The Impact of Iraq on Turkey-US Relations

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ABSTRACT

This research assesses how Iraq as an external factor influenced, shaped and altered intra-alliance relations between Turkey and the US between 1990 and 2003. It develops an integrative foreign policy model of Turkey-US intra-alliance behaviour with a specific focus on the parameters that enable security cooperation between Turkey and the US on Middle Eastern issues. It studies Turkey's cooperative and non-cooperative relations with the US vis-à-vis Iraq in three major phases: During the 1990 Gulf Crisis and 1991 Gulf War and their immediate aftermath, Turkey and the US shared a common understanding of the nature and urgency of the threat Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait posed to their national interests, and on the requisite strategy to deal with that threat. Between 1991 and 2001, it became apparent that the unintended economic, political and strategic consequences of the conflict in the Gulf had disproportionately affected Turkey's interests, creating serious dilemmas for Turkey-US relations, while both countries closely cooperated on Northern Iraq, albeit with different motivations. From the inauguration of the Bush-Cheney administration in 2001 to 1 March 2003, when the Turkish Parliament refused to allow the opening up of a northern front through Turkey for the US invasion of Iraq, Turkey diverged entirely from the US over the level and urgency of the threat from Iraq and also the devised US strategy for a military solution, but attempted to pursue a policy of unwilling cooperation in the hope of preserving the alliance and indirectly securing its interests in the future of Iraq without compromising domestic stability. The research thus tests its integrative foreign policy model on an empirical case study of Turkey-US relations, and thereby aims to contribute to the academic understanding of intra alliance behaviour.

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INTRODUCTION

For over five decades, the relationship between Turkey and the United States (US) has often been defined either to reflect Turkey's position in the Western alliance as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or its role in the international system. The richness of the terminology used to describe the relationship is an indication of its complex, dynamic, and multi-layered character of the relations themselves, which have often required an innovative approach as their geopolitical context has changed. In the Cold War era, the most commonly used terms were 'staunch NATO member' or 'long-standing and dependable ally', while the 1990s and post 9/11 period saw the rise of terms such as 'enhanced partnership', 'strategic partner', and 'model partnership.' [1] This multiplicity of terms indicates the convergence and divergence of the two countries' foreign and security policy objectives and national interests on many regional and international issues, as well as in their characteristic approaches to the international system, both individually and in concert with one another.

Throughout the Cold War, consecutive US administrations assigned Turkey a crucial role in containing the Soviet Union. Turkey was a strategic asset in US policy during the East-West rivalry due to its position as a frontline country in the Western bloc. [2] On the Turkish side, the decision to join the Western security bloc after the Second World War was a result of the need to balance the Soviet threat. Soviet territorial demands, driven particularly by Joseph Stalin, forced Turkey to seek refuge in the Western

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[1] Respectively: Intervention by Secretary of State James A. Baker II at the Special Session of NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC), 10 August 1990; President Clinton and Turkish Prime Minister Çiller, Opening Statements at a News Conference, The US and Turkey: Developing an Enhanced Relationship, Washington DC, 15 October 1993, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no44.html; Statement by the Press Secretary, Prime Minister of Turkey to Visit Washington, 20 December 2001, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=79279; President Bush Meets with President Gül of Turkey, 8 January 2008, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/01/20080108-3.html; White House, B. Obama, Remarks to the Turkish Parliament, 6 April 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-President-Obama-To-The-Turkish-Parliament/; Bruce R. Kuniholm, 'Turkey and the West', *Foreign Affairs*, 70:2 (1991), pp.34-48; Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), p.xi.

[2] Cf. Mark R. Parris, 'Starting Over: US-Turkish Relations in the Post-Iraq War Era', *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, 2:1 (2003), pp.1-9; Mark R. Parris, afterword to *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present and Future*, by Mustafa Aydın and Çağrı Erhan (eds.) (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), pp.252-253; Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p.1; Kramer, *Changing Turkey*, p.202; Zalmay Khalilzad, Ian O. Lesser, and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Future of Turkish-Western Relations: Towards a Strategic Plan* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000), pp.79-80; Kuniholm, 'Turkey and the West'.

alliance. The convergence of Turkish and Western security interests thus served the collective defence interests of the transatlantic alliance. Turkey's commitment to the Western security cause and its pro-Western vocation were mutually reinforcing objectives that both led to a prominent role within NATO,[3] and also facilitated the country's efforts to integrate into European structures.[4]

In the late 1980s, profound changes in the international system brought about a significant change in Turkey's strategic environment.[5] The end of the Cold War removed the overarching threat to the Western alliance without any immediate replacement,[6] and Turkey felt the impact of these changes in the international setting relatively early on.[7] For Ankara, the pressing issue was to assess the implications of the conciliation between the East and West, and determine Turkey's new international circumstances. The broader question was of the effect these changes would have on Turkey's strategic importance and value for the transatlantic alliance;[8] particularly regarding Ankara's relations with Washington. Turkey retained a strong interest in close ties and an alliance with the US for political, economic, and security reasons.[9] Ankara had to re-evaluate how the unparalleled geopolitical shift and the end of its traditional containment role would undermine the 'core concept'[10] of its relations with the US. In the early 1990s, Turkey was uneasy about the 'political and military value of the existing alliance,'[11] facing the question of whether the special bilateral relationship with the US would be deprived of its strategic importance in the absence of a commonly felt and clearly defined security threat to the Western alliance.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 had far-reaching consequences for the international system and the Middle East, and returned Turkey to the strategic forefront.

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[3] Graham E. Fuller, *From Eastern Europe to Western China: The Growing Role of Turkey in the World and Its Implications for Western Interests* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1993), p.5; Nasuh Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2003), pp.1-5.

[4] Gülnur Aybet, *A European Security Architecture after the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy* (London: Macmillan, 2000), pp.1-2; Gülnur Aybet and Meltem Müftüler-Baç, 'Transformations in Security and Identity after the Cold War: Turkey's Problematic Relationship with Europe', *International Journal*, 55:4 (2000), pp.567-582.

[5] For a detailed analysis of Turkey's role in NATO and its relations with the West, see Kuniholm, 'Turkey and West'.

[6] Makovsky and Sayari, *Turkey's New World*, pp.1-2.

[7] Fuller, *Eastern Europe*, p.1.

[8] James Brown, 'Turkey in the Age of Glasnost', *Current History*, 89: 550 (1990), pp.377-394; Duygu B. Sezer, 'Turkey's Security Policy: Challenges of Adaptation to the Post-INF Era', *RUSI Journal*, 134: 4 (1989), pp.47-54; Sabri Sayari, 'Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis', *Middle East Journal*, 46:1 (1992), pp.9-21.

[9] Nüzhet Kandemir, interviewed by author, Ankara, 5 November 2009.

[10] The term 'core concept' is borrowed from Mark Parris, US Ambassador to Ankara, 1997-2000.

[11] Kramer, *Changing Turkey*, p.20.

Turkey's crucial role in the allied coalition during the Gulf War set a new bilateral agenda and became a milestone in the reorientation of Turkey-US relations. The subsequent Turkey-US cooperation vis-à-vis Iraq endured for over a decade and redefined the strategic utility of their alliance. Consequently, the US perception of Turkey as a geopolitically important strategic ally evolved into that of a reliable partner in producing stability and security across the Middle East and Eurasia. However, in the decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Iraq was one of the most significant external factors that shaped the Turkey-US agenda.

1. Historical Focus

This research intends to analyse the parameters of security cooperation between Turkey and the US on issues related to the Middle East. To this end, it will undertake an empirical study of how Iraq became the central issue in Turkey-US relations between 1990 and 2003, analysing how policy was made and what roles key individuals played over three major phases of contemporary history.

The first of these phases is the period between the invasion of Kuwait and the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War in April 1991. Here, the research examines the evolution of the factors that shaped and influenced Turkey-US policies vis-à-vis Iraq during the Persian Gulf crisis. This period is key for the impact of Iraq on Turkey-US relations as it marked the transition from the end of the Cold War to the establishment of a new international paradigm defined as the new world order. During this period, Turkey strategically aligned with the US, immediately denounced Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, called for the restoration of Kuwaiti sovereignty, swiftly joined the international coalition, implemented the UN sanctions against Iraq, and allowed the US-led multinational force to use its bases for operations during the war.

The second phase runs from April 1991 to the inauguration of the Bush administration in 2001. Here, the analysis deals with the unintended consequences of the Gulf War and the dilemmas they created for Turkey in its relations with the US. During this period, the two countries cooperated closely on Iraq, albeit with different motivations. As the containment of Saddam Hussein and his regime emerged as a top priority for Washington, Turkey remained an essential US partner in both essential elements of that strategy: ensuring that Iraq complied with all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions (UNSCRs) and military deterrence through Operation Provide Comfort (OPC) and later Operation Northern Watch (ONW), which enforced the no-fly

zone (NFZ) over Northern Iraq from the Turkish base at İncirlik. However, although Ankara's role in US strategy against Saddam's regime now became even more pertinent than its contribution during the Gulf Crisis and War, supporting the US strategy of containment also posed major challenges for Turkey. Firstly, The Turkish economy suffered severe losses due to the open-ended international sanctions imposed on Iraq. Secondly, the military component of the US strategy eventually resulted in Baghdad's limited sovereignty over Northern Iraq, and Saddam's total withdrawal from the region in October 1991 created a political power vacuum in the region. The terrorist campaign of the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) from its safe base of operations in Northern Iraq compelled Turkey to carry out several cross-border military operations, which incurred heavy diplomatic costs. Turkey faced a third and related challenge in the emergence of a de facto Iraqi Kurdish state in Northern Iraq with its implications for separatist Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. Paradoxically, while Turkey opposed these efforts at state-creation, it also had to co-lead the mediation with the US during the intermittent clashes between the main Iraqi Kurdish parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan (PUK); a conflict which also enabled the PKK to expand its presence in Northern Iraq. Despite all these dilemmas, Turkey continued to support the policy of containment in line with the perception that cooperation with the US on Iraq suited broader Turkish interests. Nevertheless, the tangible costs of supporting the containment policy created a legacy of discontent and resentment in Turkey.

The third phase covers the period from the inauguration of President Bush in 2001 to 1 March 2003 when the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*) refused to allow the US to open up a 'northern front' through Turkey during its invasion of Iraq. This decision became a diplomatic milestone and moved Turkey-US relations into a new strategic context in which Iraq became a real source of controversy, jeopardising the very essence of the Turkey-US strategic partnership.

2. Scope of the Research

Turkey's behaviour during this last period has sparked a policy debate reassessing the strategic utility of Turkey-US cooperation and a re-modelling of the foundation upon which Turkey-US ties had been based for fifty years. Therefore, an analysis of the impact of Iraq as an external factor and the extent to which it dominated and influenced Turkey-US relations during this period is an essential component of any redefinition and understanding of the future orientation of the Turkey-US alliance.

Through an empirical analysis of the extent to which Iraq influenced, shaped, and altered traditional patterns Turkey-US relations between 1990 and 2003, this study aims to develop a conceptual model of when and how Turkey and the US have security cooperation on issues related to the Middle East. The integrative model focuses specifically on the parameters that produce security cooperation and non-cooperation between the two countries vis-à-vis the Middle East, which is intended as a theoretical basis for studying the subject matter. At the same time, the examination of the influence of Iraq as an external factor in intra-alliance relations from 1990 to 2003 offers empirical cases through which to test the real-world and policy relevance of the theoretical framework. Thus, within the broader discipline of international relations, this research aims to contribute to a theoretical understanding of one of the most enduring Cold War era alliances and to the political history of the periods under study.

Within this structure, the research will address the following two categories of questions. The first category relates to the conceptual framework, asking: Is it possible to build, on the basis of alliance theory, a coherent integrative model that would incorporate sub-systemic/unit-level causal factors into the systemic structure? To what extent would such a model, integrating the international and domestic sources of state behaviour, successfully apply to Turkey's actions with its ally the US vis-à-vis the Middle East in general and Iraq in particular? Could such a model explore and analyse the parameters of how to get Turkey-US security cooperation on Middle Eastern issues? Could such a model serve as the basis for explaining Turkey's cooperative and non-cooperative behaviour towards the US regarding Iraq during the Gulf crisis, its aftermath and the US invasion of 2003?

The second category of question deals with the nature of Turkey-US relations, asking: What dynamics have been significant in Turkey-US relations since World War II? How did this relationship materialise vis-à-vis issues that fell outside of the NATO framework, namely those in the Middle East? How did Turkey and the US manage common and conflicting interests within this alliance? What was the role of Iraq from 1991 onwards as an 'external factor' in the Turkey-US alliance? What was the strategic rationale for Turkey-US cooperation in Iraq? How did the period between 1991 and 2003 influence Turkey-US approaches to Iraq and the TBMM's decision to refuse to allow the US to open a second front in the Iraq War? What were the implications of Turkey's decision for Turkey-US relations?

The integrated model derived over the course of this research may be applied both to cases that relate to Turkey-US relations vis-à-vis the Middle East and within wider Turkey-US relations, though the latter would need to be tested against relevant empirical cases, which falls beyond the focus of this research.

3. Literature Review

Analysing the impact of Iraq on Turkey-US relations is necessarily an interdisciplinary enterprise drawing on a broad range of topics and subfields in international relations. Firstly, it requires study of the theoretical background, especially alliance theory and neoclassical realism. Secondly, the literature on the general foreign policy dynamics of Turkey and the US must be explored. It also requires examination of the relevant academic literature on the broader Iraqi question, the Iraqi Kurds and their politics. Therefore, this review of the literature is grouped under six subheadings: i) Alliance theory and neoclassical realism, ii) Turkish foreign policy in general; iii) Turkey-US relations; iv) Turkey's policies towards the Middle East, Iraq and the Iraqi Kurds; v) the broader Kurdish question and Northern Iraq; and, vi) other sources, such as the memoirs of the decision makers.

i) Alliance Theory and Neoclassical Realism

The central objective in developing theoretical models is to explain the behaviour and foreign policy formulation of states. The realist and structural realist paradigms provide powerful tools from which to develop applicable conceptual models. However, the model developed here will also draw on the insights of alliance theory and of neoclassical realism.[12] In doing so, it will take into account micro and unit-level factors, such as statesmen's perceptions of the relative cost and benefit of particular strategies, and the influence of domestic political concerns on state behaviour at the systemic level. This section will briefly assess the literature on the major tenets and shortcomings of alliance theory and neoclassical realists' attempts to introduce unit-level factors into neorealist structural-level analysis.

First of all, there is considerable theoretical debate in international relations theory on the mechanics of alliance formulation, politics, and management. Walt posits that the causes of alliances and alignment are central questions when examining the patterns of

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[12] For overviews of the relative validity and institutional position of the different strands of international relations theory, see Jack L. Snyder, 'One World, Rival Theories', *Foreign Policy*, 145 (2004), pp.55-62, and Stephen M. Walt, 'International Relations: One World, Many Theories', *Foreign Policy*, 110 (1988), pp.29-46.

foreign policies of states.[13] He also presents an explanation of what determines states' choice of allies,[14] which is shared by G. H. Snyder.[15] Kenneth N. Waltz, on the other hand, formulates a powerful systemic theory and addresses the issue of state behaviour at the international/systemic level by conceptualising 'balance-of-power' theory as a natural outcome of interstate rivalry, whereby states pool their strength through alliances to restore a more balanced international distribution of power.[16] Walt introduces a 'balance-of-threat' proposition to replace the balance-of-power theory.[17] According to him, the primary motivation of states in forming an alliance relationship is to unite members' means to continue furthering their interests, especially in the security field, against external factors/threats.[18] Walt follows Waltz in defining the contrast between 'balancing' and 'bandwagoning' hypotheses within the balance-of-threat framework.[19] Randall L. Schweller, however, criticizes the balance-of-threat proposition and introduces 'balance-of-interests' theory, arguing that states, whether threatened or unthreatened, respond not only to threats but also to opportunities in their environment.[20]

Most significantly for this study, Snyder's work on alliances expands neorealist theory, contending that alliances emerge due to the 'security dilemma' in an anarchic international structure in which states fundamentally seek to secure their survival. However, Snyder's deductive theory posits that, while the primary objective of an alliance is to 'gain security against an opponent,'[21] alliance formation is based on a 'cost-benefit' analysis.[22] For him, bandwagoning is not a form of concession through which states subjugate themselves to more powerful states' demands but simply a form

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[13] Stephen M. Walt, 'Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power', *International Security*, 9:4 (1985), pp.3-43.

[14] Stephen M. Walt, 'Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia', *International Organization,* 42:2 (1988), pp.275-316.

[15] Glenn H. Snyder, 'Alliances, Balance and Stability', *International Organization,* 45:1 (1991), pp.121-142.

[16] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1979), pp.121-122; Kenneth N. Waltz, 'International Politics Is Not Foreign Policy', *Security Studies*, 6:1 (1996), pp.54-57; Kenneth N. Waltz, 'Evaluating Theories', *American Political Science Review*, 91:4 (1997), pp.913-917.

[17] Cf. Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths and Models* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp.169-170.

[18] Stephen M. Walt, 'Alliances in a Unipolar World', *World Politics*, 61:1 (2009), pp.86-120; Stephen M. Walt, 'The Progressive Power of Realism', *American Political Science Review*, 91:4 (1997), pp.931-935; Walt, 'Alliance Formation', pp.3-43.

[19] Walt, 'Alliance Formation', pp.3-43.

[20] Randall L. Schweller, 'New Realist Research on Alliances: Refining Not Refuting Waltz's Balancing Proposition', *American Political Science Review*, 91:4 (1997), pp.927-930.

[21] Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997), p.320.

