question arises why did Turkey take part in this battle? the answer is in the following points:

- i. The idea of one nation and two states is deep-rooted in the public of these two states. In this region, Azerbaijan is the most reliable ally of Turkey.
- ii. Azerbaijan is economically important for Turkey as far as the energy sector is concerned. As Turkey imports 23 per cent of gas from Azerbaijan, SOCAR is an Azeri state oil company that is considered the richest investor company in Turkey.
- iii. Turkey has played its role in the region because it does not want to leave any space for Russia. If Turkey had shown neutral status, Russia would have played the role of regional power.
- iv. Ultimately Turkey has abolished the Russian influence in the South Caucasus region and it is also a proven fact that Russian domination may be finished at any time.
- v. Turkey has played its role in the best way as Turkey wants to make psychological pressure on Russia and ultimately Turkey wants to minimize the Russian role in the Middle East region.

“The Turkish community and Azeri community are feeling superiority in the region internally. The government of the Justice and Development Party acquired favour from the opposition means internally Turkish government becomes more strong and famous again” (Biljehan, 2017).

**CHAPTER 04**

**CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW TURKISH FOREIGN**

**POLICY**

## CHAPTER 04

### CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

In the last two decades, Turkey has been playing an important role in world politics, especially in the politics of the Middle East. Since 1924, with the foundation of modern Turkey, she aligned its politics with the standard of the US and the West. Turkey is focusing on its relations with the Muslim world along with Russia, China, Africa and the Asian states. This has started a new debate that Turkey is moving towards the East and the West is losing importance in modern foreign policy of Turkey (Hale,2009).

Justice and Development Party got continuous success from 2002 to 2018 in general elections and continued the steadiness of its foreign policies. During this era, Turkey remained successful but there came many challenges in the path.

The challenges which came during the formation and implementation of Turkish foreign policy can be discussed on two levels.

#### **4.1 Turkish Foreign Policy and Confrontation on National Level**

Present Turkey is still facing many internal challenges and these challenges are becoming a great hurdle in the path of succeeding foreign policy. The government of the Justice and Development Party is facing opposition of other political parties. The modern political background of Turkey is replete with the role of secular political parties. Turkey is a democratic country and the strong role of the opposition is the beauty of democracy. There are two major challenges for the government; one is to

strengthen democratic culture and values while the second is to attain economic success.

For the achievement of these objectives, political parties play a constructive role and a consensus attitude is adopted. The government of the Justice and Development Party is facing much resistance internally from other political bodies. A glimpse of Turkish politics shows that secular powers laid the foundation of the political structure of Turkey. However, Islamic political parties had to struggle a lot to set roots in Turkey. The Justice and Development party came on the scene in 2001 after the Post Modern Coup in 1997, Erbakan government was removed and his political party named Welfare Party was banned. The leadership of this political party (JDP) is liberal but full of Islamism. Since the formation of the government very first time, it had faced much political opposition because Turkish society remained enclosed in the shackles of secular tradition. It was a challenging task for Turkey to take secularism and liberalism to a change in Turkish society. Moreover, an important task was to make amendments in the Turkish constitution to stop the Turkish army from political interference which has been time and again ceasing Turkish democratic governments in the name of protecting the secular constitution. A particular image has been created in Turkey that the Turkish army is the protector of secularism in the country. This image has been disseminated in the Turkish society that the Turkish army has been meddling the politics directly and indirectly.

From 1960 Cemal Gursel's martial law to the failed military coup of 15 July 2016, the Turkish army remained indulged in political adventures. While this slogan was raised that the Turkish army is the guardian of secular constitution and secularism and that it was forced to take extreme steps. Such was the case with the third-world

countries where the army takes over the affairs of government with enchanting slogans.

After the failed military coup, the role of the army in Turkish politics was minimized by the government of the Justice and Development Party. But it does not mean that the political role of the army has come to an end. Before this coup, the military has been damaging democratic institutions and governments using other tools.

Another fact is that the world has become a global village now. A single incident anywhere in the world may affect the politics of the world, for example, the incidents of 9/11 or the Arab Spring. The Gulf War of 1991 is also the living proof of this fact after which the Kurd issue was highlighted by international media and by taking a plea of this example, the Turkish army became the decisive partner in the state.

Arab Spring is a recent example of such a case. The wave of Arab Spring started in Tunisia, and then reached Egypt, Syria and Libya and converted into civil wars. The civil war in Syria disturbed the relations between Turkey, Syria and Iran, who were enjoying good terms with each other. The government of the Justice and Development Party opposed the isolation policy of the US concerning Iran and favoured the peaceful purpose of the Iranian nuclear program.

Turkey had good relations with Syria but when the Syrian army used power relentlessly against the Syrian public, Turkey condemned this step. Especially during the Aleppo War, relations between these two states became worse. In such a situation, the Turkish government of the Justice and Development Party was passing through a critical situation.

The constitution of 1982 is in practice for a long time and it required timely changes but in this regard, Justice and Development needs the favour of other political parties which is much more difficult because the Republican Peoples Party (CHP) is regarded as a strong political party. Moreover, this party is famous for its secular thoughts and agenda. Republican Peoples Party (CHP) deemed Justice and Development Party a big threat to secularism in Turkey. And it is also a fact that the Turkish army is all time ready to help the secular bodies. The Turkish army has shown indications many times that it may cross all limits for the protection of secularism.

A glimpse of this fact was seen in the form of the failed military coup, while the government of the Justice and Development Party handed this coup successfully. After this event, the government of the Justice and Development Party captured the rebellious elements and put them under trial. Even in 2018, 21 high-level officials were given the punishment of life imprisonment when found guilty in the Post Modern Military Coup of 1997. This shows that the Turkish civil government of Justice and Development Party and military have differences and are not on a single page.

#### **4.2 Kurdish Uprise in Turkey**

Among the other challenges of Turkey, Kurdistan Movement is a big challenge. This has been highlighted many times in the last decade when certain incidents emerged in the Middle East which flamed the Kurd issue i.e. the US attacked Iraq in 2003, Arab Spring and civil wars in the Middle East (Tezcur,2015). After the US attack on Iraq and the closure of Saddam's government, many security

issues grew up in the state and the state faced political instability which worsened the Kurd issue. In Northern Iraq, Kurds emerged powerfully.

When the government of Justice and Development started the Zero Problem policy in its foreign affairs, she struggled hard for better relations with Iraq, Iran, and Syria. So Kurds once again got a chance to stand on their feet.

With time Kurd issue became complex as after 2010 political instability spread in the Middle East. In 1984, the Kurd conflict emerged in Turkish politics. Afterwards, there started a guerilla war against Turkish forces. Since 1984, Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) has been a big challenge for Turkey and as time passed this movement got its roots deeply. Now PKK is the Achilles' heel of Turkey.

This conflict has consumed many lives up till now and the government of Turkey has spent many a million dollars on this issue. This Kurd issue was the biggest challenge for Turkey after the Cold War era. It is a multifaceted problem that can be viewed under three aspects, among them the economic aspect is the chief one. The Turkish government has spent a lot of budget on the solution to this problem. As an example Turkish forces' expenses were going up for military operations in Kurds, creating a huge burden on the Turkish economy.

The second aspect is that the democratic government have been sabotaged in Turkey many times. As a result, democratic institutions could not attain power. And many issues remained unsolved. During military regimes, such issues became further entangled and many issues like the enigma of missing persons, tortures and forced migration appeared on the scene. And these were highlighted by NGOs and international human rights organizations. Such issues are solved on the table, not on the battlefield.

The third aspect is the international relations of Turkey; the Kurd issue has influenced Turkish foreign relations deeply. At international forums, Turkey had to face the music for the violation of the humanitarian rights of Kurds. The Kurd issue is also considered a big hindrance for Turkish membership in the EU. The relations of Turkey with Syria, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, Greece and Russia have not been good because these countries have been backing PKK the separatist organization(Schott,2017).

The government of Justice and Development desired to solve the matters with the Kurds community peacefully so that Turkey may put its attention on external issues. Turkish government used Islamic ideology as a tool, as in the past Kemal Ata Turk remained successful in getting the favour of the Kurd community in the liberation war of Turkey by using the tool of religion. Keeping in view the past experiences, this government has also concluded to solve the issue through three powerful institutions namely religion, economy and more democratization, because million dollars and other military strategies could not solve the problem. However, it became imperative to adopt a give and take policy with the Kurds.