[22] Snyder, *Alliance Politics,* pp.43-44.

of allying behaviour.[23] As he succinctly observes, the management of an alliance involves 'pursuing both common interests (to preserve the alliance) and competitive interests (maintaining the benefits of the alliance).' The relationship thus proceeds through intra-alliance bargaining; 'in such a way as to maximize joint benefits and minimize costs to one's independent interests.'[24] He also addresses how alliance partners deal with long-term management of the alliance, especially in terms of the 'alliance security dilemma'; namely, the tension between fears of abandonment and entrapment.[25] Abandonment is a defection that can take several forms; realignment with an opponent, de-alignment, termination of the alliance, or failure to meet explicit commitments. Entrapment, on the other hand, denotes conflict on behalf of an ally's interests; that is, unintentional participation in conflict against an opponent for the sake of preserving the alliance, the value of which surpasses the cost of fighting for the ally's interests.[26] The most significant determinants of state behaviour in the alliance security dilemma are thus the degree of dependence on the alliance, the perception of each other's dependence, and the strategic interests that the parties have in defending each other. Additional factors are the explicitness of the alliance agreement and the degree to which the allies share interests that are in conflict with the adversary.[27] When a state is more dependent on its ally (asymmetrical dependence), it is more likely to face the pressures of abandonment, and will therefore extend its support to the partner despite the risk of becoming entrapped. In essence, the risk of abandonment will outweigh the costs and risks of entrapment.[28] In this case, a strategy of strong commitment and support for the alliance, and seeking assurances in this regard, leads to less fear of abandonment. However, as this strategy brings with it the unintended consequence of reducing bargaining leverage over the ally, it increases the risk of entrapment. In such a strategy, the ally is able to exploit this support and commitment to advance its own interests. In contrast, distancing oneself from the ally offers increased bargaining power and avoids entrapment, but might lead to abandonment. Due to the inverse relationship between the risks of abandonment and entrapment, the choice of strategy to resolve the alliance security dilemma involves a comparison and trade-off between the relative

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[23] Ibid., p.160.
[24] Ibid., pp.165-166.
[25] See, Glenn H. Snyder, 'The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics', *World Politics*, 36:4 (1984), pp.461-495; Glenn H. Snyder, 'Mearsheimer's World-Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security', *International Security*, 27:1 (2002), pp.149-173; Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p.307; Randall L. Schweller, *Review of Alliance Politics*, by Glenn H. Snyder, *Political Science Quarterly*, 113:3 (1998), pp.513-514.
[26] Snyder, *Alliance Politics,* pp. 180-182; Snyder, 'Security Dilemma';
[27] Ibid.
[28] Andrew Bennet, Joseph Lepgold, Danny Unger, 'Burden-Sharing in the Persian Gulf War', *International Organization*, 48:1 (1994), p.41.

costs and risks of both choices.[29] In short, the alliance security dilemma is 'mostly a function of tension' between these related risks.[30] Unlike in Waltz's structural approach, Snyder highlights that fears of abandonment and entrapment are largely contingent upon 'the statesmen's perception of these variables.'[31] Also significant is Charles A. Kupchan's emphasis on the coercive potential of the alliance leader's ability to exact cooperative behaviour from its weaker partners as the defining contributory factor to the alliance security dilemma.[32]

A further discussion concerns the relative influence of unit- and system-level factors in state behaviour and foreign policy formulation. The issue here is whether the neorealist focus on systemic-level factors has sufficient explanatory power when analysing state behaviour.[33] For this purpose, one of the limitations of structural realism and alliance theory is their emphasis on systemic conditions as the primary determinant of state behaviour and motivation. This is revealed in a disagreement among structural realists on the 'the relative importance of domestic versus system-level causes.'[34] William Curti Wohlforth notes that many critiques underline the 'lack of correlation between independent and dependent variables' as a significant weakness of realist theories.[35] Barry Buzan argues that the explanation of international events cannot be tied to either the systemic or the unit level alone, since all levels interact with each other.[36] Yet, as Fareed Zakaria observes, inter-state relations and domestic politics remain beyond the

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[29] Synder, 'Security Dilemma', p.467; Snyder, 'Mearsheimer's World-Offensive Realism', p.165
[30] Snyder, 'Security Dilemma', p.484
[31] Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p.308.
[32] Charles A. Kupchan, 'NATO and the Persian Gulf: Examining Intra-Alliance Behavior', *International Organization*, 42:2 (1988), pp. 317-346.
[33] Waltz, 'Evaluating Theories'. There is vigorous debate among scholars on the validity of the neorealist paradigm and its compatibility with foreign policy. For critical approaches, see Waltz, 'International Politics'; Kenneth N. Waltz, 'Neorealism: Confusions and Criticisms', *Journal of Politics and Society*, 15 (2004); Robert O. Keohane, 'Realism, Neorealism and the Study of World Politics', in Robert O. Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp.1-26, cited in T. S. Mowle, 'Worldviews in Foreign Policy: Realism, Liberalism, and External Conflict', *Political Psychology,* 24:3 (2003), pp.561-592. On the other hand, Colin Elman, makes a compelling case for neorealist theory's compatibility with foreign policy; See Colin Elman, 'Horses for Courses: Why Not Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy?', *Security Studies*, 6:1 (1996), pp.7-53; Colin Elman, 'Cause, Effect, and Consistency: A Response to Kenneth Waltz', *Security Studies*, 6:1 (1996), pp.58-61; John J. Mearsheimer, 'Reckless States and Realism', *International Relations*, 23:2 (2009), p.241; John J. Mearsheimer, 'Conversations in International Relations: Interview with John J. Mearsheimer (Parts I & II)', *International Relations*, 20:2 (2006), pp.105-243
[34] Walt, 'Progressive Power of Realism', p.933
[35] William Curti Wohlforth, 'Realism and the End of Cold War', *International Security*, 19:3 (1994-1995), pp.91-129, p.93
[36] Barry Buzan, 'The Level of Analysis Problem Reconsidered', in Ken Booth and Steve Smith (eds.), *International Relations Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp.198-215.

realm of the realist approach.[37] For Robert Powell, a related weakness of structural realism is that it takes the units' preferences for possible actions and outcomes as given.[38] As Robert Jervis notes, security policy studies highlight that realism needs to be supplemented by an account of the ideas that guide decision-makers to achieve their objectives.[39]

In the late 1990s, neoclassical realism emerged to overcome this limitation by offering a model that combined the interaction between system-level and unit-level factors.[40] This paradigm dissolves the distinction between structural and foreign policy analyses and focuses on the interaction between the domestic sources of foreign policy and the structure of the international system.[41] Gideon Rose contends that the making of foreign policy is a result of the choices made by actual leaders and policy elites, and that it is thus their perceptions of relative power, threats, and interests that matter.[42] Similarly, Zakaria underscores the critical influence of domestic politics on foreign policy,[43] arguing that statesmen, rather than the states, are the primary actors in international affairs and that their perceptions of power matter in formulation of foreign policy preference.[44] Schweller seeks to bridge the gap between the classical and structural realist strands, dwelling on the role of domestic politics as an intervening variable in state behaviour, and its significance for balance-of-power theory. He argues that the unit level factors—such as the internal and external considerations of policy elites, and their preferences and perceptions—play an essential role in determining how states respond to threats and opportunities, concluding that unit- and structural-level causes interact to produce systemic outcomes.[45] Jack Snyder and Thomas Christensen also construct a model of domestic politics by combining state-level and systemic-level analyses. They contend that non-systemic elements—such as domestic politics, the leaders' calculations of the balance of power, perceptions, ideology, and other factors—play a major role in

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[37] Fareed Zakaria, 'Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay', *International Security*, 17:1 (1992), pp.177-198.
[38] Robert Powell, 'Anarchy in International Relations Theory: The Neorealist-Neoliberal Debate', *International Organization*, 48:2 (1994), pp.313-344.
[39] Robert Jervis, 'Realism in the Study of World Politics', *International Organization,* 52:4 (1998), pp.971-991.
[40] Randall Schweller, review of *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*, by Fareed Zakaria', *The American Political Science Review*, 93:2 (1999), pp.497-499.
[41] Little, *Balance of Power,* pp.261-262.
[42] Gideon Rose, 'Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy', *World Politics*, 51:1 (1998), pp.144-172.
[43] Zakaria, 'Realism and Domestic Politics'.
[44] Schweller, review of *From Wealth to Power.*
[45] Randall L. Schweller, 'Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing'. *International Security*, 29: 2 (2004), pp.159-201.

shaping systemic choices and outcomes.[46] Similarly, Wohlforth argues that, when reacting to external conditions, state authorities are under the influence of domestic considerations and that, 'any realist discussion of international change must combine the domestic and international levels of analysis.'[47] He draws attention to the fact that definitions of interests are related to the decision-maker's assessment of power and that perceptions and expectations link power to policy. He then introduces 'an amalgam of classical realism and the hegemonic variant of neorealism coupled with a pragmatic empirical focus on decision-makers' capabilities assessments.'[48] For him, state behaviour in response to any perceived decline in relative power capabilities in the international system is mainly shaped by decision-makers' assessment of power and expectations.[49] Finally, as Samuel Barkin claims, the neoclassical realists' multi-level approach paves the way for neoclassical realism to serve as a predictive theory of foreign policy.[50]

Thus, due to the growing desire in the literature to achieve a richer concept of international politics with real-world relevance, there is an increasing focus on how and at what level state interests are defined, the domestic sources of foreign policy, and the interplay between international and domestic structures. The neoclassical realist school offers a new conceptual paradigm to explain outcomes in the international system by incorporating systemic- and unit-level factors, thus demonstrating the interaction between domestic politics and international politics as a whole.[51]

ii) Turkish Foreign Policy in General

In order to heuristically address the nature of the alliance between Turkey and the US and their respective foreign policy behaviours towards Iraq, it is necessary to identify the way in which each is conceptualised in the international system. The following critical review of the available literature aims to understand what type of actors these two states are within the remits of realist theory.

The literature argues that the US became firmly established as a military, economic and political superpower after the Cold War; perhaps a symptom of the optimism prevailed

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[46] Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, 'Progressive Research on Degenerate Alliances', *The American Political Science Review*, 91:4 (1997), pp.919-922.
[47] Wohlforth, 'Realism', p.107
[48] Ibid., p.126
[49] Ibid.
[50] Samuel Barkin, 'Realism, Prediction and Foreign Policy', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 5 (2009), pp.233-246.
[51] Ethan B. Kapstein, 'Is Realism Dead? The Domestic Sources of International Politics', *International Organization*, 49:4 (1995), pp.751-774.

in Western capitals that the US would become a truly hegemonic power in a unipolar world. Such claims again proliferated in the wake of George H.W. Bush's rhetoric of building a new world order and the two wars in Iraq that followed. However, with the changing course of events after the turn of the millennium, there emerged a new literature emphasising 'a shift in power towards the East'[52] and 'the age of non-polarity'[53] or a multipolar world. As evidence, these writers cite the rise of new power hubs in the global system such as China, Russia, the European Union (EU), India and Brazil. Nevertheless, regardless of these discussions over the precise weighting within the international system, the US remains the strongest military giant, and a huge economic and political power with immense global leverage.

In contrast, the literature tends to treat Turkey as a rather mediocre actor in the global system; a definition that suited Turkish foreign policy actors well enough until the end of the Cold War. However, subsequent developments intensified debates within Turkey about its position in the international arena and how its foreign policy should be redesigned. Arguably, this soul-searching dominated the agenda of Turkish politicians and international relations scholars during the 1990s.

Analyses of Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War period generally concentrate on Turkey's geostrategic importance and highlight its potential influence on developments in Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus. In a comprehensive and authoritative account of Turkey's foreign relations,[54] Hale surpasses that tradition in naming Turkey a 'middle power' in the international system. As a confessed realist scholar, Hale also narrates Turkish foreign policy as largely dictated by the imperatives of the international security environment. Yet, as Andrew Mango observes, Hale's study also deserves credit for relating foreign policy to the Turkish domestic scene.[55] Thanks to its broad historical perspective, Hale's study conveys the continuity, change, and evolution of foreign policy reflexes from the Ottoman period to modern Turkey.

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[52] Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008).
[53] Richard N. Haass, 'The Age of Non-Polarity: What Will Follow US Dominance?' *Foreign Affairs*, 87:3 (2008), pp.44-56.
[54] William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 3rd Edition (New York: Routledge, 2013).
[55] Andrew Mango, review of *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, by William M. Hale, *International Affairs*, 77: 2 (2001), p.457.

In the second volume of a notable collection inspired by Hale's work,[56] editor Baskın Oran employs the notion of 'strategic medium power' to describe Turkey's standing both globally and within the Turkey-US alliance. As a medium power, Turkey's room for manoeuvre and independent action is portrayed as limited and conditional. The volume divides the period 1980–2001 into two decade-long sections: '1980-90: Turkey on the Axis of the Western Bloc' and '1990-2001: Turkey on a Global Axis'. The strength of this chronology lies in the way it frames the analyses of individual events within the international and domestic contexts.

Britain's most noted expert on Turkey, Philip Robins, addresses Turkey's foreign policy after 1999 in a finely-titled study of its civilian and military 'suits and uniforms'.[57] Similarly to Hale and Oran, Robins classifies Turkey as a 'status quo power' with a firmly established westward orientation which is both 'cautious' and 'daring' in its external dealings (the latter terms are Malik Mufti's). Robins' research presents not only an outline of the making of Turkish foreign policy and the motivations behind it, but also its relationship to the Turkish public. According to Robins, Turkey's foreign policy is motivated by two factors: its Middle Eastern identity and its goal of EU membership. Robins' thematically arranged book is enriched with case studies of Turkey's bilateral relations with Israel, the Central Asian Republics, Bosnia, and Iraq after the Persian Gulf War. However, he accuses Turkey's foreign policy makers of 'normative anachronism', and uses inverted commas to refer to PKK 'terrorism', apparently to deny the reality that the PKK is internationally designated a terrorist organisation by the EU, US, UN and NATO.[58]

Reflecting on Turkey's post-Cold War behaviour, Bülent Aras offers a guide to the "new geopolitics of Eurasia" and the regional orientations of Turkey's foreign policy.[59] Unusually, Aras sees Turkey as an influential 'soft power' in the Middle East due to its dynamic and multi-dimensional foreign policy. He asserts that the transformation in the discourse and practice of Turkey's Middle East policy is a result of how Turkey's new foreign policy actors imagine and apprehend the region. This new conception of the

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[56] Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşı'ndan Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar,* Volume II: 1980-2001 (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001).
[57] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).
[58] Andrew Mango, 'Perplexed by Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 39:4 (2003), pp.206-228.
[59] Bülent Aras, *The New Geopolitics of Eurasia and Turkey's Position* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002).

region deems the traditional practice of considering all neighbours potential enemies unnecessary and sees a new opportunity for Turkey to serve as a regional leader.

Likewise, a well-organised joint study of Turkey's 'new geopolitics' by Fuller et al. addresses Turkey's geopolitics and the sphere of influence the country enjoys, from the Balkans to China.[60] Henze's section provides the reader with a general account of the linkages between domestic and foreign policy in Turkey. This work is also an argumentative sketch of the trends in Turkey's regional affairs, and Fuller presents several interesting hypotheses on Turkey's relationship with the Middle East and the former USSR. He evaluates President Turgut Özal's approach to the Gulf crisis, the Kurdish question, and Turkey's political relations with Central Asia and the Trans-Caucasus. Finally, Lesser argues that Turkey's ties to the European Union are weakening whereas its relationship with the United States is prospering.

At the turn of the millennium, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkey's current Foreign Minister and widely believed to be the architect of the sea change in Turkish foreign policy, published a monograph entitled *Strategic Depth.*[61] Defying descriptions of Turkey as a 'middle', 'medium' or 'status quo' strategic power, Davutoğlu declared his aims as 'to determine and reassess Turkey's strategic position after the Cold War' and 'to develop frameworks of strategic analysis through which alternative perspectives on the country's future may be generated.' To endorse a new foreign policy vision for Turkey, Davutoğlu provides a detailed analysis of the pre- and post- Cold War eras of Turkish foreign policy, focusing on Turkey's historical relationship with its proximate regions; not only to Anatolia but also to the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus, North Africa, and Western Asia. In the third chapter, 'Fields of Application', Davutoğlu evaluates the role and positioning of Turkey in various international organisations such as NATO, the EU, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the developing eight countries (D-8), arguing that Turkey must employ an inclusive political strategy towards those regions with which it has historical and organic ties. It is Davutoğlu's vision that has, by and large, driven the contours of Turkish foreign policy in the new millennium.

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[60] Graham E. Fuller et al., *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China* (Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 1993).
[61] Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu* (İstanbul: Küre, 2001).

iii) Turkey-US Relations

Since the 1990s, Turkey-US relations have become an increasingly popular topic among international relations experts and scholars with extensive knowledge of Turkey, Turkish foreign policy and Turkey-US relations, including Morton Abramowitz, Ian O. Lesser, Graham Fuller, Henri Barkey, Paul Henze, Alan Makovksy, Stephen Larrabee, Bruce Kuniholm, Philip Gordon, Mark Parris and Ömer Taşpınar.

In the early 1990s, works on Turkish foreign policy and Turkey-US relations generally took a realist perspective on geopolitics.[62] As Lesser notes,[63] the focus of US strategic cooperation with Turkey has generally been its geo-strategic position. After 1990, the shift in the international system introduced new regional dynamics in terms of Turkey's relations with wider Eurasia. In the late 1990s, Turkish foreign policy evolved to address the changes in the international environment and Ankara became an increasingly assertive actor in surrounding regions. The importance attributed to Turkey's role in US foreign and security policies in these regions led to growing numbers of edited volumes and articles to cover newly emerging issues, especially from Turkey experts in leading US think tanks and universities.[64] By identifying how Turkey's foreign policy could influence its wider region, these works defined Turkey as a pivotal state and a regional actor,[65] and addressed the possible impact of identity issues and changes in the domestic political landscape on Turkish foreign policy and relations with the US. This was in stark contrast to earlier scholarship, which had tended to avoid debate on these questions while focusing solely on the impact of security considerations.