But the civil war of Syria raised difficulties for the Turkish government more than ever before. Turkish forces underwent a military operation against Kurds in Syria. This worsened the already confused state of affairs. But the Turkish government is in a position to solve the issue mutually. Turkish Kurds are a strong ethnic group that is struggling for liberties and rights. But Turkish army and nationalist parties have developed strict behaviour against Kurds. Justice and Development Party has always tried to seek a peaceful solution for such a crisis as this is the biggest domestic challenge for them.

### **4.3 National Economy**

Economic progress is the prime objective of any foreign policy. For the attainment of economic interest, all treaties and agreements for this purpose are of much value. It is a fact that whenever a state forms its foreign policy, it lays much stress on economic development and security. Every state prefers economic interests at the time of development of relations with the other states. Further, at this time every state calculates interests from other states.

Immediately after the end of the First World War foundation of the new Turkish foreign policy was laid down. Political and economic effects were prominent in Turkey. It was a time of unrest in entire Europe and the European economy was trodden down. The economy was the major challenge for Turkey that needed reforms and industrial development. When Turkey was passing through this phase, Europe stepped into Second World War. This way military expenditure of Turkey increased, and the economic development slowed down.

After the end of the Second World War, the world fell prey to the new ideological conflict which is known as Cold War in international politics. At that time Turkey ended neutrality in its foreign policy and joined the US and Western block. Turkey needed economic aid so that it can improve the economic field (Hatipoglu & Palmer,2018).

If economic cooperation is corporated fairly and sincerely, it gives positive results and peace and prosperity in the world. But economic aids when used as a political tool bring harmful results and resultantly destroy peace. The US did so at the time of the cold war when it helped Turkey economically but behind this move was the control of communism in Turkey and its neighbour.

The US and European states should have given aid to such poor countries purely on a humanitarian basis but the fact was otherwise. These imperialism powers looted and plundered the resources of the backward countries under the clad of help and reforms. As a result, the imperialistic powers became much more powerful while the looted states remained underdeveloped.

The economic aid of the US and the West pushed Turkey far away from the Soviet Union, and Eastern European states. For many times in Turkey, the military governments were encouraged by giving chances to rule secularism and liberalism. The rate of economic and military aid by the US during military government had been greater as compared to the democratic period.

During the emergence of Islamic parties in Turkey, especially when liberal Islamic political parties came into power, the US and the West changed their cooperative attitude.

Moreover, as soon as Turkey introduced a transformation process in foreign policy, Turkey had to face economic challenges in the region. Among all the other challenges that Turkey faced, economic challenge occupies a central position. In recent times, trends have been settled among Turkey, the US, and Western states.

Along with these facts, Turkey and Russia are not on good terms, especially since the time when the Turkish air force shot down the Russian jet. Presently political and economical crisis is governing the Middle East. This time it is necessary for Turkey to keep up the economic pace by adopting rational policies. For the government of the Justice and Development Party, the biggest challenge of economic development awaits in future.

#### **4.4 Turkish Foreign Policy and Problems on International Level**

The environment of international politics gives shape to the foreign policy and relations between the states. It is a fact that a single state cannot exist independently. The states are independent of one another economically, socially, politically, religiously and much more. Now the world has shrunk into a global village, states have been interconnected to such an extent that the element of complex interdependency has become dominated.

At present, Turkey has an active foreign policy because its economy is progressing rapidly and there are rapid political changes in its neighbour. Turkey is playing a unique role in international politics. Since 2002, there has been a liberal Islamist political party in power in Turkey that has framed a new foreign policy and this foreign policy is facing many challenges now. Among these challenges, is the opposition of the Western world, Arab Spring and civil wars in the Middle East and fluctuating relations with Russia.

#### **4.5 Resistance from the West:**

After Justice and Development Party came into power, all the transformations in Turkey's foreign policy affected the relations of Turkey with the US and the West. There were many reasons behind the De-Westernization of Turkey's foreign policy. Why after remaining very close to each other, the US and Turkey went far apart in their relations? There are many reasons in the background of this separation.

Since 2002 there has been a visible change in the political activities of Turkey both internally and externally. The new political party started a series of reforms after coming into power: Likewise, the Turkish government maintained a balanced

approach in the relations with the other countries. But it is a fact that ups and down run side by side so Turkey's politics was no exception. Turkey had to face the Western opposition. The more the criteria for the membership of EU Turkey fulfilled, the greater the demands from the EU for doing more rose. Britain, French and German political leadership got on the nerves of Turkey in the matter of EU membership. The issues which were raised in the path of Turkey are as follows:

- Counter-Terrorism policies
- Syrian Refugees' issue
- Liberalism and Secularism in Turkish society
- Harsh behaviour with Greece and France
- Violations of Human Rights in Kurd Area.

The Western states have developed the policy of highlighting the above-discussed issues time and again to mount the tension for Turkey.

In the present time, the Turkish foreign policy has changed at a fast pace but Turkey has to face the opposition of the US, Western countries and NATO. The EU has delayed the membership of Turkey for a long time because the EU wants to regulate Turkish foreign policy, as Turkey and Western states have no good relations nowadays. The US and Western states are further opposing Turkey on the following issues:

- The military operation in Syria
- Military deployment in Libya

- S-400 Missiles Deal with Russia

- Media control policies

And recently Joe Biden administration has raised a new issue when this government highlighted the Armenian Genocide issue of 1915.

Now it is up to the foreign policymakers of Turkey how they deal with their problems and face challenges. On the advice of the EU, Turkey introduced various reforms in its political system and fulfilled other requirements also. Despite all this France opposed Turkey's membership in the EU, arguing that an increase in the number of members of the EU especially the entry of an Islamic state Turkey is not in favour of the EU(LarGro,2008).

While Germany also shows the same behaviour towards Turkey as the Cyprus issue is still a nightmare for them while labour and immigration issues are also not forgotten (Kirisci, 2008).

All these factors are enough to affect Turkish foreign policy. In such circumstances, the Zero Problem Policy of Turkey is impracticable as Turkey is facing the intolerance of EU states (Onis, November 2008).

#### **4.6 The Middle East Turmoil**

Arab Spring started in Tunisia and very soon it circulated in many Muslim states in the Middle East until Arab Spring appeared in Egypt. It was purely political but on reaching Syria, Arab Spring got a religious touch that was converted into Sunni and Shia conflict. Turkey declared Zero Problem Policy but unfortunately the circumstances did not allow for doing so. Turkey lost its neutrality when she favoured Mursi in Egypt and Syrian Free Army and Al Nusrah Front in Syria.

The Zero-Problem Policy of Turkey ended very soon in the Middle East. Turkish foreign policy experts gushed that the Tunisian Arab Spring would spread in other countries very soon. The experts further advised the Turkish administration to help and favour the public of neighbouring states instead of controlling them

Turkish interests entered into hot water due to Arab Spring and Egypt and Syrian involvement. Turkish foreign policy also got entangled because, before the advent of the Arab Spring, Turkey had good relations with the Middle Eastern states and Northern African states. Turkey was attaining its economic and political ends from these states and also working with their autocratic regime.

The government of the Justice and Development Party has designed foreign policy to get maximum interest and benefits. The Middle East is a big economic market for Turkey and producer of crude oil. Now it is a big challenge for Turkey how she gets out of this crisis.

#### **4.7 Turkish Foreign Policy and Russia**

Turkish and Russian relations have been disturbed from the very beginning and still, there are tensions among them. Sometimes they are on good terms but the relationship between both countries has been fluctuating.

At the time of the Cold War Turkey included itself in the Western block, while the Soviet Union and Turkey saw a wide chasm in their relations. “Further, when Turkey got economic aid from the US under Marshall Plane and joined NATO in 1952, it became crystal clear that Turkey may stand against Soviet interests openly” (Calvocoressi, 1991).

A tug-of-war exists between Turkey and Russia in the Middle East and Central Asia. Both countries are striving day and night for better influence in the Caucasian region. Turkey is increasing its influence in these regions at a good pace.

The civil war in Syria is also the sole cause of rivalry between both countries. In this case, Turkey is favouring Syrian opposition and Russia is backing the authoritative government of Bashar al-Assad. The relations between both countries went into serious tension when the Turkish air force hit the Russian jet.

#### **4.8 Turkey after Downing Russian Warplane**

The relations between Turkey and Russia got disturbed when on 24 November 2015 Turkish air force hit a Russian jet. This incident took place on the Turkish Syrian border. According to the Russian claim, the jet was flying at 6000 altitudes, moreover, Russia added that the plane was hit by an air-to-air missile and the plane's debris was recovered in the Syrian border province of Latakia. As a result, both crew members were killed.

While the Turkish stance was altogether different, the Turkish air force claimed that the plane was violating Turkish air space time and again despite repeated warnings. Moreover, the plane was flying in Yayladagi town Hatay province. According to a Turkish military spokesperson, two unidentified planes were warned again and again to leave Turkish air space. This incident soared tensions in the Middle East region.

In this matter, the US and NATO favoured Turkey. The US military said that there are indications that the downed jet violated Turkey's air space and it was appraised numerous times.

#### **4.9 Turkey-Russia Again Cold War Alliances System**

After the Second World War, the entire world fell prey to ideological conflict which is termed as Cold War in international politics or international relations. Turkey ended its neutrality during Cold War and joined the US and the Western block. The relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union became tense and this severity in relation continued till the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

But again relations between Turkey and Russia entered into a cold war era in the Syrian civil war as the enmity between both countries is a fact. Turkey and Russia are openly involved in the Syrian civil war and fighting a proxy war.

The disastrous development is that the Turkish air force shot down a Russian warplane. This incident has created much severity between the two countries. Now in recent times, the said countries are still at daggers drawn on the following issues.

- 1- The increasing impact of Russia in the Middle East and the Central Asian region. Russian intervenes in Georgia while Russian involvement in the Syrian war is the best example in this regard.
- 2- Russia wish to hinder NATO's influence in East Europe while Turkey is a member of the military organization of NATO
- 3- The US and NATO are establishing a missile defence shield in East European states. Poland and the Czech Republic and Russia are strongly opposing this project and think it a danger.
- 4- There is also a clash of interests between Turkey and Russia on oil and gas pipeline projects. Russia desires to build up a new oil and gas pipeline so that it can provide oil and gas to states in West Europe but Turkey also wishes to develop different pipeline projects.

5- In the Syrian civil war, Russia is supporting the autocratic regime of Bash ul Assad while Turkey is supporting the opposition and rebellious military groups.

International relations are capricious and indecisive; however, they require to be worked upon despite the hope deficit and struggle amongst states. In this epoch of neo-realism, the struggle to protect the national interest can turn into a reason for devastating wars.

After downing the Russian jet, bilateral ties between Russia and Turkey became shoddier and both countries have now become more energetic in the Syrian crisis.

When the dead body of a Russian pilot and a marine reached Russia, again a cold war started between Turkey and Russia. The Putin administration said that he will obliterate any menace to its military in Syria. Then the Turkish leader Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey will defend its sovereignty at any cost.

Russian military started to deploy missiles into Syria to defend their military sites. On the other hand, Turkey is already developing missile shields on the Turkish Syrian border area. All these negative developments are foretelling that in future the Syrian civil war will be a perilous point for these two countries and their mutual relationship.

Both the states; Turkey and Russia are rising economic and military power in world politics. They cannot endure any military clash which is destructive to their economic development. There is an inveterate hostility between these two states so Russian foreign policymakers devised impediments in the political and economic progress of Turkey which was started in 2002 when the AK party came into power

and espoused the zero problem policy doctrine. This matter is a test case for the AK party's government, how they reinstate the gracious relations with Russia.

#### **4.10 Challenges for Turkish foreign policy in 2021**

In the present time, relations of Turkey with the US and the West are very tense. In the history of Turkish foreign policy, there is no such example. It is an open secret that Turkey has been feeling proud as a Western state.

Turkey is experiencing various challenges and dilemmas among these certain issues, some of which are maybe discussed shortly.

#### **4.11 Turkish Russian Deal of S-400 Missile Defence System**

The US and Turkey are indulging in tension with each other on the Turkish-Russian agreement about one of the latest S-400 missiles system. Turkish foreign minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said this was a “done deal” clearly in a meeting with the US administration. The United States and the military organization NATO are against this treaty, even Washington confirmed to Ankara that she will revoke the Turkish-US project about F-35 jets. But up till now, Turkey not only discarded all the pressure from US and NATO but also started to procure this air defence system from Russia.

#### **4.12 Settlement of Refugees**

There is tension in the relations between Turkey and the European Union over the settlement of Syrian refugees. The countries in European Union deemed these refugees a strong economic and security threat. While the Turkish economy cannot bear the burden of these refugees. EU is demanding to do more, while Turkey demands economic aid from the EU for the settlement of these refugees

The foremost reason is that the terrorist activities of ISIS can soar in Europe and fanaticism and religious fundamentalism will also boost in Europe.

#### **4.13 Enhancement of Military Capabilities**

In 2021, Turkey not only increased its military capacity but also enhanced its military capability and continued its military activities in the Mediterranean Sea, The Middle East region and the South Caucasus which resulted in a rapid change in the region.

On one hand, Turkey purchased the latest air defence system from Russia while on the other hand, it is involved in the project of the F-35 fighter jet with the US.

In the matter of Turkey and Greece's unfriendly relations, France is favouring Greece. The fact is that Turkey is supplying arms and ammunition in Syria and Libya to the rebels group. This favour consequently has created a distance in the relations between Turkey, Russia and other Western countries respectively.

The biggest development up till now is that Azerbaijan defeated Armenia in a recent war on the conflict of Nagorno Karabakh, with the military help of Turkey. Turkish military technology especially drones played an important role in this war. Turkey has gained so much military capacity that Ukraine is also using Turkish drones and Poland also wants to purchase this technology from Turkey. The Turkish companies are preparing missiles locally and enhancing Turkey's naval power also.

#### **4.14 The Decline in the Turkish Economy**

The economy plays a vital role in international relations. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the states in world politics started to focus their

attention on the internal economy. Before the break up of the Soviet Union, states usually used to enhance their military powers but having strong military power the Soviet Union was dissolved into fifteen separate states due to the poor economy. So, in the present time solid and stable economy is required for successful diplomacy and foreign policy.

If an overview analysis of Turkey, it is observed that in the present time, the biggest challenge for Turkey is to stop its continued economic decline. The government of the AK party has been facing the challenges of economic decline. Now having such experiences of economic decline, all the states are worried about economic progress.

In 2002, when the AK party took command of the affairs, Turkey achieved its economic targets at a rapid pace. But unfortunately, Turkey was very soon involved in the civil wars of the nearby states in the Middle East region, for example, the US attacked Iraq, the military coup in Egypt and the civil war in Syria and Libya. All these circumstances had a bad effect on Turkey's economy, while the burden of refugees from different states added to the miserable declining economy. Further, the involvement of Turkey in proxy wars and increased military budgets is also leaving long-lasting effects on the Turkish Economy.

#### **4.15 Growing Nationalism**

In Turkey, nationalism was a factor which was started to develop very early in the Turkish nation but Kamal Ataturk utilized nationalism in a better way. In 2002, the modern Islamist political party Justice and Development Party succeeded in the election and made the government. The leadership of this political party reshaped nationalism and give a new direction to it. In Turkey, foreign policy decisions and

decisions about internal affairs framed and grew the nationalism factor again. Erdogan expressed his ideas and policies during the speech while addressing the public, by reading a poem in public and later on, he was sentenced by the court and he also read a poem in Azerbaijan that impressed the youth and increased the nationalism in public. So, his charismatic personality increased the nationalism in Turks. The Turkish president converted Hagia Sofia into the Masjid which was a decision, opposed by secular forces in Turkish politics and also by the Western world, especially Greece. This was the time when Turkish nationalism was enhanced inside and outside Turkey. But in recent years, the political scenario has changed and it will be a hurdle for the government of the Justice and Development Party because it will pressurize the government to take sentimental decisions that are not based on rationality.

The political system in the world is based on complex interdependence. So these decisions cast bad economic impacts on the nation. In the future, it will be the biggest challenge for the Justice and Development Party in the foreign policymaking process.