Following the decision by the TBMM on 1 March 2003 not to allow the opening of a northern front in Turkey for the US invasion of Iraq, Turkish foreign policy received particularly close attention from American experts with a special focus on how to re-evaluate and redefine Turkey-US relations and Turkey's policy in the Middle East,

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[62] For example, Fuller, *Eastern Europe*; Graham Fuller, *Turkey Faces East: New Orientations towards the Middle East and the Old Soviet Union* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1992); Kuniholm, 'Turkey and the West'; and Brown, 'Turkey in the Age of Glasnost'.
[63] Ian O. Lesser, 'Turkey, the United States and the Delusion of Geopolitics', *Survival*, 48:3 (2006), pp.83-96.
[64] Some volumes worthy of mention here are: Makovsky and Sayari, *Turkey's New World*; Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee, *Future of Turkish-Western Relations*; Morton Abramowitz, *Turkey's Transformation and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2000); Cengiz Candar and Graham E. Fuller, 'Grand Geopolitics for a New Turkey', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 12:1 (2001).
[65] F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000).

including Iraq.[66] These works offer expert guides to the US perspective on Turkey's foreign policy and Turkey-US relations after 2003. However, these studies tend to offer policy prescriptions rather than presenting an academic basis for analysing the Turkey-US relationship.

One of the most comprehensive academic studies of Turkey-US relations is *Turkish-American Relations*, edited by Mustafa Aydın and Çağrı Erhan,[67] though it presents mainly descriptive contributions from historians, political scientists, and retired state officials. Another key text on the Turkey-US relationship to 2003 is by Nasuh Uslu.[68] This study, based on a coherent theoretical framework, applies it to a pertinent analysis of decision-making processes in Turkey and the US and elaborates on the evolution of the bilateral relationship since the 1960s. Also, Aylin Güney's article stands out as a comprehensive analysis of the anatomy of the transformation of the Turkey-US alliance from the Cold War to the Iraq War.[69] Güney presents a coherent examination of the factors behind the transformation in Turkey-US relations and concludes that Turkey gradually began following a more independent and multidimensional policy.

In an article on the crossroads facing Turkey-US relations,[70] Bill Park factors in the changes in Turkey's domestic politics to understand the transformation in its attitude towards the US. He argues that Ankara increasingly chooses to 'regionalise' those issues that Washington sees as having an inevitably international character. According to Park, Turkish and American interests, perspectives, and policies frequently align, although this alignment occurs in a somewhat independent fashion and is circumstantial and contextual. Moreover, it is balanced by other issues where alignment is not possible or where there is conflict.

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[66] The most important reassessments are: Ian O. Lesser, *Beyond Suspicion: Rethinking Us-Turkish Relations* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2007); Philip Gordon and Ömer Taşpınar, *Winning Turkey: How America, Europe, and Turkey Can Revive a Fading Partnership* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008); F. Stephen Larrabee, 'Turkey Rediscovers the Middle East', *Foreign Affairs*, 86:4 (2007), pp.103-114; and Bruce Kuniholm, 'Turkey and the World in Twenty-Five Years: Thinking about the Future', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 102:2-3 (2003), pp.471-489.

[67] Mustafa Aydın, and Çağrı Erhan (eds.), *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present, and Future* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[68] Uslu, *Turkish-American Relationship*.

[69] Aylin Güney, 'An Anatomy of the Transformation of the US-Turkish Alliance: From "Cold War" to "War on Iraq"', *Turkish Studies*, 6:3 (2005), pp.341-359.

[70] Bill Park, 'US-Turkish Relations: Can the Future Resemble the Past?' *Defense and Security Analysis*, 23:1 (2007), pp.41-54.

iv) Turkey's Policy towards the Middle East, Iraq and the Iraqi Kurds

Turkey's policy towards the Middle East, Iraq, and the Iraqi Kurds received substantial attention from academia. The earlier works of Ali Karaosmanoğlu and Marcy Agmon are well-articulated samples of security oriented approach on Turkey's Middle East policy.[71] During the Gulf War and its immediate aftermath, the works of three scholars in particular offered detailed analyses of Turkish policy; Philip Robins, William Hale and Sabri Sayarı: In 1991, Philip Robins filled an important gap with an early and informative study of Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East and its bilateral relationships with Iran, Iraq and Syria.[72] However, weaknesses of this work relate to its use of mainly non-Turkish sources and its thematic/horizontal approach to the bilateral relations which excludes cross-cutting factors in foreign policy behaviour. In 1992, comprehensive and satisfying articles by William Hale and Sabri Sayarı focused on the transformation of Turkey's security environment in the post-Cold War era and examined the extent to which the Gulf crisis and the Kurdish problem had influenced Turkey's more proactive involvement in the Middle East.[73] In the mid-1990s, a Turkish-language monograph by Baskın Oran, *The Poised Hammer: OPC and Kurdish State*,[74] offered the first detailed exploration of Turkey's Iraq policy, the dynamics of Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq, and Ankara's relations with the Iraqi Kurds. It focused on the widespread public concern in Turkey about US policy in Iraq and whether the US sought to establish an independent Kurdish state through OPC. In 2007, Turkey expert William Hale highlighted the evolution and the dynamics of Turkey-US relations regarding Iraq since the Gulf War.[75] During and after the 2003 Iraq War, Meliha Benli Altunışık examined Turkey's Iraq policy.[76] She argued that neither the failure of Turkey and the US to cooperate fully in the Iraq War, nor the post-2003 Iraq policy of Turkey could be explained by rational analysis alone. Instead, she suggests, Turkey's Iraq policy may be understood by factoring in the impact of identity politics and historical narratives on Turkey's interests.

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[71] Ali Karaosmanoğlu, 'Turkey's Security and the Middle East', *Foreign Affairs*, 62:1 (1983), pp.157-175; and Marcy Agmon, 'Defending the Upper Gulf: Turkey's Forgotten Partnership', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 21:1 (1986), pp.81-97.

[72] Philip Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1991).

[73] William Hale, 'Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis', *International Affairs*, 68:4 (1992), pp.679-692; and Sayari, 'Turkey'.

[74] Baskın Oran, *Kalkık Horoz: Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınları, 1996).

[75] William Hale, *Turkey, the US and Iraq* (London: Saqi, 2007).

[76] Meliha Benli Altunışık, 'Turkey's Iraq Policy: The War and Beyond', *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 14:2 (2006), pp.183-196.

Most works in the literature assume Turkish foreign policy towards the Gulf crisis to be a departure from Turkey's firmly established principles of non-involvement and non-interference in Middle Eastern conflicts.[77] This argument has some merits, but does not account for the fact that changes in Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbourhood since the 1980s occupy an ever larger place in Turkey's strategic calculations and threat perceptions, and have forced Turkey to assume a more active role in the region.

Another oversight relates to Turkey's initial reaction to Gulf crisis. For instance, Hale argues that Turkey tried to continue 'its previous policy of remaining strictly aloof from Middle Eastern conflicts,'[78] that Ankara expected that the crisis would 'soon blow over,' and assumed it could be approached as a 'purely inter-Arab dispute' in which Turkey could 'preserve a neutral attitude . . . without damaging its links with the Western powers.'[79] Robins passes a similar judgement in defining Turkish policy during the Gulf crisis as 'intuitive' and a 'traditionalist Kemalist reaction' of 'extreme caution and measure.'[80] However, in actuality, the Turkish leadership, and particularly President Özal, were resolved to oppose Iraq's invasion of Kuwait from the outset and played an instrumental role in convincing the US to impose sanctions.

v) The Broader Kurdish Question and Northern Iraq

In the 1990s, many studies emerged on the broader Kurdish question due to the internationalisation of Kurdish issues in Northern Iraq and in relation to Turkey's struggle with the PKK. Martin Van Bruinessen has pioneered work on Kurdish history with a sociological background,[81] and his early articles examined the role of the PUK and KDP during the Iran-Iraq War and the PKK's violent terror campaign.[82] His work is unique in offering a historical and social context based on Turkish sources, especially on the question of Kirkuk and the policies of Turkey, Syria and Iran on the Kurdish question.[83]

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[77] Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.47; Sabri Sayari, 'Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 26:3 (1997), pp.44-55; Sayari, 'Turkey'; Hale, 'Turkey, Middle East and Gulf Crisis'; Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, pp.223-224.
[78] Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.220.
[79] Hale, 'Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis', p.683.
[80] Philip Robins, 'Turkish Policy and the Gulf Crisis: Adventurist or Dynamic?' in Clement H. Dodd (ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy* (London: The Eothen Press, 1992), pp.70-87.
[81] Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1992).
[82] Respectively: Martin van Bruinessen, 'The Kurds between Iran and Iraq', *MERIP Middle East Report,* 141 (1986), pp.14-27; and Martin van Bruinessen, 'Between Guerrilla War and Political Murder: The Workers' Party of Kurdistan', *Middle East Report,* 153 (1988), pp.40-42, 44-46, 50.
[83] Martin van Bruinessen, 'Iraq: Kurdish Challenges', in Walter Posch (ed.), *Looking into Iraq* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2005), pp.45-72.

In a voluminous and well researched book, David McDowall depicts the history of Kurds and the emergence of ethno-politically oriented Kurdish movements in the Middle East.[84] The book presents a detailed account of developments with regard to the Iraqi Kurds, including the oppression of successive Iraqi regimes, their role in the Iran-Iraq War, the internecine fights between the KDP and PUK, and the situation in Northern Iraq in the period after the Gulf War. McDowall, however, takes an overly sympathetic view of Kurdish movements, representing the cooperation between Turkey and the KDP and PUK as a trap at the expense of Kurdish people, and losing balance in failing to address why both parties were motivated to deal with the PKK's dominant presence in Northern Iraq.

Michael M. Gunter has produced important scholarly studies on the broader Kurdish question. However, for the purposes of this study, his analysis of the politics of Iraq's 'Kurdish predicament' stands out in examining the period of conflict between the KDP and PUK in Northern Iraq in the 1990s.[85] He undertakes a comparative analysis of the ideology and leadership of the KDP and PUK, and their relationships to the Iraqi opposition. However, this is still mainly a descriptive work derived from secondary sources.

In their report for the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict,[86] Henry Barkey and Graham Fuller chiefly analyse the PKK, the surge in Kurdish identity-consciousness, the shortcomings of the Turkish security-based perspective, and the impact of these issues on Turkey's foreign policy, while also offering a series of proposals to resolve these problems.

Also significant for this study is Bill Park's work on Turkey's policy towards Northern Iraq.[87] Park's scholarship offers a detailed analysis of the importance of Northern Iraq and the relationship of the KDP and PUK to Turkey's security and foreign policy. Park explores the conditions of the Kurdish population in Turkey and the Middle East by examining the relationship between Turks and Kurds from a historical perspective. He attempts to clarify the Kurdish problem within Turkey's domestic setting and

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[84] David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996).
[85] Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).
[86] Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998).
[87] Bill Park, *Turkey's Policy towards Northern Iraq: Problems and Perspectives* (London: IISS, 2005); Bill Park, 'Turkey's Kurdish Complex', *Adelphi Papers*, 45: 374 (2005), pp.11-27; Bill Park, 'Iraq's Kurds and Turkey: Challenges for US Policy,' *Parameters*, 34 (2004), pp.18-30.

emphasises the significance of Northern Iraq in the fight against the PKK. He also lays out several scenarios for Iraq's future, including whether Iraq would ultimately stay intact or disintegrate, whether the Iraqi Kurds would take control of additional territories, and what the prospects would be for relations between Turkey and the Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq. Other scholarly works also approach the overall Kurdish question and Turkey's policy towards the PKK and Northern Iraq, including Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow's edited collection and Robert Olson's work on Kurdish nationalism in the 1990s, though these are again generally descriptive and based on secondary sources.[88]

Indeed, most scholarly works on Kurdish question are based on secondary sources, particularly with reference to Turkey's foreign and security policy. For instance, in his analysis of Turkey as an 'overlord state',[89] Philip Robins claims 'to explore the Kurdish issue in both the domestic context and the foreign policy of Turkey'.[90] He argues that the revival of Turkey's bilateral ties with Iraq was somehow related to the Kurdish question, reminiscent of Bagdad Pact, which also aimed to contain the potential impact of the Kurdish problem. However, as the primary sources in this research demonstrate, the Baghdad Pact was a strategic consensus between Turkey and the US for the containment of the Soviet Union in the Middle East; an overriding objective superseding any other regional concerns. Turkey's involvement in the Pact was not driven by a need to contain Kurdish question, but rather to secure Turkey's Cold War role. Robins further notes that the 'the close relationship which had been forged between Ankara and Baghdad over the Kurdish issue began to unravel after the ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq War in August 1988'. However, this neglects the actual reasons behind the change in Turkish policy and Iraq's approach to the Iraqi Kurds; it takes into account neither Iraq's 1988 decision to end the 1983 memorandum of understanding (MOU) on hot pursuit due to Turkey's rejection of an Iraqi request for a cross-border operation against Iraqi Kurds fleeing to Turkey, nor the cooling of relations due to the Turkish reaction to the Halabja massacre. The article thus misses the underlying reasons for Turkey's contacts with the Iraqi Kurdish groups in March 1991.

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[88] Respectively, Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 1997); and Robert W. Olson, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996).
[89] Philip Robins, 'The Overlord State: Turkish Policy and the Kurdish Issue', *International Affairs*, 69:4 (1993), pp.657-676.
[90] Ibid., p.658

Most works on Turkey's policy towards Northern Iraq rightly describe Turkey's primary motivation in working to prevent Iraq's disintegration and the establishment of a Kurdish state as the prospect of a spill-over effect on Turkey's Kurdish population. However, they overlook an equally important Turkish concern with the repercussions of Iraq's dismemberment on the regional balance of power, especially regarding the influence of Iran. Turkey's interest in the Iraqi Turkomens is generally simplified as an effort that started only after the Gulf crisis to control and counterbalance the achievements of Iraqi Kurds in Northern Iraq. However, this ignores Ankara's many previous démarches towards Bagdad over its oppression of Iraq's Turkomen community. For instance, during the visit of Iraqi President Ahmed Al-Bakr to Turkey on 19-20 September 1972, President Cevdet Sunay expressed Turkey's concerns about the oppression of the Turkomen and requested their fair treatment by the Iraqi government. Also, in 1980, even at a time when Turkey depended on Iraq for one third of its crude oil import, Ankara strongly protested Iraq's execution of three Turkomen leaders. Iraq, in return, issued warnings to Turkey not to interfere in its internal affairs.[91]

In addition, the wider literature asserts that Turkey used the KDP and PUK against one another or against the PKK in order to prevent a unified administration in Northern Iraq, thus precluding an independent state, and claims that continued intra-Kurdish hostilities were related to Turkey's role. Admittedly, Turkey did seek to constrain Kurdish ambitions for statehood. However, the literature on the matter overlooks the fact that both the KDP and PUK sought to use the intervention of outside actors in their fight for political survival against each other. Cases in point are KDP Chairman Masoud Barzani's request for help from Saddam in August 1996, and the PUK's joint attack on the KDP in cooperation with the PKK in 1997. The literature also tends to explain Iraqi Kurdish groups' fight against the PKK as due to Turkish pressure, while not adequately addressing the KDP and PUK's own motivations to fight the PKK, which became a threat to both in their quests for wider control of Northern Iraq.

vi) Memoirs

The academic literature has also made rigorous efforts to explain the motivations behind the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and behind Turkey's parliamentary refusal of US requests for the Northern option. A central problem for any researcher is the need to understand the factors that shaped the decisions of the policy makers, and the immediate context in which those decisions were made. In this sense, political memoirs are one of

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[91] 'Iraq Warns Turkey Not to Interfere', *Daily Telegraph*, 5 February 1980.

the most valuable forms of primary sources. As George Egerton argues, the role of the memoirists in the making of a foreign policy decision, their knowledge about the operation of the political system, and their personal engagement and experience through access to, participation in and observation of events in flux offer 'invaluable sources of privileged information on contemporary history long before the official documentation becomes accessible.'[92] He argues that such memoirs have a unique value in their ability to describe 'the events, actions, and conditions, to explain the causes of these events, and to interpret their meaning.'[93]

However, political memoirs also have inherent shortcomings. As Stephen M. Walt observes, 'national security issues are highly politicized … and work on these topics is often written for political rather than scientific goals'.[94] As memoirs are what Egerton calls a 'personalized narration of history', the risks associated with them are the tendency of politicians to advocate and justify their acts of policy, and employ post-facto reasoning to rationalise a decision or explain past perspectives and motives, which deviates from the perspective of a scholar.[95] In most cases, however, political memoirs ultimately provide first-hand and accurate information and introspective insights from foreign policy actors, despite their limitations of scholarly perspective.