#### **4.16 Military Activeness of Turkey**

Turkey is spending a huge amount on military preparedness from its budget which is a burden on the economy. In 2002, when the new government came to power, the main agenda in Turkish foreign policy was to enhance the economics and social development of Turkey. But the sudden changes in International politics compelled Turkey to get involved in regional politics which is full of conflicts and all this changed the priorities of the foreign policy decision and the Turkish defence

budget was also increased. Now Turkey is active in neighbour and regional politics, especially in the Middle East and South Caucasus region.

Even Turkish land forces, air force and navy are in active mode. In 2021 Turkish navy deployed its first aircraft carrier TCG Anadolu into the sea. Turkey is developing new drone technology to enhance military power in the region. In the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia on the issue of Nagorno Karabakh, the air force of Azerbaijan used a Turkish-made drone which played a vital role in Azerbaijan's decisive victory in the war.

Turkish military expenditures have increased because of the surrounding environment of Turkey. Civil wars, terrorism and proxy wars are going on by powerful states in the neighbour so the Turkish military is working on special grounds to protect Turkish interest in regional politics.

The foreign policymakers are facing challenges due to the military activeness because it's not a good gesture for regional politics and neither for the long-term interests of Turkey. Military activeness is a big burden on the economy and a good economy is the guarantee of successful foreign policy.

Turkish foreign policymakers want to normalize relations with the neighbouring countries so that military budgets and activeness in the military field should be reduced. It is a task for Turkish foreign policymakers to implement the zero problem policy or coercive diplomacy to achieve the objective.

Turkey is searching for alternate sources to fulfil its military needs and she is also enhancing military production that will be beneficial for Turkey in two ways. The first benefit is that Turkish dependency on Western markets of the weapon industry

will be abolished while the second benefit is that Turkey's exports of small and advanced weapons to other states will be increased.

#### **4.17 The Stance on European Union Membership**

Membership of the European Union is still a dream for Turkey and Turkey uses this issue as a weapon against the West and considered it an example of a hypocritic attitude. The governments of Britain France and Germany are criticizing the Erdoğane administration. They feel a sense of insecurity about the internal and external policies of the Justice and Development Party government. That is why the behaviour of the EU is completely changed and on this forum, the criticism on Turkish policies is a daily routine work and it has become a normal phenomenon for President Erdogan because different issues are going on creating an atmosphere of mistrust between Turkey and the EU. The major issues nowadays are; president Erdogan's approach towards the West, his transformation policy in Turkish foreign policy from the West to the East, Turkish relations with other states and Turkish criticism on Western policies.

In recent times, the major issue is Turkey's worst relations with Greece due to the drilling of oil and gas in the controversial territory near Cyprus and Greece. The second issue is the involvement of Turkey in neighbouring countries and their proxies, when Arab spring came in the Middle Eastern states, civil wars and political instability started, millions of refugees moved towards Europe and shortly settlement of refugees has become the bone of contention between Turkey and the EU. The Turkish government wants the EU to give favour to its policy of resettlement of refugees in Syrian border areas but the EU hesitates to cooperate in this policy and shows different concerns. While on the other side, Turkey is not ready to bear more

burden of refugees and this issue has become a conflict because Turkey gave a threat that it will send these refugees to the EU member states. After this, the EU released controversial statements in response and a negative development happened that is cuts in EU financial backup support to Turkey and the EU also showed intention to impose economic sanctions on Turkey if she did not stop searching for oil and gas in the controversial territory.

The Turkish president also has an aggressive stance on all these development and criticism. They already say that Turkey fulfilled all conditions but the result is still zero on this issue and the EU is still reluctant on the issue of membership.

Now many issues are highlighted and discussed between the EU and Turkey and these issues will be a challenge for Turkish foreign policymakers as to how they deal with them to satisfy the EU.

- i. The aggressive stance of the Erdogan administration against the Western states. It is an important task that Turkish foreign policymakers reduced this strategy against the Western world.
- ii. The Turkish involvement in proxies in the neighbouring countries especially in the Middle Eastern states of Syria and Libya.
- iii. The political solution, not the military operation is the best policy that Turkey has to choose to deal with neighbouring countries and to secure its territorial integrity that will change and clarify the Turkish stance more powerfully.
- iv. The most important cooperation is the cooperation on refugees' matters with the European Union. The European Union desires that

Turkey do more for the betterment of refugees and collaborate with the EU.

- v. The newly highlighted problem is about the power sector in which Turkey seeks operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. The situation has become a serious threat to peace and stability in Europe because Greece and France also showed anger and behaved roughly so what Turkey will do in future is a question.
- vi. One of the most important goals for the Turkish political leadership is to increase economic ties with the European Union countries and to offer a safe and sound environment to local and foreign investors for the economic progress of Turkey.
- vii. The West trust political liberty, a democratic style of government and secular societies so they are optimistic and demand that the AKP regime give liberty to the Turkish public and maintain secularism.
- viii. The Freedom of media is also a basic issue in Turkish politics. European Union and other civilized democratic nations in world politics demand this also. The administration of the AK Party was also convinced of the freedom of media and this administration assured the international community that they will give freedom to media when they came to power. But in 2016, after the failed military coup, AKP's government adopted different policies to control the media. So the EU wishes that the Turkish administration should provide complete liberty to the media and the Turkish public must have the right to express their views.

- ix. One of the chief concerns of the EU from the very start was the situation of human rights in Turkish society. This claim of the EU is very essential for Turkey to achieve EU membership.
- x. The conflict of Kurdistan is a prevalent dispute for the AKP's administration as this problem is damaging the good image of Turkey. When Turkish forces launched the military operation in Syria against the Kurd rebels, the US and the European states strictly opposed this step and pressurized the AKP's administration to stop the military operation in Syrian territory. The Western media also highlighted this so it is also a challenge for the AKP's administration to handle this problem in a better way.

All these steps are thought to be a big hurdle for Turkey on the path to membership in the EU. Turkish foreign policymakers are working in a better way to take Turkey out of these circumstances. The Turkish government has advised the EU that strong relations between Turkey and the EU are the need of the hour for the betterment of the entire region.

Now it is awaited how does Turkey solve these issues which are a great hurdle in new foreign policy and its implementation. In the current scenario, the element of complex interdependency is dominant in world politics where states are neither friends nor enemies but interdependent.

## **CHAPTER 05**

### **FAILED MILITARY COUP IN TURKEY AND INTERNAL & EXTERNAL IMPLICATIONS**

## CHAPTER 05

# FAILED MILITARY COUP IN TURKEY AND INTERNAL & EXTERNAL IMPLICATIONS

## 5.1 A Concise History Of Turkish Military Intervention in Turkish Politics

The public was against the liberal policies of Mustafa Kamal. The reforms he desired could not be publicized without being strict which was against the norms of democracy and eventually, democratic traditions started to weaken because owing to his popularity among the masses, Mustafa Kamal started acting contrary to the democratic traditions. During the rule of Mustafa Kemal, people had already started protesting against him. His opponents remonstrated in Ankara, and in 1926 the government adopted an authoritarian and dictator-like attitude. Kemal accused opponent politicians that they had been indulged in conspiring against the government and that they had been planning to kill Mustafa Kemal. On account of such allegations, the government started to arrest the politicians including the allies of the Sultan as well as those supporters of Mustafa Kemal who had been resisting his reforms. Some of the supporters of Mustafa Kemal including General Kazim Kerbakr, Rifat, Ali Fawad Pasha, Hussain Rauf, and Dr Adnan Bay were forced to live in exile.

After the death of Mustafa Kamal on November 10, 1938, Ismet Inonu took the seat of president. His rule is also considered by opposition to the despotic style of domination. To fortify his authority, he brought numerous constitutional amendments. The role of opposition parties had been limited to a bare minimum.

In 1939, World war-II commenced with the German assailed on Poland but it encompassed almost the whole world. In the early phase of this warfare, Turkey was incredibly firm politically and economically and also very burly in terms of armed force but the world war started to impact Turkey adversely. The need for defence multiplied in Turkey and the administration had to burgeon its defence funds. Before the war, Turkey was spending 25% of its capital on defence but as the war prolonged, the defence funds of the country started to consume 50-60% of the total budget. Turkey faced gigantic stress just like other developed nations did. The supply of raw materials dwindled and the inflation rate escalated. Eventually, the Turkish administration had to inflict war taxes; nonetheless, agriculture progressed a lot and it became a lucrative industry.

The war ended in 1945 but the reliance of Turkey on the Western nations enlarged which began to sway its political affairs also. The speciality was that due to the dominant influence of the West, the authoritative policies of Turkey began to soften. All the political parties began their active participation in internal politics. Turkey got membership in the United Nation. In 1948, the authoritarian style in national politics was initiated to reduce and the opposition party the Democratic Party in the general elections got elected. As a result, Celal Bayar became the president and Adnan Menderes held the Prime Minister position. This new administration began to bring out various reforms in politics but the Black Force movement launched a campaign against the Kemalistic sentiments in the country.

In the aftermath, the internal politics got to strengthen and even on 21st July 1953, the Turkish parliament passed the resolution not to criticise the government's decisions otherwise it will be a punishable crime. The government took a strong step against the freedom of expression both verbal and written.

Again another bill was passed on 7th March 1954 by the Turkish parliament about national security. This bill stated the complete ban on the extension in the services of government officials and officials of Judicial departments. The Democratic Party again got elected in the general elections on 2nd July 1954 but this time the ruling party had many challenges; economic crisis, political crisis and issues related to line and order. But ironically, again this government adopted a dictatorial approach in 1957. The government held general elections and got success in making the new set up but the domestic politics of Turkey remained in crisis.

After 1957, the internal politics of Turkey have become worse when Ismet Inonu went on a country tour for political activities. The opposition started a protest against the government, when he was in Anatolia, workers of opposition groups and his party indulged in riots. Finally, the government made a committee consisting of fifteen members to inspect the reason for such riots and conflicts among political workers of different parties. However, all the members of the committee were appointed from the government side and the opposition criticised it. On April 28, 1960, Ankara was under martial law (Lombardi, 1997). At that time NATO's foreign ministers' meeting was scheduled in Turkey but because of the political issues, the session was cancelled because protests and riots were spreading day by day. The Turkish military, however, remained neutral during this time. Adnan Menderes decided to use force against any riots and clashes but general Cemal Gursel announced resigning from the service if the government used force against the protesters, and thousands of cadets started to protest in the favour of students.

Finally, Cemal Gursel imposed martial law and arrested Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes and other members of the cabinet. He as a fourth president took the governmental affairs. The military government of Turkey sentenced Adnan Menderes

to death and Jalal Baba was also imprisoned. The finance minister committed suicide and the military imposed sanctions on the Democratic Party, courts came under the control of the army and everything given by the courts was according to the will of the military. Turkish politics was also under the control of the military, even in 1961 Turkish army promoted the private sector in the business field and made with them (OYAK) Army Mutual Assistance Association (Jacoby,2003). The main objective was to protect the commercial interests of military officials in a specific political situation of Turkey (Unsaldi, 2008).

The Turkish military commander general Cemal Gursel announced to schedule a Commission. The commission was given the duty of preparing a new constitution and after the preparation of the constitution, it was announced that general elections will be held. According to the constitution, Cemal Gursel became the commander of the state, and he kept on this designation till his death in 1966. He promised that sooner government will impose the new constitution (Zaheer, 2001, P,155-56).

In January 1961, the constitutional Assembly was established which started the formation of the constitution. On 9<sup>th</sup> July 1961, the new constitution was implemented through a referendum. The new constitution was accepted to secure the secular image of the state. This constitution was set to strengthen democratic traditions in the country and to achieve that goal it was considered that the political parties must be allowed to flourish freely and participate in the political activities in the country. However, it was also decided that any political party involved in rebellious activities would be dissolved. The NSC was also the outcome of this military coup to control political activities.

In October 1961, the general election was held in the country and in the new political system, several new parties emerged among which Justice Party, New Turkey Party, and Republican Peasant Party were very prominent. The overall outcome of the election was as follows:

**Table 5: Political Parties and Representation in National Assembly/Senate**

<b>Political Parties</b>	<b>National Assembly</b>	<b>Senate</b>
Republican Peoples Party	173	36
Justice Party	158	70
New Turkey Party	65	28
Republican Peasant Nation Party	54	16
	450	150

(Source: Zaheer, 2001)

None of the parties could achieve defining majority, however, the military government was devised to keep the Democratic Party out of the government. The committee for national integrity put the following demands before handing over the command:

- i. General Jamal Gursel must be elected as the new president of the country.
- ii. The four political parties who have won seats in the election will make the joint government.
- iii. The Democratic Party had been declared illegal and its members who have been penalized by the courts would not be granted amnesty.

iv. The status of the military officials who retired after 27 May 1960 would not be changed.

The helpless political representatives had to accept the above-mentioned demands. GNA elected and accepted Jamal Gursel as the president for the next seven years. The president formed a coalition government consisting of members from the Republican Peoples Party and the Justice Party. From 1960 to 1970 Turkey had been under political crisis because the coalition government was deliberately formed weaker. In 1962, Ismet Inonu resigned from the seat of Prime Minister because in the Justice Party, most of the members were originally from the Democratic Party. The president once again asked Ismat Inonu to make the government and this time it was planned not to take the members from the Justice Party. The coalition government once again failed because the opposition was creating hurdles for the government. Consequently, military interference in politics started to increase once more. The proof of such interference can be noticed through the fact that several military generals held the office of the president under their authority. The year 1973 was the end of military presidents in Turkey when GNA elected Fahri Korturk as the president of the state (Zaheer, 2001).

As a result of the election held in 1965, The Justice Party was victorious and president Cemal Gursel invited Suleyman Demirel of the Justice party to form the government. As his government had to face an economic crisis as a result the government had weaker authority. Resultantly, countrywide protests started which proved to be favourable for the military as they had the reason to interfere in state politics. The military started to stress Suleyman Demirel to resign from office.

The military authority handed over the presidential powers to Nihad Erim. The law and order situation was the main issue for the government of Erim. The military authorities made the civil governments amend the constitution in such a way that the military generals had enormous power and greater roles in state affairs. Even the military had the power to extend its martial law period. One aspect was that the state's power was being used against the individual liberty and rights of citizens (Bayramoglu, 2006).

The politicians once again started struggling against the authority of the army. In the meantime, the military president Cevdet Sunay completed his period as a president and he vacated the office on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1973. Once again election was held in the country and the Democratic Party again won the majority of the seats. Despite the victory of the Democratic Party in the election, they could not run the country successfully.

As a result, on 12 September 1980, General Kenan Avren imposed Martial law for the third time in the state. This was a multifaceted martial law as there was an economic crisis and civil violence in the politics of Turkey and the government was completely failed to deal with these issues while secularism was also under threat (Heper and Tachu, 1983). The cabinet was working under the authority of military officials. The Turkish NSC and the provincial governors formed a National Consultative Assembly. The Martial law administration suppressed all the democratic voices to achieve its agenda. A few points depicting their agenda are discussed below.

- i. Imposed sanctions on the political parties
- ii. Victimized the political workers through court trials

- iii. Started the lawsuits against secular-minded politicians like Bulent Ecevit and Religious minded politicians like Necmettin Erbakan.
- iv. The initiated crackdown was against the communist political workers.
- v. Controlled the freedom of the press and speech.

However, the internal problems and the international political pressure were making it difficult for General Kenan Avren to head the state. The West was mounting pressure for the restoration of democracy and the financial problems were also not making favourable grounds for the dictators.

In 1982, General Kenan formulated a new constitution which was promulgated through a referendum. With the help of that constitution, the General appointed himself as the president of the state. The new constitution favoured Kemalism and secularism. The basic rights of the citizens and freedom were ensured through the constitution. The president was vested in the power of appointing Judges for the Supreme Council of Judges, Supreme Military Court and Constitutional Courts. In short most of the powers were retained by the president and it was a way to strengthen the dictatorial style of ruling. Even the political rights of the people could also be suspended if required and the president also has the power to use the Army if needed. The National Security Council was reconstituted according to article 118 of the Constitution of 1982 and enhanced its political role in the politics of Turkey. The new constitution also has some clauses which further clarify the style of the government in Turkey, e.g:

- i. According to clause 4 of the new constitution, the political activities of the opposition were banned.

- ii. The members of the Senate and the Assembly were also barred from party politics.
- iii. According to clause 95, the members of banned parties were not allowed to head the new political parties.
- iv. According to clause 96, the political parties were not allowed to use the names or electoral signs of those parties which had been disbanded during martial law.
- v. According to clause 97 of the constitution, the political parties had no right to criticize the policies of the NSC.