Comprehensive explanations of US foreign policy before and during the Gulf War can be found in memoirs by President George H. W. Bush and his National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and his Secretary of State James Baker.[96] Likewise, the origins of the US decision to invade Iraq in 2003, the context of that decision, the details of the personalities involved, and the deliberations within the administration are best revealed in the memoirs published by nearly every senior member: President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, National Security Adviser and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Undersecretary of Defense Douglas J. Feith, and finally US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director George Tenet.[97] All these books present valuable insights into the way the Bush

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[92] George Egerton, 'Politics and Autobiography: Political Memoir as Polygenre', *Biography*, 15:3 (1992), p.233
[93] Ibid., p.237.
[94] Stephen M. Walt, 'The Renaissance of Security Studies', *International Studies Quarterly*, 35:2 (1991), p.213.
[95] Egerton, 'Politics and Autobiography', pp.224, 236.
[96] Respectively: George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999); and James A. Baker and Thomas M. DeFrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War, and Peace, 1989-1992* (New York: Putnam, 1995).
[97] Respectively: George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010); Dick Cheney, *In My Time* (New York: Threshold Editions, 2011); Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of*

administration made foreign policy decisions and shaped the overall US defence and national security policy, including the highly contentious decision to occupy Iraq.

Elsewhere, one of the best examples of political memoirs and case studies in decision making during both the Gulf and Iraq Wars is by Richard Haass.[98] In a well-documented and insider account of US policy on Iraq from 1990 to 2003, Haass argues that the Gulf War was a 'war of necessity' with the realist objective of reversing Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and destroying Baghdad's military capability. In contrast, he claims that the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 was a 'war of choice' resulting from an inadequate decision-making process and based on convictions rather than facts.

From the Turkish perspective, the most compelling book on Turkey-US diplomacy in 2003 is *The 1 March Incident: The Iraq Motion and Its Aftermath* by retired ambassador Deniz Bölükbaşı, who served as the chairman of the Turkish negotiating team during the talks.[99] Based on his notes and classified Turkish documents, Bölükbaşı provides a first-hand analysis of the Turkish position during this contentious episode in Turkey-US relations. Turkish columnist Fikret Bila's *The Iraq War in Ankara: The Attempted Civil Coup and 1 March Motion in Light of Confidential Documents* is a valuable source in terms of its annexes of official classified Turkish documents from Turkey's negotiations with the US before the Iraq War in 2003.[100]

To conclude, this research differs from the broad literature outlined above in being neither a purely theoretical, nor a mainly empirical study. Certainly, it contributes to an understanding of the impact of Iraq on Turkey-US relationship over three historical phases largely as an empirical work based on primary sources. However, it also applies a theoretical framework in the form of an integrative model deduced from an amalgam of structural realism, neoclassical realism and alliance theory. Therefore, the theoretical approach sets the framework for the empirical analysis, and the research itself is not an examination of alliance theory. The unique contribution this dissertation makes to the literature is the detailed integrative model of foreign policy behaviours of two allied

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My Years in Washington (New York: Crown Publishers, 2011); Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Sentinel, 2011); Douglas J. Feith, *War and Decision* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008); and George Tenet and Bill Harlow, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA* (New York: HarperCollins: 2007).

[98] Richard N. Haass, *War of Necessity War of Choice: A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009).

[99] Deniz Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası: Irak Tezkeresi ve Sonrası* (İstanbul: Doğan, 2008).

[100] Fikret Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları: Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Gizli Belgelerle 1 Mart Tezkeresi* (İstanbul: Güncel Yayıncılık, 2003).

nations that it both deduces from and applies to an empirical case study Turkey-US cooperation and non-cooperation on Iraq in the given period.

4. Methodology

In developing an integrated model in relation to an empirical case, this research has necessarily been what Harry Eckstein's describes as a 'disciplined-configurative study',[101] emphasising the application (or synthesis) of theories in case interpretation. As Graham Allison observes, analysts of foreign policy may use description, explanation, prediction, evaluation, and recommendation as related, but logically separable, methods.[102] In terms of methodological consistency, there are two principle challenges for any attempt to understand, analyse and explain foreign policy and intra-alliance behaviour patterns in international relations. The first is to demonstrate causal links between theoretical debates and the practice of foreign policy. The second is to demonstrate the relevance of the theoretical debates themselves to the subject of study. It is not usually possible to avoid the problems pertaining to these challenges by employing a single method of investigation. In order to overcome them, this research has chosen a multifaceted approach which has been called 'multiple strategies of field research,'[103] and distinct but complimentary methods have been used in the different phases of this thesis. The primary and secondary sources outlined below have thus been consulted using a combination of process tracing, discourse analysis and content analysis.

The major organisational/methodical decision at the outset of this research was whether to structure the account of the whole period chronologically or to focus more systematically on key topics. This thesis is a case study which aims to articulate why different states of relations occurred between Turkey and the US regarding Iraq in different instances *and* to understand which dynamics are worth exploring in similar situations. As Yin points out, a case study necessitates an investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.[104] Because the research required multiple sources of evidence to support it, the final methodological decision was to blend chronology with systematic analysis of the key phases, as this better reflected the

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[101] Bennett, Lepgold, and Unger, 'Burden-Sharing'.

[102] Graham Allison, 'Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis', *American Political Science Review*, 63:3 (1969), pp.698-718.

[103] Robert G. Burgess, *Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual* (London: Allen and Unwin, 2005), p.144.

[104] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994).

positions of those engaged in shaping policy on Iraq and its subsequent influence on Turkey-US relations.

This research is based chiefly on qualitative data gathered from several types of source. The primary sources used are official communiqués, diplomatic correspondence, government policy papers, minutes, press statements, press releases and background briefing notes. Additional primary sources are the semi- and un-structured interviews with key political figures, analysts, scholars, and former and current government officials in Turkey, the US, Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdish region. The study also employs open source materials, such as official statements, the collected works and memoirs of former presidents, politicians, and foreign policy makers, newspaper databases and Turkish and the US journals. The primary sources have been carefully reviewed and crosschecked, and rigorous efforts have been made to carefully consider every available piece of evidence and to reflect the views of the interviewees themselves.

The strength of this research is that the majority of the sources used are primary material. This was made possible through a unique opportunity to have unlimited access to the primary source material at the archives of the Turkish MFA, which has enabled and unprecedentedly detailed presentation of the Turkish perspective, and a well-informed analysis of US policy.

The semi-structured or unstructured interviews were carried out between 2008 and 2012 with top-level politicians and senior Turkish, US and Iraqi Kurdish officials directly involved in the policy formulation process during the periods in question. The interviews have been instrumental in understanding the reasons, motivations, and context of the policy makers' responses to specific issues. Having a certain level of command of the events based on the primary written sources added value to the interviews. In most cases, the interviews turned into sessions of genuine exchange of personal reflections, perceptions and interpretations of events. The interviewees were asked to focus on why, how, and the context in which policy was formulated rather than simply sharing their recollections of what happened. This was useful in sourcing further primary archive material and also made it possible to combine such material with the personal reflections, interpretations and perceptions of individuals involved in the policy making process. The researcher's official position both provided access to these actors and encouraged frankness and openness during the interviews. Each interview took shape according to the knowledge, position and experience of the interviewee.

However, it must be noted that interviews are in certain ways risky enterprises. Some inherent problems with the form are the post-facto reasoning interviewees may apply to the given policy choices, their emotional attachment to a particular person, cause or stance,[105] and the sheer difficulty of recollecting events after many years. As Robert Jervis argues, determining the accuracy of statesmen's perceptions of actions during wartime presents a real problem; not only is one required to 'tease the person's views out of confused and conflicting evidence and try to separate his true beliefs from those he merely wants others to believe he holds,' but a statesman with no well-defined perceptions at the time might develop them retrospectively to conform to the actions he has taken.[106]

For all these reasons, critical content analysis was applied to substantiate the information during the interviews. For instance, the claim about Özal's perceived intentions to annex Kirkuk-Mosul region is an example. Information from Özal's close confidants, such as his chief foreign policy advisor Kaya Toperi, was cross-checked against the accounts those politicians who resigned from their posts allegedly in opposition to Özal's plans, such as Ali Bozer, then Foreign Minister, and against that of M. Abramowitz, then American ambassador to Turkey. The risks inherent in the interviews also apply to public statements about past policy and events. For instance, nearly a decade after the Gulf crisis, Korkut Özal, a former politician and the elder brother of President Özal, publicly accused the foreign policy elite and the Turkish military of preventing Özal from carrying out his courageous strategic/military plan to annex Kirkuk and Mosul. However, in an interview, the then Foreign Minister Ali Bozer claims that Korkut Özal visited him at the MFA during the Gulf crisis to lobby against prospects for Özal's adventurism in Kirkuk and Mosul. In short, the challenge of relying on first hand accounts was to crosscheck all the information obtained through primary source material and interviews instead of accepting it at face value.

The final source of primary material was the researcher's personal experience as a member of the Turkish diplomatic service for nearly two decades. An academic aspect was added to this diplomatic experience through co-authoring a book in 1996 on OPC

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[105] For instance, Yıldırım Akbulut lost his seat as the leader of the *Anavatan Partisi* (Motherland Party, ANAP) and thereby the post of Prime Minister in June 1991 because of his publicly perceived subordination to President Özal, especially during the Gulf crisis and the war.
[106] Robert Jervis, 'War and Misperception', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 18:4 (1988), p.680.

and Turkey's Northern Iraq policy,[107] as well as successfully completing an MA dissertation on 'The Future of Iraq' at King's College in 2006.

Lastly, as detailed in the literature review, a range of secondary sources have also been consulted in the form of books, journal articles, policy papers and monographs by think tanks, covering academic approaches to Turkish foreign policy, Turkey-US relations, Turkey and Iraq, and the Kurdish problem. Secondary sources were also used to contextualise and interpret primary sources, and leading newspapers, biographies and historical works were also consulted to illuminate the contextual background to policy-makers mind-sets and policy choices.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 of the thesis focuses on the conceptual framework. It develops an integrative model to understand and analyse the parameters of security cooperation between Turkey and the US in the Middle East, especially on Iraq, with a particular focus on how Iraq impacts Turkey-US relations. The model is inspired by the realist school and is an amalgamation of structural realism, neo-classical realism and alliance theory, incorporating incidents from the historical record of Turkey-US relations. The aim here is to develop a model which has sufficient explanatory power to facilitate an analysis of the impact of Iraq on the Turkey-US alliance relationship. By way of historical background and validation, the chapter then applies the model to Turkey-US relations up to 1990.

Chapter 2 attempts to reconstruct Turkey's strategic calculations in cooperating with the US-led international coalition during the Gulf crisis and Gulf War. It analyses the strategic thinking behind the formation and implementation of Turkey's policy between the emergence of the crisis and the war, explaining the major dynamics at play and the way the crisis influenced and shaped Turkey's relations with the US. It argues that the Turkey-US agreement on the threat from Saddam's regime and the consequent joint strategy to deal with it by reversing his invasion of Kuwait led to close cooperation during this period.

The following three chapters all deal with the period of 'unintended consequences' from 1991 to inauguration of the Bush administration in 2001. This period is examined in three separate chapters for a number of reasons. The first is for practical purposes since

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[107] Oran, *Kalkık Horoz*. As the book was being published, I became a diplomat at the MFA and my name had to be withheld as co-author due to MFA regulations.

a single chapter covering all the developments during this period would be too lengthy. The second is to demonstrate how Turkish and American perceptions of threat from Iraq and their respective strategies evolved within different timeframes. Chapter 3 covers the period from 1991 to 1994, when the first KDP-PUK clashes in Northern Iraq introduced a new dynamic in Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq. Chapter 4 covers the 1994-1996 period, which was marked by intensifying intra-Kurdish hostilities that eventually led to the KDP's invitation of Saddam's forces into the region at the end of August 1996. Chapter 5 covers 1996-2001, examining the joint Turkey-US efforts to reconcile the Kurdish groups. Taken as a whole, these three chapters examine Turkey-US cooperation on overall Iraq strategy, including Turkey's increasingly reluctant support for the US containment policy. These chapters also trace the emergence of Northern Iraq as a distinct issue in Turkey-US relations, including the creation of a de facto Kurdish entity, the PKK's infiltration into and use of the region to stage terrorist attacks against Turkey, and Ankara's response to the situation.

Chapter 6 deals with the period from the inauguration of the Bush-Cheney administration in January 2001 to US invasion of Iraq in March 2003. It examines how Saddam's regime was elevated to a clear, primary, and present threat to vital US interests and how the use of force for regime change evolved into the central US strategy to deal with the perceived threat from Iraq. The chapter analyses the Turkey-US discussions over US requests from Turkey to assist in implementing the strategy of regime change through the military option. It also examines the factors leading to the TBMM's 1 March 2003 decision not to allow US troops a northern front, including Ankara's non-agreement with Washington on the level of threat from Saddam's regime and the military option for regime change as the corresponding strategy. It also addresses how Turkey and the US' respective strategic objectives and calculations for the invasion of Iraq differed regarding the possible outcome of a post-Saddam Iraq.

The concluding chapter looks briefly at the immediate fallout from the 1 March decision in terms of the 'Iraq gap' it created in Turkey-US relations and especially US perceptions of Turkey. It then summarizes how the historical cases studied correlate to the integrative foreign policy model, showing how, rather than being the result of individual diplomatic errors or intelligence failures, a combination of divergence of interests, alliance politics, expectations and trust gaps, and domestic political pressures all led to Turkey's refusal of the US request for full cooperation during the Iraq War.

CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This research seeks to explain the foreign policies of Turkey and the US vis-à-vis Iraq between 1990 and 2003, and to trace how Iraq became such a central issue. This involves constructing an analytical/conceptual framework to explain both the parameters of security cooperation that can successfully be applied to Turkey-US relations in general, including when Turkey and the US can have security cooperation on issues related to the Middle East, and the specific impact of Iraq as an external factor in the evolution, or definition, of the Turkey-US relationship.

Glenn H. Snyder and Stephen M. Walt identify three criteria to assess international relations research; precision and logical consistency, creativity/originality, and empirical validity, to which Snyder also adds a fourth; policy relevance.[108] This chapter thus has two objectives: The first is to devise and construct a coherent integrative model and hypothesis that can potentially meet all four criteria in analysing the impact of Iraq on Turkey-US relations in 1990-2003. A key challenge here centres on the question of whether it is possible to deduce such a model from the general propositions of structural realism, alliance theory and neoclassical realism. The model must then be developed in light of the key research question of why Turkey pursued security cooperation with the US during the Gulf Crisis and Gulf War but failed to establish such cooperation during the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. It will thus have to take into account the following: the patterns that the Turkey-US alliance has exhibited since 1952; how this alliance relationship materialised vis-à-vis issues such as the Middle East that fell outside of the NATO framework; how Turkey and the US managed their common and conflicting interests within this alliance; and the factors at play during the processes of intra-alliance bargaining on global and regional issues of mutual interest.

The second objective of this chapter is to explore if this model can be successfully applied to Turkey's relationship with the US regarding the Middle East in general and Iraq in particular. It tests the integrated model it develops against three empirical cases in Turkey-US relations related to the Middle East from Turkey's entry into NATO in 1952 until the Gulf crisis in 1990: the formation of the Turkey-US alliance; the establishment of the Baghdad Pact in 1955; and the period following the pact's demise

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[108] Glenn H. Snyder, review of *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*, by Robert Powell, *Political Science Quarterly*, 115:1 (2000), pp.132-134; Stephen M. Walt, 'A Model Disagreement', *International Security*, 24:2 (1999), pp.115-130.

in 1958 until 1990. Thus tested, the conceptual model will then serve as the basis for analysing and testing the impact of Iraq on Turkey-US relations in 1990-2003 in the following four chapters.

1.2. An Integrative Model of Security Cooperation between Turkey and the US vis-à-vis the Middle East

As it develops and argues for an integrative model and hypothesis to explain Turkey's relationship with the US, especially as regards security cooperation in the Middle East in general and the Gulf crisis and its aftermath in particular, the analysis of this chapter is based on two key assumptions:

1. Following admission to NATO in 1952, Turkey's role in the Western alliance, particularly its relationship with the US, became a key determinant of its policy towards the Middle East. Nevertheless, this did not mean that the Turkey-US alliance relationship led necessarily to cooperation on Middle Eastern issues in all cases, as the Middle East and the Gulf crisis were both of out-of-area in the NATO context.

2. Turkey and the US continued to enjoy a formal alliance relationship when Iraq occupied Kuwait in 1990. Although the Cold War was about to end, and the US no longer considered the Soviet Union a primary threat to be balanced against, this did not undermine Turkey's motivation to maintain the alliance relationship, since it continued to depend on NATO and the US for its national security. In addition, Turkey's ideological Western orientation remained a key motivation in its foreign policy behaviour.

The integrative model constructed in this chapter posits that, in order to have security cooperation between Turkey and the US on Middle Eastern issues, the existence of two conditions are essential: (1) agreement on a significant/strategic common threat and (2) agreement on strategy to deal with that threat.[109]

(1) Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat

The first condition posits that there should be agreement between Turkey and the US on a significant common threat and thus an overriding shared strategic objective on the nature of that threat. The common concern and the overriding strategic objective can be

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[109] I would like to thank Professor John Mearsheimer for his feedback on this model during his trip to Turkey in October 2012, which was of great assistance in reviewing and reconstructing the conceptual framework as it is developed here. I would also like to thank Professor Stephen Walt for taking time to comment on an earlier version of the framework during the interview in September 2010.

considered systemic level factors in the form of Walt's proposition about balance-of-threat against an external power and Schweller's balance-of-interests.

(2) Agreement on strategy to deal with the common strategic threat

The second condition posits that there should also be agreement between Turkey and the US on the strategy how to deal with the common strategic threat. This raises the question of perceived national interests in the region, and is thus related to the influence of domestic politics as an intervening variable in state behaviour, and thus in foreign policy making. As discussed in the review of realist theories, solely systemic-level analyses often fail to incorporate sub-systemic/unit-level/domestic causal factors in explaining state behaviour in an alliance relationship. The model developed here, therefore, draws on the neoclassical realist emphasis on the interaction between complex domestic political processes and systemic-level factors. In other words, even though structural factors constrain any nation's strategic/national interest at the systemic level, its perceptions are primarily defined through the domestic political process. As Schweller observes, foreign policy is also formulated in response to unit-level factors such as policy elites' considerations of cost versus risk, perceptions of the external environment, views on the nation's goals and challenges, preferences for the means of serving those purposes, and the domestic political risks associated with certain foreign policy choices.[110] The model outlined here thus combines unit- and structural-level causes in its analysis of foreign policy formulation.

Agreement on strategy to address a common threat also involves the question of whether the mutual expectations of each party converge in the implementation of the actual strategy. This dimension relates to the questions of whether there is agreement on the division of responsibilities and whether both sides have the ability to carry out the requisite strategy.

Table 1 (overleaf) demonstrates how the model uses these scenarios to decide when there will be security cooperation between Turkey and the US:

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[110] Randall L. Schweller, 'Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing', *International Security*, 29: 2 (2004), pp. 159-201.

Table 1: Scenarios 1–2 for Turkey-US security cooperation on the Middle East

	Independent Variable 1: Agreement on significant/ strategic common threat	Independent Variable 2: Agreement on strategy to deal with perceived strategic threat	Dependent Variable / Result
Scenario 1	Yes	Yes	Cooperation
Scenario 2	Yes	No	Non-cooperation

According to scenario one, if there is agreement on the independent variables of (1) and (2), then the dependent variable, and thus the result, will be security cooperation.

On the other hand, scenario two posits that if there is agreement on independent variable (1), but no agreement on (2), the dependent variable, and thus the result, will be non-cooperation.

This model also suggests the possibility of other scenarios. For instance, if the states did not agree on (1), would there be any possibility of them agreeing on (2)? What would be the prospects for such an option? What would be the defining factors and parameters for any state to agree on (2), even if it did not agree with the other state on (1)? In such a scenario, what would be the prospects for security cooperation?

In fact, the two scenario model outlined above does not account for what might compel or induce a state to agree on (2) in the absence of agreement on (1). In such cases, the defining factors for an agreement on (2) would become matters of alliance management, cost versus benefit, relative gains, and whether the expectations of both parties converged or diverged. For instance, state (a) might not agree with state (b) about the nature of a threat (1), but if the demands and expectations of (b) from (a) in the strategy to address the threat were minimal or there were gains to (a) from its cooperation, there would be no expectations gap, no costs or risks, and (a) could agree on the actual strategy (2), yielding security cooperation. In contrast, if (a) did not agree on (1), and if the demands and expectations of (b) from (a) for the actual strategy were likely to create high costs and risks for (a), there would be an expectations gap, and (a) would disagree on (2), most likely resulting in non-cooperation. However, even in cases where (a) disagrees on the nature of both (1) and (2) due to an expectations gap regarding the demands and expectations of (b), (a) might still feel forced to cooperate with (b) on the implementation of the actual strategy if it perceived the costs of non-cooperation to be

higher than those of cooperation. In short, with the addition of a third scenario, the results for security cooperation vary from cooperation to reluctant, limited or non-cooperation in the absence of agreement on (1), but conditional agreement on (2), as illustrated in table 2.

Table 2: Scenarios 1–3 for Turkey-US security cooperation on the Middle East

	Independent Variable 1: **Agreement on significant/strategic common threat**	**Independent Variable 2:** **Agreement on strategy to deal with perceived strategic threat**	**Dependent Variable / Result**
Scenario 1	Yes	Yes	Cooperation
Scenario 2	Yes	No	Non-cooperation
Scenario 3:	No	**a.** Conditional yes, subject to: minimal cost of cooperation / relative gains / no expectations gap	Cooperation
		b. Conditional yes, subject to: costs of non-cooperation > costs of cooperation / expectations gap	Cooperation / limited or non-cooperation

While scenario three certainly helps to finesse the hypothesis, the model still does not factor in the impact of the existing relationship between the states involved on security cooperation. Thus, if states (a) and (b) did not enjoy good relations, would agreement on (1) and (2) automatically lead to security cooperation? For instance, a bilateral problem can cast a shadow on security cooperation in different fields, as did the 'poppy crisis' between Turkey and the US in the 1970s.[111] In addition, where an external factor emerges in which (a) perceives its fundamental interests to be at stake, yet (b) pursues a policy that runs against that interest, cooperation in other fields could be undermined or prevented. The US position on Cyprus in the 1960s, for instance, caused Ankara to urgently redefine its relationship with Washington. President Johnson's notorious letter to the Turkish Prime Minister in 1964 severely strained Turkey's ties with the US, despite their strategic consensus on addressing the shared Soviet threat through NATO.[112] However, on balance, the state of relations between the relevant countries should not be considered an independent variable determining the outcome of security cooperation scenarios. For instance, during World War II, the US and the Soviet Union,

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[111] Çağrı Erhan, *Beyaz Savaş: Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Afyon Sorunu*, (Bilgi Yayınevi: Ankara, 1996)
[112] Baskın Oran (ed), *Turkish Foreign Policy: 1919-2006*, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010), p.413-415

despite a lack of mutual trust and good relations, were able to develop security cooperation against Germany. Nevertheless, the absence of good relations between states may have a certain—but indecisive—impact on the possibility of security cooperation between them. A good state of relations is likely to create goodwill among foreign policy-makers and the public at large towards cooperation on the issues at stake. Accordingly, it would be unrealistic to dismiss the impact of the contemporary state of Turkey's relationship with the US in analysing, for instance, its active involvement in the Baghdad Pact and participation in the US-led alliance during the 1991 Gulf war and its aftermath.

1.3. Testing the Model against Empirical Cases

1.3.1. Case One for Scenario One: Turkey's Entry into NATO

(1) Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat

Turkey and the US have enjoyed a formal alliance since Turkey's admission to NATO in 1952. Walt presents Turkey's alliance with NATO and the US following World War II as a compelling case for balancing state behaviour.[113] After the war, Turkey was faced with an increased threat from the Soviet Union in several forms, including Moscow's rejection of the Soviet-Turkish Non-Aggression Treaty, demands for the revision of the Montreux Convention governing the status of the Turkish Straits, and for territorial concessions in eastern Turkey. The Soviets threatened Turkey's survival as an independent and sovereign state, and Turkey chose to ally itself with the West to balance this threat.[114]

Thus, Ankara's fundamental strategic interest was in achieving its national security through a US-led Western collective defence. Turkish foreign policy between 1945 and 1960 reflected this Western alignment and was devised primarily to contribute to Western collective defence and establish good relations with the US and with Europe.[115] This policy converged with Turkey's broader aim to establish economic, social, and cultural links with the West, and Ankara sought to utilise its role in the alliance to maintain its Western orientation. The dual commitment to the Western security cause and pursuit of a pro-Western orientation were mutually reinforcing and led to a

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[113] Stephen M.Walt, 'Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia,' *International Organization*, 42: 2 (1988), pp.275-316.

[114] Ibid. and Melvyn P. Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and NATO, 1945-1952', *Journal of American History,* 71:4 (1985), pp.807-825.

[115] Güney, 'Anatomy of Transformation', p.341. Indeed, During the Cold War years, Turkish foreign and security policy circles applied the term 'West' to both the US and Western Europe without differentiation.

prominent Turkish role within Western security.[116] This 'core concept' remained one of the structural determinants in the formulation of Turkish foreign policy from 1945 to 1960. To this end, Turkey sent a brigade of 4,500 soldiers to the Far East to support American forces in the Korean War in 1950, and was consequently admitted to NATO in 1952 with explicit American backing. American aid to Turkey also started to pour in as part of the Truman Doctrine (1947) and the Marshall Plan (1950).[117] In short, Turkey and the US had agreed on the nature of a common strategic threat; the expansion of the Soviet Union.

(2) Agreement on strategy to deal with the common strategic threat

From the late 1940s to the end of the 1950s, the chief strategic objective of Western thinking on the Middle East was containment of the Soviet Union. Indeed, beyond its commitment in Korea, Turkey's unique geopolitical situation, linking the Soviet Union with the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, was one of the key factors for its admission into NATO.[118] Walt characterises Turkey's alignment with Europe and the US after World War II as 'substantial support for testing balancing behaviour,'[119] and his balancing/bandwagoning dichotomy suggests that ideology has a modest effect on alliance preferences.[120] While Turkey's national interest in maintaining the Turkish Republic's security and survival in the face of the Soviet threat dictated that it participate in the Western bloc as a balancing behaviour, this also converged with a prior ideological orientation towards Westernisation. In the end, agreement on the Soviet threat and agreement on admission of Turkey into NATO as a strategy to deal with that threat led to a formal alliance and security cooperation between Turkey and the US, and became the central pillar of their relationship.

1.3.2. Case Two for Scenario Two: The Baghdad Pact

(1) Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat

As explained above, following World War II, Turkey considered the Soviet Union the primary threat to its national security. It aligned itself with the US policy of regional

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[116] Fuller, *Eastern Europe*, p.5.
[117] Güney, 'Anatomy of Transformation', p.342.
[118] Charles A. Kupchan, 'American Globalism in the Middle East: The Roots of Regional Security Policy', *Political Science Quarterly*, 103:4 (1988-1989), pp.585-611.
[119] Walt, 'Testing Theories', p.297
[120] Cf. Robert O. Keohane, 'Alliances, Threats, and the Uses of Neorealism', *International Security*, 13:1 (1998), pp.169-176.

containment to prevent Moscow from exploiting intra-Middle Eastern instability.[121] In this period, there was explicit agreement between Washington and Ankara that the Soviet Union was a common strategic threat.

(2) Agreement on strategy to deal with the common strategic threat

The US strategy to contain Soviet expansionism in the Middle East concentrated on the link between the region's security and the defence of Western Europe based on the concept of the 'Northern Tier,' which referred to the line of countries that formed a border between the Soviet Union and the Middle East.[122] The chief proponent of this idea was John Foster Dulles, the US Secretary of State. It entailed containing the Soviet Union by creating a collective security structure through an alliance that would link the southernmost member of NATO, Turkey, with the westernmost member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), Pakistan.[123]

Following its admission to NATO, Turkey lobbied hard to ensure that other NATO members recognised Turkey as part of Europe, rather than the Middle East. Turkey considered itself to be an integral and inseparable part of a Europe confronting the Soviet Union. It therefore fervently opposed British proposals to establish an 'Eastern Mediterranean Command,' which would encompass Greece, Turkey, the eastern Mediterranean, and the Middle East under a British Supreme Commander, and insisted that its forces serve under the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR).[124] At the same time, Ankara recognised that its Middle East policy had to be based on calculations related to its new role in the broader global context of the Western Alliance against the Soviet Union and aligned with US policies accordingly. According to Marcy Agmon, Washington intended for Turkey to defend NATO's southern flank and the Middle East, both directly and by providing basing and staging sites for US units.[125] Turkey, in essence, was attributed a primary leadership role as the 'cohesive element' in organising the defence of the Middle East in line with the Northern Tier concept.[126] As the Soviet Union was regarded as the principal threat to Turkey's security, the Persian

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[121] Memorandum of the meeting between the Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and the British Ambassador in Ankara Sir James Bowker in Ankara on 17 June 1954.
[122] Foreign Relations of the US, 1955-1957 Volume XII, Near East Region; Iran; Iraq, Document 1, 'Editorial Note,' http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v12/d1
[123] 'The Middle East: After the Baghdad Pact', *Time*, 11 August 1958, http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,825407,00.html
[124] Agmon, 'Defending the Upper Gulf'; Leonard Binder, 'The Middle East as a Subordinate International System', *World Politics,* 10:3 (1958), pp.408-429.
[125] Agmon, 'Defending the Upper Gulf'.
[126] Binder, 'Middle East', p.424

Gulf was given high priority in US military planning and force procurement.[127] Turkey remained the only NATO country bordering both the Soviet Union and the Middle East; its boundaries were effectively on the frontlines of the East-West strategic rivalry,[128] and its role was an essential element of the US strategy to prevent Soviet intrusion into the Middle East. In short, in addition to agreement on the nature of the Soviet threat, Turkish and American interests and strategy to address that threat overlapped, allowing them to pursue security cooperation against the Soviets as an external threat in Middle East. Successive Turkish governments' perceptions of national interest and the resultant policy of ensuring a role in the Western alliance thus converged with the special role attributed to Turkey in the US strategic calculation.

In 1955, this consensus between Washington and Ankara led to the establishment of the Baghdad Pact; a collective defence organisation among Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq, the UK and Iran.[129] Turkey-US cooperation on the Baghdad Pact was due to the convergence of three factors; agreement on the strategy to contain the Soviet threat in the Middle East, Washington's expectations that Turkey assume regional leadership to achieve this objective, and Ankara's perception that playing such a role was in accordance with its national interests.

Nevertheless, the pact itself was ill-fated. While the US signed individual agreements with members of the Baghdad Pact, it refrained from formally joining because of the difficulty of obtaining Congressional approval. This was due to controversy over Israeli objections and possible requests for similar guarantees which in turn would be rejected by the Arab members of the Pact.[130] The US also considered close cooperation with the UK essential for establishment of a Middle East defence arrangement.[131] However, US non-adherence to the Pact left the UK with major burden while Britain's prestige and strength in the Middle East were on the wane and allowed the US to distance itself from the UK 'in a colonial area context.'[132] More importantly, according to the US Secretary

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[127] Robert H. Johnson, 'The Persian Gulf in US Strategy: A Skeptical View', *International Security*, 14:1 (1989), pp.122-160.
[128] Sezer, 'Turkey's Security Policy'.
[129] For detailed background on the Baghdad Pact, see İsmail Soysal, 'The 1955 Baghdad Pact', *Studies on Turkish Arab Relations*, 5 (1990), pp.43-92; Sezer, 'Turkey's Security Policy'.
[130] Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson), *U.S. Adherence to the Baghdad Pact*, 30 November 1956, http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v12/d153
[131] Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson), *U.S. Position Regarding Middle East Defense*, 16 June 1955, http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v12/d44
[132] Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State, 15 November 1956, http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v12/d142; Special National Intelligence Estimate

of State, Washington viewed the British role in Baghdad Pact as: 'largely an instrument of U.K.-Arab politics; … under the Pact the British are trying to use Iraq to advance their interests in the Middle East.'[133]

The other Arab states, in the sway of intense Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism, opposed Baghdad Pact, which they viewed as an arrangement to sustain Western political dominance in the Arab world, reminiscent of resented British rule.[134] Egypt, competing for regional leadership, led Arab opposition to the pact. From the outset, the Soviet Union protested Turkey's initiative as a design among periphery states to turn the Middle East into a NATO military base. According to the Soviet government, the timing of this initiative, as Moscow was making efforts to improve its bilateral relationships with countries in the region, was not coincidental. In the end, the interests of the Soviet Union, Egypt, and Syria overlapped to undermine the Baghdad Pact.[135] Following a series of regional developments between 1956 and 1958, the pact ultimately collapsed and officially came to an end with Iraq's withdrawal in 1959. The other signatories formed the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), which was formally disbanded in 1979.[136]

1.3.3. Case for Scenario Two: Turkey-US Relations towards the Middle East, 1960–1991

(1) Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat

Starting in the early 1960s, the US strategic focus shifted from the southern flank of NATO and the Middle East to Central and Southeast Asia. The Northern Tier was no longer perceived to be in immediate danger from the Soviet threat, despite US recognition that the independence and integrity of Greece, Turkey, and Iran were vital US interests.[137] For Washington, the Middle East lost importance as a theatre of operations in its strategic rivalry with the Soviet Union.[138] Simultaneously, intra-

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SNIE 30–7–56, *Probable Consequences of US Adherence or Non-adherence to the Baghdad Pact*, 14 December 1956, http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v12/d170

[133] Memorandum by the Secretary of State, 16 November 1956, http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v12/d144

[134] Gordon C. Smith, 'The Emergence of the Middle East', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3:3 (1968), pp.3-17.

[135] Declassified CIA Research, *Soviet Policy towards the Middle East*, http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000499549.pdf,

[136] US State Department, Office of the Historian, *Milestones: 1953-1960*, http://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/CENTO

[137] Interdepartmental Group for Near East and South Asia, *NSCIG/NEA 69–1B (Revised): Basic US Interests in the Middle East*, 30 January 1969. http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d2

[138] Johnson, 'Persian Gulf in US Strategy', p.122.

regional disputes gradually took precedence over and then began to direct the global rivalry.

When US global priorities shifted, Ankara recognised that, so long as the Soviets remained an external threat, Turkey's role in the Western alliance would remain the principal factor in the formulation of its global foreign and security policies. However, it also drew several conclusions from the failure of the Baghdad Pact, which henceforth constituted the fundamental elements of its Middle East policy. Turkey's involvement in the pact had been driven by its role in the global East-West rivalry and had not been intended to interfere with intra-regional disputes unless they had a bearing on the global context. However, developments in the region in the late 1950s proved that intra-regional disputes could prevail over the global East-West conflict and be instrumental in nationalist Arab states' decisions to enter into alliances with the Soviet Union. A logical extension of this analysis was the need to refrain from seeing the Middle East through 'East-West' eyes and from blaming the Soviet Union for every regional destabilisation. In the end, while the external Soviet threat remained a significant factor for both Turkish and American strategic calculations, starting from the 1960s, it became increasingly subordinate to intra-regional priorities.