Despite several imposed restrictions, the political parties started to emerge and it was becoming difficult for the Turkish military to keep the nation away from political awareness. The Welfare Party (Refah Party) emerged under the command of Necmettin Erbakan during martial law and religious-minded politicians started to gain popularity among the masses. Under such circumstances, the election was held in Turkey on 24 December 1995. The following table shows the outcome of the election:

**Table 6: Political Parties and Seats Won**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Number of Votes</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Seats Won</b>
Welfare Party	5970603	21.32%	30
Motherland Party	5500590	19.66%	18
True Path Party	5368994	19.20%	13
Democratic Left Party	4103295	14.65%	03
Republican Peoples Party	3011130	10.75%	02
Nationalist Movement Party	2287769	8.20%	--
Kurdish Peoples Democratic	1167657	4.20%	--
New Democratic Movement	0135074	0.48%	--
Nation Party	0126123	0.43%	--
Rebirth Party	0095628	0.33%	--
Communist Workers Party	0062302	0.21%	--
New Party	0038378	0.13%	--

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(Source: Zaheer, 2001)

Necmettin Erbakan tried to make the government but the secular opposition and the military generals created immense problems for him. (During the period of his premiership in eleven months, 12 resolutions of No-Confidence were initiated against Erbakan. Ultimately, on 18 June 1997, Erbakan had to resign.)

The Welfare party formed a coalition government in 1996. The military showed dissatisfaction with the idea of a political and Islam-oriented government and their tensions increased (Yavuz, 2004). The military forced the government to resign, which is known in Turkish politics as a Postmodern Coup because the government warned to follow Kemalism and secular values otherwise military will take control over the government. In this coup, non-governmental organizations mean workers of civil society also launched a campaign to encourage the Turkish military to remove the democratic government (Jenkins, 2001). In simple words, it shows that the military was taking part in politics, while in 1990 Turkish military became the centre of politics and they even criticized the visit of Erbakan to Libya and Iran (Akpinar, 2001). Turkish courts also started working in the direction of the military.

In the late 1990s, the Turkish military was facing challenges from radical Islamists and it was the time when the Turkish military was mobilizing the secular or liberal political forces against this situation

There was a gradual change in the politics of Turkey. This was a radical change in the internal politics of Turkey when the Justice and Development Party came into being, and also came into power in Turkey. This party was based on modern flowering ideas, independence and the continuity of the Erbakan's Islamic struggle.

The second major development was the issue of membership in the European Union. The issue was an external factor but it affected the civil-military relationship in Turkish politics. In 1993, the Copenhagen European Council meeting was held in which they set political criteria for Turkey in the accession process (Cizre, 2004). The military status and power of the military in politics were under pressure. Turkey

aimed at bringing reforms in the constitution of 1982 and also in the judicial system, especially in the military courts.

These were the legacies of military rule and dictatorship in Turkey. Simply the power of the military control has started to reduce or is under threat due to the issue of membership criteria. The EU wanted to reduce the military power of Turkey and its intervention in regional politics. On the other side, the Turkish military was not happy to reduce its role in politics. They were guardians in the politics of Turkey. They considered them the defenders of Kemalism and secularism in Turkey. Turkey had played a vital role in Eastern Europe, the Middle East region and Caucasus regional politics. The US and the Western World especially cannot deny the role of Turkey during the Cold War.

It was the time when the Western world was under the threat of communist ideology under the leadership of the Soviet Union. From 1945 to 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed. That is why the Turkish army was hesitating to reduce its role in Turkish politics, especially in the foreign policy process. But the Western nations believe in liberalism and democracy for political, economic and social development. The military intervention in politics and disrespect of democratic norms and values is not acceptable by the EU. And these conditions imposed by the EU for membership are also proof that the international community understands the military intervention and their role in domestic and international politics. The Turkish military propagated Islamic fundamentalism in media and other platforms so that they can recognize their importance and justified their presence in politics but it proved useless.

The European Union raised four fundamental problems and demanded reforms in this regard. The four problems were; the status and role of the chief of general staff,

the role of the National Security Council, the military-courts role and their status and activism.

The Turkish Nation faced multiple military interventions and the involvement of the Army Chief in politics so the European Union raised the question about the chief of general staff which should be under the Minister of Defence (Guney and Tekelioglu,2005). According to their criteria, furthermore, the European Union raised the issue of the violation of Human Rights in Kurdish areas. The military had been active and intervening in Northern Iraq in the era of late 1990 and all this was happening without the permission of the civil government

The significant development that happened in 2003 during Justice and Development Party era, was the democracy package launched in August 2003 to satisfy the EU that the Turkish government had started to reduce the role of the Army.

The Turkish government also started to reduce the role of the Turkish military in foreign policy affairs. In this regard firstly, different steps have been taken about the National Security Council but the package also contained different important steps like restructuring the composition of the National Security Council and reducing the power of this institution and increasing the civilian members in it. Amending the wording of the related articles directed the Council of Ministers to evaluate instead of giving priority consideration to the decisions of the National Security Council. In simple words, the decision power body of the NSC was converted into an advisory body (Michaud-Emin, 2007).

Since 2002, when the Justice and Development Party came into power, they started reforms in the internal political system and reduced the military intervention in

Turkish politics because the military intervened in Turkish politics several times. The history of Military Coup can be summarized in the following table:

**Table 7: Timeline of Military Coup in Turkey**

Sr. No	Year	Type of coup	Type of Military Regime
1	1960	Coup d'etat	Guardian Regime
2	1971	Coup by Memorandum	Veto Regime
3	1980	Coup d'etat	Guardian Regime
4	1997	Post Modern Coup	Veto Regime

In foreign policy, a great transformation process occurred. The foreign policy advisers of Eurdgne shaped new foreign policy according to their interests. They transformed the whole foreign policy and established a balanced foreign policy for the Turkish nation. This was the time when the politics of the world was completely affected by the incident of 9/11, 2001. According to scholars, this was the time when the US and the Western world started the war against terrorism and when Turkey started to shift its foreign policy from the Western world and established good ties with the other nations in the world.

The process of transformation in Turkish foreign policy continued but the situation started to become complicated. The Justice and Development Party started to face challenges from different actors in internal-external politics. The opposition parties, and civil and military bureaucracy from within the state and the US and the West in external politics gave a tough time to this party.

In Turkish politics, the same model or play was applied to remove the government of the Justice and Development Party, since 2013 clashes and distance

between Erdogan and Gulen started to point out a disturbance in the politics of Turkey. The alliance of the opposition parties became strong when Gulen joined them. However, the alarming situation was that Gulen also allied with the Kurdistan Workers Party. These were internal activities in the political system which raised different questions on the Gulen personality and political role. The above-mentioned situations created doubts about the social, religious and cultural services by the Gulen movement.

On July 15, 2016, failed military coup compelled president Recep Tayyip Erdogan to declare Gulen and his supporters to be responsible for the conspiracy against the elected democratic government of Turkey because, in this failed military attempt, Gulen and his educational, economical and charitable institution all were involved. Gulen has millions of followers ready to come to the road at any cost and any time.

Gulen and his institutions were affected due to the reforms in the politics of Turkey and they also affected of success of the Justice and Development party's government in the election again and again

## **5.2 The Failed Military Coup**

In 2014, after the success in the election, the Justice and Development party gave a clear message that there is no space and reason for anybody involved in a conspiracy against the democratic government. From the victory of the 2002 to 2015 election, the government of this political party achieved political, economical and social development. They gave basic rights and political, economic and social rights to the public and completely abolished military influence from the political, social and economical institutions which no one was expecting.

The blunder was highlighted by the Arab media on 16 July 2016. It was so sudden that it shocked everyone. The Bosphorous bridge occupied all government headquarters and institutions were occupied by the Turkish military personnel. The Turkish president Erdogan called the public shortly on a social media account and then the public started their resistance and blocked military advancement.

All this was happening in a country that is the most important state having a different cultural legacy and played a vital role in history and working as a bridge between East and West, playing important role in the Middle East and sharing a border with Iraq and Syria both the states facing civil wars, terrorism and social-political and economic instability.