Thus, in spite of the broader agreement between Turkey and the US that the Soviet Union still posed threat to their vital interests, from the 1960s to the 1980s, it was no longer perceived to be an overriding/primary security threat in the Middle East context. Turkey, nevertheless, remained firmly committed to NATO and its alliance with the US. [139]

(2) Agreement on strategy to deal with the common strategic threat
In this period, the containment of the Soviet Union remained a shared strategic objective for Turkey and the US. Both countries supported CENTO as a successor organisation to the Baghdad Pact, albeit less vigorously. [140] Turkey also reconsidered its position within the Middle East and took a more independent perspective on regional issues. However, because of its non-Arab character and persistent identity issues, Arab nationalists continued to see Turkey as a former colonial power and opposed the

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[139] David S. Patterson, James E. Miller and Laurie Van Hook, eds. *Foreign Relations of The United States, 1969–1976 Volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972*, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2012), p.196
[140] National Intelligence Estimate NIE 29.2–70, *Turkey Over the Next Five Years*, 3 February 1970, http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v29/d428

'operation of a dominant Turkish power in Middle Eastern affairs.'[141] This was compounded by changing political circumstances; Arab states began to reject alignment with the US due to its domestic and intra-regional political costs.[142] In addition, Turkey's active involvement in regional security arrangements outside the NATO alliance further undermined its standing among Arab nations, which perceived it as an agent of Western interests in the region. Intra-regional disputes and Western intervention also widened the gap between countries' different approaches to the US and the Soviet Union. Turkey remained a staunch member of the Western alliance, and continued to regard the Soviet Union as the principal threat both to its own and to regional security. In contrast, most Arab nations viewed Western interference as the root cause of intra-regional disputes and the Arab-Israeli conflict as the primary source of regional instability. They blamed the US for backing Israel and regarded Moscow as a counterbalancing power against excessive Western dominance in the region. As Fuller and Çandar argue, Turkey and the Arabs were now 'on different sides of the strategic fence.'[143] With the Middle East already fraught with local sources of instability, the conflagration of intraregional conflicts had the potential to become an extension of great power competition. Turkey now risked being drawn into regional conflicts in which it had no direct interest and that would eventually undermine its security.

Turkey redefined its policy towards the region, adopting principles of non-involvement and non-interference in intra-regional disputes. These principles were carefully crafted to strike a balance between diplomacy that would complement both Turkey's position as a US ally and NATO member with a clear sense of the Soviet threat and its own regional agenda to contain potential challenges to its security without being dragged into intra-regional conflicts that would detract from containment of the Soviet threat. This strategy also evolved in the following decades: First, Turkey began to acknowledge its vital interest in regional stability; political fragility and intra-regional disputes such as the Arab-Israeli conflict and the civil war in Lebanon undermined regional stability, and, in certain cases, as in the Iran-Iraq War, had a direct impact on Turkey's security. Secondly, Turkey enhanced its bilateral ties with countries of the region, especially after Ankara initiated a multidimensional foreign policy in the mid-1960s to attract international support on the Cyprus problem.[144] Turkey also had

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[141] Binder, 'Middle East', p.424
[142] Kupchan, 'American Globalism', pp.585-611.
[143] Çandar and Fuller, 'Grand Geopolitics', p.26.
[144] Andrew Mango, 'Turkey in the Middle East', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3:3 (1968), pp.225-236.

increased economic interests in the region; it was dependent on Gulf oil, and, by the 1980s, trade with the Middle East accounted for a significant portion of Turkish foreign trade volume.

As a result, from the 1960s onwards, Turkey increasingly sought to decouple its role in the Western alliance from its regional policy.[145] Due to shifting priorities, this was mutually convenient, if not totally satisfactory, for both Turkey and the US. The Soviet threat in the region remained of secondary importance to US strategy despite an increase in Soviet power and influence in the Middle East, with intraregional dynamics presiding.[146] The Kennedy administration's policy of reducing US overseas military commitments later transformed into the 'Nixon Doctrine' and its corollary 'Twin Pillar Policy,' which delegated responsibility for maintaining regional security to Iran and Saudi Arabia.[147] The comparatively low level of US expectations from the alliance in this period also suited Turkey's policy of non-involvement and non-interference in intra-regional disputes. Thus, with the exception of Syrian claims to Turkey's Hatay province, intra-regional issues remained secondary in Turkish foreign policy.

Unlike during the 1950s, US expectations from Turkey in the region during this period remained limited to its general role in the Western alliance at the south eastern flank of NATO. Turkey wanted to help prevent further destabilisation in the region, but essentially lacked the influence to change the course of interstate rivalries, regional conflicts or the power struggle for pan-Arab leadership. Turkish policy-makers' choices were selective involvement in cases where they might have influence and non-interference in cases where they had no role. Ankara's balancing of its alliance responsibilities with its regional policy did not generally lead to a clash of interests with Washington, except when the latter requested to use Turkish bases for non-NATO contingencies, which Ankara was reluctant to allow.[148] In short, the international and regional circumstances allowed Turkey to pursue an agenda to improve bilateral ties, expand its economic opportunities, and avoid embroilment in intraregional problems without feeling direct pressure on its national interests. Another important factor was the change in the state of Turkey-US relations following the 1960s, when the relationship was overshadowed by both the Cuban missile crisis and the Turkish-Greek

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[145] Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.170.
[146] Kupchan, 'American Globalism'.
[147] Agmon, 'Defending the Upper Gulf', pp.81-97.
[148] Kuniholm, 'Turkey and the West'; Larrabee, 'Turkey Rediscovers the Middle East'.

conflict over Cyprus.[149] These events, in turn, made Turkey question the value of the NATO alliance[150] and the US military commitment to its defence,[151] questioning what role—if any—the alliance would play in a conflict that fell beyond the scope of the NATO Treaty. Turkey therefore felt justified in adopting a policy of avoiding responsibility and making no formal strategic commitments in the region outside the scope of the NATO treaty.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the political and strategic environment in the Middle East underwent significant changes as a result of the Iranian Revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Iran-Iraq War. These developments created direct challenges to the position and strategic interests of the US in the region. Following the Soviet advances in Afghanistan, US strategy was reoriented to deter the increased Soviet threat in Southwest Asia and the Middle East.[152] In recognition of the need to meet this threat, the US declared the Carter Doctrine to defend the region against aggressors, marking a reorientation of US regional priorities and strategy.[153] In 1980, the US began to include potential contingencies in Southwest Asia in NATO planning. This initiative was forestalled by the Europeans, however, who objected to out-of-area involvement by NATO.[154] The US strategy also encompassed the establishment of a 'new security framework' on the basis of 'strategic cooperation between regional states and the United States.'[155] As a result, Turkey once again became critical in US strategic considerations.[156] However, unlike in the 1950s, when Turkey had been assigned a role as pacesetter for a regional security framework, this time it was mainly involved because of the utility of the Turkish bases for military contingencies. The invasion of Afghanistan had also revived Ankara's concern about Soviet expansionism, and it believed that the US would now be more sensitive to Turkey's strategic importance. Indeed, in 1980, Turkey and the US initialled a new Agreement on Defence and Economy, covering 27 military facilities, which would formally remain under Turkish

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[149] Gülnur Aybet, *Turkey's Foreign Policy and Its Implications for the West: A Turkish Perspective* (London: RUSI, 1994), p.4.
[150] Zalmay Khalilzad, 'The Superpowers and the Northern Tier', *International Security*, 4:3 (1979-1980), pp.6-30.
[151] Agmon, 'Defending the Upper Gulf'.
[152] Soviet Policy towards the Middle East, Declassified CIA Research, http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000499549.pdf
[153] Presidential Directive NSC-63 on Persian Gulf Security, 15 January 1981, http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/pddirectives/pd63.pdf,
[154] Kupchan, 'NATO and the Persian Gulf'.
[155] Charles Kupchan, 'American Globalism' in the Middle…,
[156] Offense-Defense Working Group, *The Future of Containment: America's Options for Defending Its Interests in the Soviet Periphery*, September 1988, http://www.albertwohlstetter.com/CILTS/Containment/19881000-CILTS-FutureOfContainment.pdf

command. Nevertheless, upon Turkey's insistence, the cooperation was 'limited to obligations arising out of the North Atlantic Treaty,' and in 'support of NATO Defence plans.'[157]Ankara's strict limitation of the American military's use of Turkish bases to NATO commitments and its objections to requests for basing rights for the Rapid Deployment Force were extensions of its policy of balancing its alliance commitments with its individual approach to intra-regional problems. As then Prime Minister Turgut Özal said in 1985:

> It would be a mistake for us to allow the Rapid Deployment Force to use the Turkish bases. We are living through a time when Turkey's influence is increasing in the Middle East, which I believe would also be to the benefit of the US. It would be wrong to spend Turkey's credit in the Middle East on the RPD. If we choose to do so it would ultimately undermine Turkey's credibility in the region, whereas we can play the most influential role (of an honest broker) in the Iran-Iraq war and I guess in the Middle East question (Arab-Israeli conflict).[158]

Thus, while Turkey remained a staunch US ally during the renewed East-West tensions in accordance with the confluence of mutual interests in the new political and strategic environment from the 1960s to early 1980s, it remained wary of the political and regional risks of extending Turkey-US cooperation to Middle Eastern problems outside of NATO's remit. While Turkey and the US still agreed on the common Soviet threat, that agreement had not translated into actual security cooperation on Middle Eastern issues because of the absence of an agreement on an explicit strategy to deal with them. It was also linked to lowered US expectations from Turkey in terms of the actual implementation of Middle East strategy and to Ankara's resolve to decouple its regional role from its alliance relationship with the US.

The key argument of this chapter has been that a conceptual model is a necessary comparative and analytical tool for presenting a coherent and fully detailed account of the Turkey-US relationship vis-à-vis the Middle East. The chapter has developed an integrative model of the parameters of when and why Turkey has security cooperation with the US on Middle Eastern issues. In the following chapters, the model will be tested as it serves as the basis for an empirical study of Turkey's cooperative and non-cooperative foreign policy behaviours with the US vis-à-vis Iraq during the Gulf War and its aftermath and the Iraq War.

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[157] Joe Stork, 'The Carter Doctrine and US Bases in the Middle East',
MERIP Reports 90, The Vietnam Syndrome (September 1980), pp.3-14, 32.
[158] 'Interview with Turgut Özal: Üslere Karşı Ticaret', *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1985.

CHAPTER 2: GULF CRISIS TO GULF WAR AND IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH, AUGUST 1990 to APRIL 1991

From the onset of the Gulf Crisis in August 1990, the question of how to reverse Iraq's aggression dominated the agenda of Turkey-US relations. For the US administration, Turkey emerged as a key partner in achieving its objectives, and it expected Turkish cooperation in the implementation of UN sanctions, the use of Turkish bases in case of an attack against Iraq, the deployment of Turkish troops to its Iraq border to help discourage Saddam from moving troops south to Kuwait, and finally, as a residual request, the dispatch of a Turkish battalion to Saudi Arabia to join the allied forces.[159]

The formulation of Turkey's own policy during the Gulf Crisis reflected the changes in its international, regional and bilateral strategic environment. In the new strategic setting, the containment of a commonly defined Soviet threat had dropped out of the equation in Turkey's relations with Europe and the US.[160] Turkey increasingly felt pressure to readjust its relations with its Western allies. This was not a matter of changing the well-established direction of Turkey's foreign and security policies, but rather of identifying common ground to maintain Turkey's relevance to the West, and the US in particular, in the absence of an overarching threat. The objective for Ankara was to achieve an enhanced partnership with Washington in the new international setting in which the US emerged as the supreme power, and which President Özal termed 'indecisive balance.'[161] According to Özal, US supremacy would define the international system in the following decades, but Washington would still depend on alliances with a number of countries for the regional components of the new international paradigm. As Morton Abramowitz, then US Ambassador to Ankara, observed:

> For Özal, who was always keen to find ways to deepen and maximize relations with Washington, and therefore wanted Turkey to be closer to the US, the Gulf War offered an extraordinary opportunity to cement the American relationship over the longer term, especially in face of the decline of the Soviet Union.[162]

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[159] Morton Abramowitz, 'The Complexities of American Policymaking on Turkey', in Morton Abramowitz (ed.), *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy* (New York: The Century Foundation, 2000), pp.154-155.
[160] Parris, 'Starting Over', pp. 1-9; Parris, afterword to *Turkish-American Relations,* pp.252-253.
[161] Cengiz Çandar, interviewed by author, İstanbul, 29 November 2009.
[162] Morton Abramowitz, interviewed by author, Washington, DC, 29 May 2008.

Turkish-Iraqi relations, on the other hand, were strained due to a combination of factors. Ankara's increased perception of a threat emanating from Baghdad and President Özal's deep personal distrust of Saddam were largely due to latter's unambiguous regional ambitions, agitation over increased Iraqi assertiveness in the cross-boundary water dispute,[163] intelligence reports detailing Baghdad's support for the PKK presence and activities in Northern Iraq, and Iraq's huge military arsenal.[164] Thus, on the eve of the Gulf Crisis, Turkey's foreign and security policies were already predisposed to respond to the challenges presented by the shifting strategic environment. The eruption of the crisis following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait confirmed the convergence of Turkey's national interests and US policies, particularly in the eyes of Özal.[165]

This chapter seeks to demonstrate the parameters of Turkey-US cooperation during the Gulf Crisis and the ensuing conflict through the integrative model explained in the previous chapter. It will first analyse how Turkey and the US agreed on the nature of the threat that Saddam's invasion of Kuwait posed. It will then demonstrate how concurrence on the strategy to deal with that threat led to Turkey-US cooperation during the crisis, and covers Turkey's contribution to allied operations during Operation Desert Storm (ODS). The chapter also examines the war's unintended consequences, including Özal's unexpected move to engage in direct contact with the Iraqi Kurds and the launching of OPC.

2.1. The Initial Phase: The Turkish Assessment of the Gulf Crisis and Policy Formulation, 2–10 August, 1990

For the US administration, Saddam's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 posed a clear threat to vital US regional and global interests. It almost immediately declared its national security objectives to be 'the immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait; the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government; a commitment to the security and stability of the Persian Gulf; and, the protection of the lives of American citizens abroad.'[166]

Özal had also come to see Saddam as a serious threat, and his suspicions long predated Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. In fact, during a meeting with President Bush on 17

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[163] Yıldırım Akbulut, interviewed by author, Ankara, 12 November 2009.
[164] Kaya Toperi, interviewed by author, Ankara, 5 November 2009.
[165] Hale, *Turkey, the US and Iraq*, p.39.
[166] National Security Directive 45 on US Policy in Response to the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait, 20 August 1990, http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsd/nsd_45.htm

January 1990, Özal had called Saddam 'the most dangerous man in the world,' who would 'cause serious trouble for Turkey and the US.'[167] During a telephone conversation on 22 July 1990, Özal reminded Bush of his earlier warning, and told him that Saddam was about to invade Kuwait.[168] In addition to his personal dislike for Saddam and his emissaries, Özal was wary of Iraq's significant military power and regional ambitions. Not only did he believe Iraq posed a threat to Turkey's national security interests,[169] he also thought that only the US was powerful enough to counter Saddam's military capability.[170] Özal feared that, once Saddam had ensured the annexation of Kuwait, he would proceed to invade Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, and would eventually turn against Turkey.[171]

On the day of the invasion itself, Özal called an extraordinary meeting of the Turkish National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*, MGK) to assess the crisis.[172] At the strategic level, the MGK was primarily concerned with the possible repercussions of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on Turkey's national security. Firstly, the invasion seemed an initial step in Baghdad's regional ambitions, and these had the potential to undermine the balance of power on which the political map of the Middle East was drawn. The Gulf region had traditionally been a sphere of strategic rivalry between Iran and Iraq, but the invasion of Kuwait greatly increased Iraq's regional influence and power. The change in the status quo was likely to prompt Iran to pursue policies to offset Iraq's strategic achievement, further destabilising the region. Secondly, it was feared that Turkey would also face an ever-greater direct threat from Saddam's emboldened regime. Thirdly, Iraq's fait accompli would set a dismal precedent for future Iraqi aggression in the region. The MGK concluded on the same day that the stability and the future of the region, and Turkey's interests, hinged upon whether Iraq was to gain from this aggression. Forcing a swift Iraqi withdrawal was a 'sine qua non' to constrain Saddam within Iraq's borders.[173]

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[167] Abramowitz, interview.
[168] Toperi, interview.
[169] Özdem Sanberk, interviewed by author, Ankara, 2 February 2011.
[170] Abramowitz, interview.
[171] Toperi, interview.
[172] The MGK, under the chairmanship of the President, at the time was composed of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of the Interior, the Foreign Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, the Commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force, and the General Commander of the Gendarmerie. The MGK was entitled to submit advisory views to the Council of Ministers on the formulation, establishment and implementation of national security policy.
[173] Akbulut, interview.

However, at that point, forcing Iraq out of Kuwait seemed highly unlikely without drastic, US-led, international action, and it was unclear whether such action would be taken at all.[174] The first plausible policy course was to apply a trade embargo since Iraq's dependence on oil exports made it vulnerable to economic coercion.[175] International military action appeared as an alternative but unlikely option at that stage. Both options would require Turkish involvement and involved serious challenges for Turkey. The closure of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık oil pipeline, flowing from Iraq across Turkey and into the Mediterranean, would be crucial for the success and credibility in any strategy of economic coercion.[176] Iraq was one of Turkey's major trading partners, and participation in an economic coercion strategy would likely inflict heavy losses on Turkey's economy. Politically, the potential economic consequences would make participation in sanctions difficult to justify to the Turkish public. In addition, Saudi cooperation was imperative for the effective enforcement of any sanctions regime. Saudi failure to endorse sanctions, and any opposition from other Arab countries, would seriously undermine the prospects of economic coercion. Furthermore, it was unclear whether the sanctions would suffice to reverse Iraq's aggression. The second plausible policy course was a large-scale military operation against Iraq, in which Turkey would be a logical staging area. Ankara would then face the difficult decision of whether to allow the use of Turkish bases and/or open a front against Iraq through Turkish territory; especially sensitive given that Turkey had refused to allow the US to use Turkish bases for previous non-NATO contingencies.[177] Above all, participation in either option carried the risk of antagonising Iraq into taking retaliatory measures against Turkey. Exposure to Iraqi threats and aggression, therefore, had to be part of Turkish strategic calculations. Such calculations would pave the way to Turkey's demands that NATO draw up contingency plans to provide for its security.

Thus the major contours of Turkish policy towards the crisis had already been established by 2 August. The Turkish leadership, and particularly President Özal, were resolved to oppose Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. First, Turkey declared its agreement with the UNSCR 660 that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was an unacceptable and flagrant violation of international law, and stated its intention to pursue a principled policy for

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[174] Ali Bozer, interviewed by author, Ankara, 10 November 2009.
[175] Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict, 1990-1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.xvi.
[176] Baker and DeFrank, *Politics of Diplomacy,* p.278.
[177] 'Interview with Turgut Özal: Üslere Karşı Ticaret'; Gökhan Çetinsaya, 'Turkish-Iranian Relations since the Revolution', *Turkish Review of Middle East Studies*, 14 (2003), pp.143-161.

restoration of Kuwait's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and legitimate government.[178] Second, Turkey would consider taking part in possible sanctions, provided they were mandated by the UNSC, and the Saudis were also involved. Finally, Ankara's security concerns regarding possible Iraqi reactions to Turkish participation required that the international effort be couched in NATO Treaty obligations.

2.2. The Initial Phase: Emerging Strategy

In addition to concurring that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait posed a paramount threat to regional and global stability, Turkey and the US also agreed on the strategy to address Saddam's aggression. For the first time in decades, Turkey's perception of its national interest in an intra-Arab/regional problem converged with US expectations of it; namely, that Turkey assume a pivotal role in the strategy to reverse Iraq's aggression. In the initial phase of the crisis, this strategic calculation guided Özal's policy of active engagement through 'telephone diplomacy' with President Bush and regional leaders. Özal first called Bush on 3 August 1990: First, he argued that Saddam should be taught a 'lesson' and, in a reference to appeasement of Nazi Germany, that 'the international community should not repeat the mistakes made at the beginning of World War II.'[179] Second, based on his earlier conversation with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Özal confided that the Saudis might refrain from taking action, confirming the US concern about possible Saudi accommodation with the new status quo. In response to Bush's inquiry as to whether Turkey intended to accept closure of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline from Iraq, Özal argued the embargo itself would be inadequate to counter Iraqi aggression. Finally, he also pushed for discussion of the situation in NATO.[180] Following this telephone conversation, Bush said that he and Özal viewed the crisis with the same 'sense of urgency and concern.'[181]

Iraq, on the other hand, expected to easily deter Turkey from taking part in any international coalition. Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraq's first Deputy Prime Minister, on his first mission abroad after the invasion of Kuwait,[182] paid a visit to Ankara on 5 August 1990, to relay Saddam's intention to forcefully deter Turkey from taking part in the

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[178] Turgut Özal, 'Turkey: An Unwanted War Became Unavoidable', *The Washington Post*, 21 February 1991.
[179] Bush and Scowcroft, *World Transformed,* pp.321-326.
[180] Ibid.
[181] US Presidency, 'Remarks and an Exchange with Reporters on the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait', 3 August 1990, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=18738&st=turkey&st1.
[182] Robert Fox, 'Self-Confidence High in Turkey', *Daily Telegraph*, 14 August 1990.

international response to the crisis. Özal's response to Ramadan reflected Turkey's unequivocal position:

> This conduct of the Iraqi regime is contrary to all principles and rules of international law and has further aggravated the tense situation in the Middle East. No one will let you annex Kuwait. Turkey can help find a face-saving solution for Iraq. You have to be realistic and withdraw from Kuwait without delay. We will not remain aloof from international actions against Iraq.[183]

Ramadan responded that Iraq had no intention of pulling out, and planned to permanently annex Kuwait. He claimed the West was bluffing, that Iraq could endure sanctions, and would fight till the end if necessary.[184] He urged Turkey to refrain from participating in any effort against Iraq and also delivered a hostile statement to the Turkish press as he left Ankara. He declared any attack on Kuwait would be treated as an attack on Iraq, that any economic embargo or foreign military intervention would mean a loss for the other side, that Turkey's closure of the pipeline would create mistrust, and that Ankara had to take into account the two countries' mutual interests.[185]

Immediately after Ramadan's visit, Özal again called Bush to share his view of Iraq's intentions. Ramadan's non-conciliatory and antagonistic approach confirmed Özal's conviction that Iraq had no intention of withdrawing from Kuwait or allowing the restoration of the status quo. Özal argued that, without a forceful Western response, the odds of further Iraqi military aggression against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were also high. He advised Bush to swiftly initiate UNSC authorised sanctions, to which Turkey was prepared to adhere by shutting down the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline, provided that Saudi Arabia agreed to follow suit. However, Özal reasserted the inadequacy of sanctions alone and stressed the need to contemplate military action. He also sought to rally US support for NATO guarantees to deter any possible Iraqi retaliation for Turkey's involvement in either sanctions or military action. Bush confirmed that the US would support the Turkish request to convene a special meeting of the NAC.

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[183] Toperi, interview; Transcript of Özal's 18 August background meeting with members of the Turkish press in Mahmut Bali Aykan, *Türkiye'nin Kuveyt Krizi (1990-91) Politikası: 1998 Yılından Geriye Dönük Bir Yeniden Değerlendirme* (Ankara: Dış Politika Enstitüsü, 1998), pp.91-129.

[184] Bush and Scowcroft, *World Transformed*, pp.331-332.

[185] Hugh Pope, 'No Turkish Guarantee on Pipeline', *Independent*, 6 August 1990; Clyde Haberman, 'Iraqi Official Urges Turkey Not to Shut the Oil Pipeline', *The New York Times*, 6 August 1990; Sami Kohen, 'Turks Walk Fine Line between Iraq and the West', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 7 August 1990.

On 6 August, UNSCR 661 called for a total embargo on all commerce with Iraq and its puppet regime in Kuwait. The UNSC also invoked article 51 of the UN Charter, opening the way for individual or collective self-defence. Comprehensive international sanctions now became a crucial first step towards reversing Iraq's aggression, and their success depended on the closure of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık oil pipeline. That day, Bush informed Özal that US Secretary of State James Baker would commence his regional tour with a visit to Turkey on 9 August, self-evidently to try to persuade Ankara to enforce UNSCR 661. On 7 August, Özal confirmed plans to shut down the pipeline with the government, though this was far from being a unilateral decision on Özal's part.[186] Agreeing to implement the sanctions before Baker's visit aimed at avoiding public misperceptions that the government was caving in under strong US pressure or that the policy derived from Özal's pro-US stance.[187] In fact, the closure of the pipeline accorded with Turkey's own strategy of countering Saddam's aggression. Nevertheless, failure to comply with the sanctions would have had high international legal and political costs, isolated Turkey within the Western alliance, and damaged Turkey-US relations. In addition, Özal himself firmly believed that alignment with Washington during this vital strategic effort would serve Turkey's interest in better relations with the US and allied Western nations after the war.[188] Above all, though, any blow to Saddam's regional ambitions was also in Turkey's own national security interests.

Thus, on 7 August, Turkey implemented UNSCR 661 by shutting down the two Iraqi oil pipelines, stopping trade with Iraq and closing Turkish borders and ports to the trans-shipment of goods to Iraq.[189] Ankara informed Baghdad that it would immediately halt the loading of Iraqi oil in Yumurtalık, and Iraq stopped pumping oil into the pipeline the same night. Turkey officially announced its decision on 8 August, a day before Baker's visit.

2.3. The Second Phase: Emerging Dynamics of Cooperation

Baker's visit to Ankara on 9 August was part of a larger strategy to encircle Iraq in an economic chokehold and implied a military threat to prevent future attacks. Baker undertook extensive consultations with Turkish officials, including Özal. He explained

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[186] Vehbi Dinçerler, interviewed by author, Ankara, 11 November 2009.
[187] Engin Güner, 'Çankaya Fırtınası', *Hürriyet,* 19 February 1998.
[188] Abramowitz, 'American Policy'.
[189] TBMM Tutanakları, B:126, O:1, 12 August 1990, p.431; Philip Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East*, p.69-70.

the principles that would guide US policy,[190] and stressed that the US administration would not allow any hostile power to gain a stranglehold on the energy resources of the Gulf region. In terms of policy options to resolve the crisis, the US was committed to the restoration of the status quo through peaceful and diplomatic means. Baker also conveyed Washington's satisfaction with Turkey's firm stance and Ankara's rapid implementation of the UN sanctions.

In response, Özal and other senior Turkish government officials reaffirmed their full agreement with the US policy. Özal again denounced Saddam as a dangerous despot and pushed for his overthrow, stating that his regime's survival would pose a perpetual threat to every nation in the region. For him, the destruction of Iraq's military power was crucial to curtail Saddam's future ambitions. Additionally, Iraq should be expelled from Kuwait even if military action was necessary.[191] From the Turkish perspective, firm and uniform implementation was vital for the success of the sanctions. The Turkish officials also requested Baker share the US assessment of the sanctions' effectiveness and proposed policy course if they failed. Baker stated that the US administration viewed comprehensive sanctions and their effective implementation as crucial to reversing the Iraqi invasion. The immediate US concern, however, was to deter further Iraqi aggression, especially against Saudi Arabia, through deployment of a multinational force in the Gulf region. He emphasised that non-defensive military options were not being considered, and that he was not seeking Turkey's support for the use of force or permission to use Turkish bases for military attacks against Iraq. The US would only call for these sorts of Turkish contributions if Iraq attacked Saudi Arabia, and if and when the US decided a military solution was unavoidable.[192] Baker added that the US would appreciate the deployment of a Turkish battalion to Saudi Arabia as a symbolic contribution to the allied multinational force.[193]

In addition to exchanging perspectives on the future policy course, the Turkish leaders provided Baker with full account of the $2.5 billion financial losses Turkey expected to suffer from implementing the sanctions. Turkey requested at least partial assistance with the burden, and US backing for increased World Bank loans. Baker provided assurances that the US would offset the estimated annual Turkish losses, promising that the World

[190] US Department of State Dispatch, 'The Arabian Peninsula: US Principles', 1:1, 3 September 1990, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1990/html/Dispatchv1no01.html.
[191] Baker and DeFrank, *Politics of Diplomacy*, pp.284-285.
[192] Akbulut, interview; Bozer, interview.
[193] Abramowitz, 'American Policy', pp.154-155.

Bank would extend between $1 billion and $1.5 billion in loans for each of the next two years. He also reported a pledge made to Washington by the legitimate government of Kuwait to minimise Turkey's financial losses.[194]

Turkey's national security was also discussed with Baker. While Ankara did not fear imminent Iraqi reprisals for Turkish policy, Iraq, with its history of aggression and military capacity—including 5,700 modern tanks and 10,000 armoured vehicles—did pose a credible threat to Turkey. They felt that NATO contingency planning was essential to deter Baghdad from future attacks. Baker confirmed that the US had already consulted key NATO allies and, at the upcoming special meeting of the NAC, would work to ensure the Alliance's commitment to collective defence obligations under the NATO Treaty. In response to Özal's remarks that Turkey desired to maintain its status as a member of the Western alliance and to join the European Community (EC), Baker reiterated that the US recognised Turkey's strategic role 'as a bridge between East and West', and pledged continued US endorsement for Turkey's membership application.[195]

At the NAC session on 10 August, a day after his visit to Ankara, Baker called for the council to confirm that Article 5 of the NATO Treaty would apply in the event of Iraqi aggression against Turkey, and that, pursuant to Article 4, the council should be prepared to meet at any time should the territorial integrity or security of any member state be threatened.[196] The council agreed that Article 5 would apply in case of an Iraqi aggression against Turkey.[197] The meeting was a milestone in NATO history, marking the first such agreement on an 'out-of-area' conflict.

2.4. The Domestic Setting: Decision Making in Ankara and Tensions over Policy

Özal now sought to make the case for Turkey's involvement in the crisis to the public, stating that, 'This invasion will give rise to even bigger problems in the region. It must not be seen in terms of private interests … This is not just a problem for the Arabs; it's a world problem.'[198] Özal argued that Turkey had no choice other than to comply with the UN resolutions. The repercussions of the crisis would endure for years after its resolution, and Turkey had to protect its national interests by pursuing a dynamic

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[194] Baker and DeFrank, *Politics of Diplomacy,* pp. 284-285; Thomas L. Friedman, 'US Says Turkey Plans to Cooperate on Iraq', *New York Times*, 10 August 1990.
[195] Baker and DeFrank, *Politics of Diplomacy*, pp.284-285.
[196] Intervention by Secretary of State James A. Baker, at the special session of the NAC, 10 August 1990; TBMM Tutanakları, p.432.
[197] TBMM Tutanakları, p.432.
[198] Quoted in Pope, 'No Turkish Guarantee'.

foreign policy. Any solution to the crisis without Ankara's involvement could potentially create serious trouble for Turkey, including the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. Turkey coveted no Iraqi territory, yet had to be part of the international coalition against Iraq in order to influence events and secure its place at the negotiating table. It was thus essential that the president and the government have maximum room to manoeuvre in conducting policy. Özal insisted that force would be a last resort due to its severe and enduring implications for the region. More importantly, he believed the new international order would differ greatly from the Cold War system and the West had to understand that Turkey remained an indispensable ally in the region. He emphasised to the Middle Eastern nations that Turkey was not a military base for Western interests. For Özal, good relations with the West and the Arab world were mutually reinforcing and encapsulated Turkey's bridging role. He did not expect Turkey's policy to immediately secure EC membership, but believed its prospects of joining would increase as the crisis made its strategic indispensability more evident.[199]

However, from the outset of the crisis, there was public opposition to Özal's active involvement in and control of the decision making process. The opposition parties claimed that Özal had overstepped his constitutional powers in directing foreign policy. Özal called a meeting with the leaders of the opposition parties, but they declined to attend, claiming it was designed to legitimise Özal's misconduct.[200] Many commentators also argued for a cautious foreign policy approach towards the Middle East, a strategy they claimed had always served Turkey well in the past.[201]

According to then Prime Minister Yıldırım Akbulut, the government itself was content with Özal's leading role during the crisis.[202] According to Bozer, Özal attached special significance to the coordination of policy with the government, which aimed at minimising friction over policy. Özal wanted a freer hand in maintaining Turkey's active posture in dealing with the crisis, and that required a war powers resolution from the TBMM.[203] Article 92 of the Turkish Constitution grants the TBMM powers to authorise the declaration of a state of war, to send the Turkish Armed Forces (*Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri,* TSK) to foreign countries, and to allow foreign armed forces into

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[199] See, Aykan, *Türkiye'nin Kuveyt Krizi.*
[200] TBMM Tutanakları, pp.423-478.
[201] Clyde Haberman, 'Quick Action by Turkey on Sanctions a Startler', *The New York Times*, 7 August 1990.
[202] Akbulut, interview.
[203] Bozer, interview; Toperi, interview.

Turkey, subject to 'international legitimacy.' The real point of dissent was Özal's insistence on a mandate for the use of force, including sending Turkish forces abroad.[204] According to Akbulut, Özal felt that parliamentary authorisation was unnecessary while Akbulut believed it was the only course of action.[205] Bozer and Vehbi Dinçerler, the then Minister of State, resisted Özal on the grounds that any unnecessary use of Turkish forces in a regional military intervention would create immense long-term troubles for Turkey.[206] However, in interview, none of the then policy makers claimed that Özal's intention in seeking the powers was to involve Turkish armed forces in a conflict with Iraq. On the contrary, they all confirm that Özal never raised the prospect of authorising military intervention during any cabinet or MGK meetings. They also note that the Turkish leadership, including Özal, was unanimously against opening a second front for ground operations against Iraq unless Turkey was directly attacked.[207] Akbulut underscored that the Turkish General Staff (TGS) raised no objections to policy throughout the crisis, adding that the US tabled no request that Ankara open a second front through Turkey. According to some contemporary advisers, Özal considered dispatching a frigate to the Gulf to contribute to ODS as a gesture of solidarity with the US.[208] However, his public statements claimed that Turkey had no current plans to send troops to join the US-led international force, though that was open to change. On the other hand, Özal, the government and the Turkish military recognised that Turkish air bases, and especially İncirlik, would be strategically vital to US war plans, and there was thus no disagreement on authorising the American military to use them.[209] On 5 September, the government secured the TBMM's mandate for the requested war powers under Article 92, though revised to strictly limit their use to cases of direct aggression.[210] On 12 September, the government obtained a new mandate with broader war powers. As part of contingency planning, the TSK almost doubled troop deployments along the Turkish side of the Iraqi border to more than 100,000 troops supported by tanks and warplanes. This move was in line with US efforts to 'encourage Iraq's neighbours, Syria and Turkey, to increase their forces along their borders with

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[204] Akbulut, interview; Bozer, interview; Dinçerler, interview.
[205] Akbulut, interview.
[206] Bozer, interview; Dinçerler, interview.
[207] Akbulut, interview; Bozer, interview; Dinçerler, interview.
[208] Derya Sazak, '11 Eylül Gölgesinde Saddam-2', *Milliyet*, 6 January 2002.
[209] Akbulut, interview; Bozer, interview; Dinçerler, interview.
[210] TBMM Tutanakları, 5 September 1990, pp.99-115.