When Justice and Development Party assumed power, they succeeded in every field like economics, culture or politics. They started to limit the role of the army in politics and government institutions, but this was not acceptable for the Turkish army. So a failed military coup happened and for the first time in history, Turkish politics that the democratic forces succeeded and the army completely failed. The Turkish president started an operation against the anti-democratic element in the army and judiciary. The government of Turkey started a crackdown against those who were involved in this failed coup.

In this regard, they removed servants from their jobs, arrested them and shut down the institutions especially the educational institutions of Gullen within and outside Turkey by forceful diplomacy. President Erdogan demanded to hand over the Gulen from the US where he was residing. But the US refused and this issue disturbed the bilateral relations between these states. These were the strong measures taken by the Erdogan administration against the anti-democratic elements. This was a great

achievement for democratic forces because they abolished the role of the military in Turkish politics for the future. The government of the Justice and Development Party became stronger and they started to freely work for the betterment of Turkish development.

### **5.3 Internal and External Implications**

In the political history of Turkey, it was the first time that people came on the roads and streets and they played a vital role in failing the military coup. After announcing or requesting on social media by the Turkish president Erdogan, workers of the Justice and Development Party and citizens of Turkey started to lay down before tanks, military vehicles and trucks. The other political parties of the opposition wing also announced to support the government of the Justice and Development Party in which the Republican Peoples Party and Nationalist Movement party were on the top position. The mainstream media and social media favoured the government of the Justice and Development Party. It was a natural response because in the past media was kept banned in dictatorship or military rule. So the journalist community knew well about the problems they would face if they imposed martial law by the military or removed the democratic government.

After the success of Turkish president Erdogan, the media supported his stance in front of international communities and the public. This way Turkey met this crisis and dealt with this issue. It is considered by political and military observers that after this military blunder, the government of the Justice and Development Party became stronger. The popularity of the Turkish president also increased in the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East and Caucasus region.

Another main development was that Justice and Development Party's government improved relations with the opposition parties. The responsible officials were investigated, and forcefully retired from the services and a large number of personnel from different departments were arrested. All these steps taken by the government were not opposed by the opposition.

The political opposition parties gave their stance on media to the public that they are not supporting Erdogan but a democratic future of Turkey. They have the idea that democracy and democratic reforms are necessary for the success of Turkey in the international community. This was a golden chance for Erdogan and the circumstances also favoured him, so he completely abolished the power of secular and Kemalist ideas based military with the help of the public, media and political parties. He completely knocked out the army from politics.

It was a great achievement because from the very beginning in 1924 military was powerful in politics and among the public and they never compromised on their role in politics and other civil institutions. Even they established their regimes and controlled democratic government. But now the situation has changed completely, the democratic government has entirely overcome the anti-democratic actors. The influence of the Turkish army has been reduced in politics because the political awareness in public is high. The economic condition is a big hurdle in military intervention because, in the international community, military governments are not acceptable especially if Turkey wishes to become a member of the European Union because the process of membership in the European Union demands a liberal democratic style of government. It is most important for the integrity of the country that elected governments do their work and not be intervened by the military and judiciary.

In the past, the military and judiciary had been intervening in politics and they crossed the limits. The Turkish elected government could not work freely even could not complete its time framework. Internal issues remained unsolved, even the Kurdistan problem remained unsolved. The basic rights were suspended so the problems remained in the status quo and time and opportunities were wasted. Although the constitution of 1982 given by the military government assured that this constitution will provide the basic rights to the nation:

- i. There will be freedom of religion for every citizen
- ii. There will be political freedom
- iii. Right to own property
- iv. Right to choice of profession
- v. Freedom of speech and public opinion
- vi. Right to liberty and life

All these rights were given in the democratic government when Justice and Development Party came into power. They worked for the economic and social development of the people that is why they got success in elections every time and made government. This was the public who came to the street to protect the democratic government from the military rebellion as they knew that the success and development of decades will be wasted. It was the government of the Justice and Development Party that came to power in 2002 and economic and social development started. They adopted a balanced approach in foreign policy and reshaped it on new grounds and benefited from the world community. One great achievement was the payment of loans to the International Monetary Fund and other monetary institutions. Economic development improved the living standard of the common man, so the Turkish nation supported the decision of the AK Party and rejected the military coup.

## 5.4 External Implication

Different consequences became the major reasons for the military coup on 15 July 2016. One of them was the transformation of Turkish foreign policy which was established in 2002 when the AK Party came into power and the foreign policy advisor of Erdogan, Ahmet Davatuglo started to transform the Turkish foreign policy and in 2020 the process of transformation continued. An anti-West element in the transformation of Turkish foreign policy has become an important element. It is perceived commonly that the United States is a supporter of military coups. In the past, in the political history of Turkey, there are many examples of military interventions directly and indirectly and these types of interventions were supported by the United States. In 2013, the United States favoured the military coup led by general Fateh Al Sisi in Egypt against the elected government.

There is a general belief established in the Muslim world especially in the Middle East region that the United States does not support democracy in the Muslim States, rather it supports authoritarian regimes for its interest in the region. In Syria, the United States supported the Syrian branch of the PKK Kurds fighter group. This made the public approach negative against the United States and in the past, the United States supported the military interventions in Turkey and gave economic support to the military governments to make them successful.

After the military coup when the Turkish president demanded to hand over Gulen to Turkey, the United States did not cooperate with the government leading to the doubtful role of the United States in this military venture against the democratically elected government of the Justice and Development Party.

The military failed coup further disturbed the relations not only with the United States but also with the Western world. When Justice and Development Party came into power, they first applied the zero-problem policy with the neighbours and they also clarified the Turkish role as a bridge between the Muslim world (East) and the West. But in recent years after 2016, the relations started to dwindle.

The gap between Turkey and the West became wider due to various issues including; the Turkish stance against Israel on the Palestinian conflict, the Freedom Falotaila crisis, the Turkish role in the civil war in Syria, the Turkish role in Libya and the Turkish favour to Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt against the military government of Sisi, Turkish-Greece disturbed relations, Turkish-French unideal relations on French governments extremist policies against the Muslim community in France, And Turkish role in Armenia and Azerbaijan war started on 27 September 2020 to 10th November 2020. All these events widened the gap between the Western and Turkish governments.

Turkey's foreign policy which had numerous objectives of economic and social development fell victim to the antagonistic policies of the US and the Western states. The AK Party made the government in 2002 at the time when the US and NATO had already launched a war against terrorism after the incidents of 9/11 in 2001. The war against terrorism affected the whole Islamic world. Ahmet Davutoglu had evolved a foreign policy for Turkey but the turbulence in the politics of the Middle East shoddily jolted Turkish foreign policy. On the issue of Syria, Russian-Turkey relations kept dwindling. Turkey fired down Russian Jet Plan but Erdogan and Putin's judicious decisions saved the relations between the two states from getting shoddier.

The political crisis in Libya generated tension between France and Turkey. The Turkish and Greek ties are also not fine. During Azerbaijan's war with Armenia, Turkey openly supported Azerbaijan which was an unfriendly gesture towards the West.

## **CHAPTER 06**

### **CONCLUSION**

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### CONCLUSION

In the present position, any state cannot do without relations with the other states. In this international politics, every state makes its entrance into the international community to get its interests or to secure these interests. In world politics, it becomes imperative for a state to go along with other states. And it is also a fact that states can achieve their interests through relations with other states while these relations cannot be developed without affecting the characteristics of the nation, institution, resolution and conscience of the other nation. The foreign policy of any state is framed in the light of circumstances and events not measured by emotions and slogans.

A lot of literature has been produced on Turkish foreign policy. Its basic reason is the changing political trends and the dynamic policy of Turkey. Two captions have been under repeated discussion in Turkey:

- 1) Islamism
- 2) Authoritarianism

To some experts, these two points are significant as they have a pivotal role in the formation of Turkish foreign policy or its behaviour in international affairs.

According to research conducted on the Turkish foreign policy, it is better to divide the foreign policy of Turkey into two halves for a better understanding;

- Democratic/Balance Foreign Policy
- Islamism dominated/De-westernized Foreign Policy

Turkish political history has covered a long journey from secularism /Kemalism to Islamism very successfully. This state has got changes internally and externally as well. When Justice and Development Party took the control of Turkish affairs for the first time, world politics was also passing through the transition. The 9/11 incident in the US has changed world politics completely, as this tragic incident affected the political, economic and social structure of the world. After 9/11, the Bush administration took the entire Islamic world with an iron hand. In continuation of their policy against terror, they attacked Afghanistan in 2001 to remove the Taliban regime and Iraq in 2003 to remove the government of Saddam Hussain.

Justice and Development Party newly had to face a lot of issues soon after coming to power. The thought and publications of Ahmet Davutoglu, the ex-foreign minister and prime minister show that he was desirous for Pan-Islamism. Being the architect of new Turkish foreign policy, he formed a foreign policy of Turkey free from Westernization, Arab Nationalism, Secularism and Socialism so that Turkey may bring newness in its foreign affairs and have good relations with the regional states. Another great wish behind foreign policy transformation was that Turkey should play its role as a regional power. In the South Caucasian region, Turkey played the role of regional power in the recent war on Nagorno Karabakh and hence showed a strong hegemony.

The other side of the picture is that Turkey got such status not by using Islamism but due to strong criticism of US and Western policies all over the world and especially by unveiling the dual face of the US in the Middle East politics. Moreover, Turkey also criticized Israel over Gaza blocked policy. In addition to this, the Turkish government won the favour of the entire Muslim Umah by

highlighting the issues of the Islamic world on different international platforms. Turkey gained much favour by supporting Muslim Brotherhood and opposing the military coup of Abdel Fattah el Sisi in Egypt.

In 2002, Justice and Development Party took the helm of affairs, when it began to work on new Turkish foreign policy. As the political environment of the world was changing rapidly such was the case of the internal politics of Turkey. In Turkish politics, there were politicians like Necmettin Erbakan who broke new ground in Turkey. The politics of Turkey which started with Kemalism reached up to political Islamization.

In the modern politics of the Justice and Development Party in Turkish politics, this element of Islamization remained dominant since 2002. The government of the Justice and Development Party decided at the time of the formation of the new Turkish foreign policy that without disturbing the internal political affairs, the interests of Turkey will be defended. Kemal Ata Turk brought out big changes in Turkish politics which transformed the whole political structure of Turkey and its social set-up. It was also a difficult task because Necmettin Erbakan already fell prey to secular powers (Turkish Army and Dummy Judiciary) many times.

Time and interest are the two vital factors at the time of forming foreign policy. It is the key principle in the world of politics that enmity and friendship are not permanent. Changing environments and interests bring sweeping changes. The foreign policy of Turkey, after 1924, was in accordance with the situation caused by the First World War.

That is why Turkey remained busy with the attainment of its economic and military interests avoiding any clashes during the Inter-War Period. In 1939, before the advent of the Second World War, Turkey settled its many issues with the West through successful diplomacy. Turkey manifested its neutral behaviour during Second World War. The secular leadership of that time was busy strengthening the economy and political institutions. This was the sole cause that Kemal Ata Turk preferred to nurture good relations with the US and the West.

Suddenly after the end of the Second World War in 1945, the era of the Cold War started. At that time, Europe was left battered by the storms of the distorted economy because Europe remained an arena for wars and conflicts. Even the bigger imperialistic powers like Britain, France and Germany were much affected. These states required a lot of time to normalize while the US emerged as a strong and stable economy because of the US isolation policy. Likewise, the US involved itself in Second World War in 1941 when Japan made an air attack on Pearl Harbour port. From the very beginning of the cold war, the Soviet Union tried its best to disseminate communist ideology. It was at that time communism was likely to spread in Europe.

So the US offered services by helping financially several states under the Marshall Plan in 1948 while Turkey was also among the aid recipient states. In this way in the beginning Turkey lost its neutral status. Further to strengthen itself and for the attainment of economic and military aid, Turkey joined the US and the Western block. The main reason for ending its neutrality was that the US was a strong power and it was apparent that the Western countries would get economic strength in future. But very soon a gap appeared in the relations between Turkey

and the Soviet Union. The Turkish foreign policymakers were convinced to join NATO and the debate ended on whether Turkey's foreign policy is neutral or not.

This trend of Turkish foreign policy lingered on for a long time and Turkey felt proud to be a Western state. But time and circumstances changed and in comparison, to secular and pro-Western powers, other political parties including Islamic parties surfaced. In such circumstances, the biggest resistance force was Erbakan. After remaining in politics, he changed the mindset that Turkey has no choice other than the US and the West.

Afterwards, Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul were introduced by Erbakan in the politics of Turkey. This group formed Justice and Development Party in 2001 and ultimately came into power in 2002. At this stage, the transformation process appeared in Turkish foreign policy as Ameht Davatoglu framed a new Turkish foreign policy. Turkey also chalked out a balanced foreign policy so that Turkey may start its trade from neighbouring states and then up to the African region and play a crucial role in world politics. In continuation of this, Turkey wanted to play a role of a viaduct between the Islamic world and the West.

But in world politics, Turkey intends to lead the Islamic world and the other countries entangled itself in various issues. Turkey openly refused to support any military action of the US, especially against the Muslim countries. Such a stance became the basis for the transformation process in Turkish foreign policy. This step helped Turkey to stand with confidence in the politics of the Middle East. The Middle East remained a nucleus for political activities from the cold war era among the big powers. This region is historically significant, but some factors which made this region politically important are:

- Black gold (Petroleum)
- Sea routes
- Religious Importance
- Palestine conflict
- Arab Spring (later on converted into civil wars)

Since its inception, Justice and Development Party faced many challenges in this region and the politics of this region influenced Turkey very much. From the transformation process in Turkish foreign policy, Arab Spring is an important tool. This emerged from Tunisian Street and covered all the Middle East and changed into civil wars; circumstances of Egypt Syria and Libya are living examples. It affected Turkish internal and external politics. Turkish relations with the other states did not remain normal. Further Turkey left Zero Problem Policy and began to exhibit aggressive behaviour. These aggressive policies of Turkey disturbed relations not only with the Middle Eastern states but also with the US and the Western states.

Even in the present time, Turkey is facing a lot of issues and challenges. Now the future will decide how the policymakers of Turkey would solve these issues and face the challenges. The recent challenges still exist as in 2021 Turkish forces are still there in Syria, Libya and Northern Iraq for proxy wars. For these reasons, Turkey is enhancing its military capabilities.

While on the other hand, due to the oil and gas exploration survey in the Mediterranean Sea, Turkey and Greece are at daggers drawn. Along with Greece France also came face to face with Turkey, while on Islamophobia; Turkey and France had no good relations, and even now confusion becomes worsened. On

such issues, the EU has also shown grievances. These factual events show that Turkish membership in the EU is fluctuating.

Internally, Turkey has also been facing various challenges and is wisely resolving them. Among these challenges, the biggest one is the decline in economic progress and military involvement in politics. Moreover, the Kurd issue is yet to resolve. But besides all, Turkey is busy gaining its interests successfully. Recently, in the South Caucasian region in the Azerbaijan and Armenia war, the solid decision of Turkey in favour of Azerbaijan took big powers by surprise.

Now the current ruling party is showing leniency in its attitude on the matter of foreign policy. It is now really taking steps to promote good relations with the neighbouring states. The Turkish government of the Justice and Development Party has adopted a reconciliation attitude toward Saudi Arabia and Egypt as there have been complex relations with Saudi Arabia on the Qatar boycott issue and with Egypt on the military coup of Abdel Fattah el Sisi for a long time. Turkey has now decided that for economic progress good relations with other and neighbouring states are inevitable, that is why Turkey wants to lessen its tensions with the West. Further, for the betterment of its relations with Greece and France, Turkey closed its project of exploration of oil and gas. While on the other hand, Turkey is very much scrupulous in its relations with Russia and Ukraine keeping their tension in view, likewise, Turkey has intended to develop a balanced approach in its relations with US and China. The government of the Justice and Development party wants to develop a friendly attitude with the majority of the states.

After 2002, the transformation process occurred in Turkish foreign policy and 2013 showed its strict attitude toward the West. But Turkey is revising its attitude with the other states due to socio-economic pressure. Justice and Development Party is showing that Turkey is extending its friendly relations for the attainment of its interests as per the hope of the entire nation. For this purpose, the US, Russia, China, EU and the Arab world are the desired states for relations. Not to talk of the US and the West, Turkey will not ignore even the African region for its interests. If Turkey wishes to play a key role in international politics, it should establish its diplomatic ties with other nations. This is very imperative for the Turkish foreign affairs department because the world is a global village and there is a complex interdependency in relations.

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