Iraq so as to draw off Iraqi forces from, and resources devoted to, the Kuwait theatre of operations.'[211]

2.5. The Third Phase: September 1990 to January 1991

From mid-September to the start of the Gulf war, Ankara defined its national interests and the policies pursuant to them on three levels: The primary level concerned strategy towards Iraq itself. The sanctions were proving inadequate as Iraq seemed easily able to weather them, suggesting that the Turkish economy would suffer long term damage. Iraq was also exploiting the Arab Street's historic mistrust of the US and Israel to propagandise against the blockade, suggesting that uniform implementation of sanctions through the international coalition would prove harder than anticipated. Furthermore, even if economic sanctions did coerce Iraq into withdrawing from Kuwait, if it were thereby allowed to maintain its unmatched military might and capabilities, the Iraqi threat to the regional balance of power would remain, and Saddam would continue to blackmail other nations with impunity. On the other hand, a military solution to the crisis and Iraqi threat would create risks for the future of Iraq. The military devastation of the Iraqi regime could lead to the dismemberment of Iraq or leave it too weak to check the regional power of Iran and Syria. According to Kaya Toperi, then Spokesperson for the Presidency, this analysis was the context of Özal's active policy to ensure that Turkey wielded influence over the course of the crisis. For Ankara, the best outcome would be a territorially integrated and stable Iraq with curbed military might and potentially without Saddam in power.[212] It was concerned to prevent any disintegration of Iraq that could inspire a separatist drive by Iraqi Kurds looking to carve out an independent state in the region.[213]

Secondly, at the regional level, Ankara's key motive was preserving the regional balance of power. From the outset of the crisis, Turkey remained wary of the policies of its Middle Eastern neighbours, Iran and Syria, allies since the late 1970s.[214] Iran's policy towards the crisis was a duplicitous pragmatic opportunism. Tehran condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, called for an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal, and endorsed the UN sanctions, yet also pursued a strategy of limited rapprochement with Baghdad. It

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[211] National Security Directive 45.
[212] Toperi, interview.
[213] Gerald F. Seib, 'US Dilemma: How to Hammer Iraq in a Battle without Smashing It, Emboldening Iran, Syria', *Wall Street Journal*, December 1990.
[214] For the relations between Syria and Iran, see Anoushiravan Ehteshami, 'Iran-Iraq Relations after Saddam', *The Washington Quarterly*, 26:4 (2003), pp.115-129.

was a sensitive situation for Iran. First, Iraq was a long-time rival, and Iraq's annexation of Kuwait would provide Saddam, Iran's archenemy, with unrestricted access to the Gulf and vast oil assets. The prospect of an Iraqi hegemony in the Gulf thus posed a vital threat to Iran. However, Tehran was also wary of increased Western presence and called for the coalition to withdraw from the region. In contrast, for Syria, the Gulf Crisis created an opportunity to decrease its international isolation by improving ties with the West, and Damascus endorsed the US strategy, deploying troops to the multinational force in Saudi Arabia. Ankara was especially watchful of Syrian policies as Damascus was known to sponsor PKK terrorism against Turkey. It also remained alert to how the enduring alliance between Damascus and Tehran would develop in response to the Gulf Crisis. Paradoxically, Ankara believed it was crucial to establish a uniform approach in concert with both Syria and Iran to ensure the preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity if Saddam's regime collapsed following a war.

Thirdly, at the international level, Ankara acted with a renewed confidence that the Gulf Crisis had proven Turkey's strategic importance. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait had been the first major crisis of the post-Cold War era, and was seen as an opportunity to create a new world order, reflecting a general desire to re-establish stability in the international system based on shared values and common interests.[215] Özal believed supporting the US policy from the start of the crisis would ensure that Turkey became a pivotal actor in the new global paradigm. In fact, Bush affirmed that the Gulf Crisis had demonstrated the 'indisputable strategic importance of Turkey to NATO and the US.'[216]

Against this backdrop, Turkey-US discussions on the Gulf Crisis focused on Saddam's political situation, the efficiency of sanctions, Iraq's military capabilities, and the future policy course. Özal took every opportunity to remind Bush that Saddam did not have the flexibility to back down.[217] Although sanctions were the preferred policy course, when they showed no sign of effecting change in Iraq's behaviour,[218] the military option gradually emerged as the most viable alternative. Özal advised the US administration

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[215] Lawrence Freedman, *A Choice of Enemies: America Confronts the Middle East* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), pp.229-230.

[216] US Presidency, Remarks Following Discussions with President Turgut Özal of Turkey, 25 September 1990, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=18857&st=turkey&st1; White House, Readout Regarding Visits of President Turgut Özal of Turkey, 25 September 1990, http://fednews.com/transcript.html?item=19900925z0436&op=&addr=FN15-NW1; Jim Bodgener, 'Interview with Turkish President: Özal Sets Terms for Sanctions Compensation', *Financial Times*, 21 August 1990; Thomas Goltz, 'Dealing Turkey into the Power Game', *The Washington Post,* 23 September 1990.

[217] White House, Regarding visits of President Özal; Walter S. Mossberg, 'Bush Expected to Ask Congress to Clear 7.5 Billion Arms Sale to Saudi Arabia', *Financial Times*, 27 September 1990.

[218] White House, Regarding Visits of President Özal.

that military action should be considered in the event that the economic embargo failed.[219] He claimed that the Iraqi army was seriously overestimated in the West, was no more powerful than that of a Third World state, and could not hold out against a US-led international force.[220] However, if Saddam remained in power, his military would be as strong as ever, he would be politically emboldened, and any concession to him in return for withdrawal would encourage future Iraqi aggression.[221] Özal declared Turkey would not oppose an armed intervention, provided that the UNSC sanctioned the action,[222] but also underlined that Turkey would not become a second front unless Iraq attacked Turkish territory.[223] In fact, Özal repeatedly dismissed the prospects of a second front through Turkey, and did not commit to US military requests until war became inevitable.[224] Abramowitz observed that Özal 'had kernel doubt about the US determination to deal decisively with Saddam,' particularly about whether the US would ultimately opt for a military course. He thus remained wary of giving any immediate carte blanche to the US on Turkish bases which would potentially further antagonise Iraq into reprisals against Turkey.[225] The legal basis for any US-led military campaign was also questionable until the UNSC explicitly authorised the use of force,[226] and Ankara believed it was imprudent to expend political capital so long as war itself remained avoidable. Thus, the question of whether Turkey would allow the US to conduct offensive military action from Turkish territory or military facilities remained unclear until the start of the war.[227]

Özal's strategy of aligning with the US also aspired to make Turkey a player in a post-war scenario. He acted on the assumption that participation in the coalition would secure Turkey a place at the table after Saddam's defeat.[228] He argued that new regional security arrangements had to be put into place, irrespective of how the crisis was resolved, as intraregional relations were bound to change:

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[219] Mossberg, 'Bush Expected'; Kamen, 'Turkey'.
[220] White House, Regarding Visits of President Özal.
[221] 'Crisis in the Gulf: Interview with Turgut Özal, President of Turkey', *CNN,* 11 January 1991, http://fednews.com/transcript.html?item=19900806z0138&op=&addr=NW1-FNSBI
[222] Mossberg, 'Bush Expected'; Kamen, 'Turkey'.
[223] 'Crisis in the Gulf', *CNN.*
[224] Abramowitz, 'American Policy', pp154-155.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Nigel D. White and Hilaire McCoubrey, 'International Law and the Use of Force in the Gulf', *International Relations*, 10 (1991), pp.347-373.
[227] Address by H.E. Turgut Özal, President of the Republic of Turkey at the NPC Washington DC, 25 September 1990; White House, Regarding Visits of President Özal; Johanna Neuman, 'Baker Moves On to Moscow', *USA Today*, 7 November 1990; Sam Cohen, 'Turkey Cautions Baker about Pulling It into a Gulf War', *The Christian Science Monitor,* 8 November 1990; David Hoffman, 'Baker Wants U.N. to Approve Force', *The Washington Post*, 8 November 1990.
[228] Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.166.

> Seeds of dissent have been sown all over the Arab world. Elements of instability in the area are likely to become more pronounced. That is why the conditions for lasting peace and stability in the region need to be established. The resolution of the Gulf Crisis will not be enough to achieve this goal.[229]

The Turkey-US discussions in this period also involved compensation for the economic burden of the sanctions on the Turkish economy. By the end of 1990, Turkey was feeling the severe and immediate economic consequences of the sanctions, especially on its fragile balance of payments and inflation levels. Uncertainty over the likely duration of the crisis compounded the problem.[230] Turkey required offsetting action and expected US assistance to that end. Özal repeatedly emphasised that Turkey's interests were served by more export opportunities to US and Western markets, rather than direct aid.[231] Turkey aspired to increase trade with the US by elimination of trade barriers and improve economic and security cooperation, and Washington agreed, pledging to initiate negotiations towards a new agreement on textiles. Turkey was also assured that the 13 nations contributing over $20 billion to the US burden-sharing initiative would offer it aid.[232]

Turkey additionally requested military assistance from the US to improve its defence capability and modernise the TSK, which was equipped with obsolete weaponry. Ankara submitted a detailed list of requirements to Washington, requesting that the US assist with the finance for a second package of 120 F-16 aircraft,[233] and calling for an end to the cuts to its military assistance and the removal of the 7:10 ratio.[234] Turkey expected that the US administration would respond positively and ensure congressional authorisation for military sales and assistance. Bush pledged to Özal that his administration would work with Congress to ensure that Turkey received 'its fair share of security assistance' in the fiscal year 1991, and would help to modernise the Turkish

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[229] 'Address by H.E. Turgut Özal', 25 September 1990; White House, 'Regarding Visits of President Özal'.
[230] IBRD, *Briefing Note on Potential World Bank Assistance to Countries Affected by the Gulf Crisis*, 13 September 1990.
[231] Address by H.E. Turgut Özal, 25 September 1990.
[232] US Presidency, Discussions with President Özal.
[233] William Safire, 'The Second Front', *The New York Times*, 1 November 1990.
[234] Since the late 1980s, the US Congress had cut the administration's military assistance program for Turkey every year stressing the declined importance of military-base rights in Turkey and the increased demand from Eastern Europe. Above all, Congress linked the level of aid for Turkey to the level for Greece, guaranteeing Greece $7 of American military aid for every $10 that Turkey received. Ankara had consistently objected to the 7:10 ratio.

Air Force (*Türk Hava Kuvvetleri,* THK) through future sales of F-16s and provision of other military equipment.[235]

However, by the end of 1990, tangible US economic and military assistance had still not materialised. Özal's frustration was reflected both in his public statements and official approaches. He was disappointed by what he termed a lack of a fair and accurate understanding of Turkey's role in the crisis and an appropriate response to its contribution. He was particularly annoyed that the US had not accommodated Turkish requests for modernisation of the THK. The factors that most upset Ankara were continued uncertainty about the financing of the second package of F-16s, the continued application of the 7:10 ratio in military assistance, and the US president's regular report on Cyprus, which Ankara viewed as ever more biased. The Turkish leadership was also frustrated at the inadequate financial assistance that Turkey had received despite being one of the countries most affected by the crisis, especially as the US had written off Egypt's $7 billion FMS debt but made no offer to relieve Turkey's $3 billion debt. In terms of Turkey's security, a delay in the decision to deploy NATO's Allied Mobile Force to Turkey due to German objections cast doubt on the validity of NATO's pledge to invoke Article 5 in the event of an Iraqi attack on Turkey, intensifying domestic political pressure on the government. Ankara was also extremely frustrated by the congressional decision to tie the increase in the annual level of military assistance to Turkey from $700 million to nearly $2 billion to parallel increases for Greece. Özal complained of Congress' unfavourable disposition towards Turkey and the limited efforts of the US administration.[236]

From September 1990 to the start of the war, while Özal's stature and prestige as an international player heightened, he faced tremendous domestic opposition and criticism. Opposition parties accused him of misusing presidential powers and exceeding his constitutional authority by single-handedly guiding policy.[237] Özal's critics described his policy as adventurism that would drag Turkey into a war for the sake of playing a role in the Middle East and Özal's personal prestige.[238] They also argued that Turkish policy was subservient the US, that Özal was more committed to a bellicose course than the US,[239] and that Turkey risked becoming a regional policeman.[240] From October to

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[235] US Presidency, Discussions with President Özal.
[236] Letter by Turgut Özal, the President of the Turkish Republic, to Senator Robert Byrd, the President Pro Tempore of the US Senate, 24 December 1990.
[237] Hikmet Çetin, interviewed by author, Ankara, 28 October 2009.
[238] Cohen, 'Turkey Cautions'.
[239] Ufuk Güldemir, 'Turkey: Caught in the Middle', *Outlook*, 4 November 1990.

December, three senior officials resigned from their posts: In mid-October, Bozer resigned as Foreign Minister to protest the insulting tone of the press reports of his non-attendance at a September meeting in Washington between Özal and Bush.[241] However, Bozer emphasised in interview that his resignation had nothing to do with Iraq policy, and his disagreement with Özal was limited to his objection to an open-ended war powers resolution.[242] This was followed in November by the resignation of Defence Minister Sefa Giray after a disagreement with Akbulut over his leadership of the ANAP. Giray too insisted that he never had any problem with Özal about the Gulf Crisis policy.[243] The most remarkable resignation of all occurred in early December when General Necip Torumtay, the Chief of the TGS resigned, allegedly over practical reservations against engaging in a war with Iraq.[244] However, both Akbulut and Bozer underlined that Torumtay never raised any objections to the policy course during MGK or crisis committee meetings.[245]

Also during this period, speculation arose in Turkey about the oil-rich Iraqi province of Kirkuk-Mosul, former Ottoman territories ceded to British rule by the League of Nations in 1926. It was widely reported that Özal expected annexation of the region as a reward for Turkey's support of US policies.[246] Some have even claimed that plans to annex the region led to Turkey's involvement in the international coalition.[247] However, Özal repeatedly dismissed these reports as speculative, underlining that the issue had been over for Turkey since 1926,[248] that Turkey did not 'covet Iraq's or any country's soil,'[249] and that Iraq's territorial integrity was crucial for regional stability.[250] Akbulut, Bozer, Dinçerler and Kandemir all confirm that Özal never broached the Kirkuk-Mosul issue during cabinet or MGK meetings, and had no recollection of official discussions on the matter,[251] while Torumtay claims that Özal raised the issue during the crisis

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[240] Cohen, 'Turkey Cautions'.

[241] Bozer, interview; Interview with Ali Bozer, 'Beyaz Saray'da Beni Görüşmeye Almadılar', *Hürriyet*, 10 January 2000.

[242] Bozer, interview; Bozer, 'Beyaz Saray'da'.

[243] Sefa Giray, interviewed by author, Ankara, 11 November 2009.

[244] Necip Torumtay, *Orgeneral Torumtay'ın Anıları* (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1994), pp.115-116.

[245] Akbulut added that Torumtay never discussed the reasons for his resignation with him.

[246] Torumtay, *Torumtay'ın Anıları*, pp. 115-116*;* 'The World This Week', *Channel 4*, 2 January 1991; 'Newsnight', *BBC 2*, 24 January 1991; Hugh Pope, 'Iraq Land Claim behind Özal's Pledge to Kurds', *Independent*, 28 January 1991; 'Profile: Turgut Özal Plays the War of Turkey', *Independent,* 2 February 1991.

[247] McDowall, *Modern History of the Kurds*, p.370.

[248] Address by H.E. Turgut Özal; Altan Öymen, 'Özal'ın Açıklaması', *Milliyet*, 4 February 1991.

[249] Özal, 'Turkey: Unwanted War'; Öymen, 'Özal'ın Açıklaması'; 'World News', *Channel 4*, 4 February 1991.

[250] Nurver Nureş, 'We Can Find the Path to Peace', *Independent*, 26 March 1991.

[251] Akbulut, interview; Bozer, interview; Dinçerler, interview. Kandemir, interview.

management meetings and once at the MGK meeting in November without detailed discussion.[252] However, Abramowitz also confirms that Özal never raised the issue with him or the US administration, but remembered hearing that Özal had talked about it with others in Turkey. For Abramowitz, 'I looked upon that as his way of starting a debate, not a serious thing. On the other hand, very early on, he saw the need for Turkey to be involved in Northern Iraq.'[253] It appears that Özal did in fact explore the historical and legal context of the League of Nations decision in 1926, examining the issue with his close advisers, especially once the prospects of use of force against Iraq increased.[254] Any military action against Saddam risked Iraq's disintegration and subsequent redrawing of the regional map.[255] Özal, who was resolved that Turkey should have a say in post-war arrangements for the region, possibly launched the debate about Kirkuk-Mosul as part of contingency planning to explore Turkey's options in response to Iraq's possible disintegration.[256] Another calculation may have been an effort to forestall international support for Kurdish separatism. Controlling Kirkuk-Mosul would have provided Turkey with the means to both check Kurdish separatism and conceivably wipe out the PKK presence in Northern Iraq.[257]

2.6. The Gulf War

The multinational force commenced air strikes against Iraq on 16 January 1991. Akbulut stated the following day that, despite Turkey's regret that war had become unavoidable, Ankara supported military action and hoped Saddam would realise the gravity of the situation before considerable loss of life occurred.[258] From 18 January to the end of hostilities, coalition forces launched air attacks from military installations in Turkey. Due to the tremendous public opposition even to Turkey's limited involvement in the war, a news blackout was implemented for operations from İncirlik air base. Özal argued that Turkey had no choice but to support the US-led coalition because of the possibility of post-war political turbulence in Iraq or a coalition government of Shiites

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[252] Mehmet Ali Birand, Soner Yalçın, *The Özal: Bir Davanın Öyküsü*, (İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2001), p.430-433

[253] Abramowitz, interview; Morton Abramowitz, second interview by author, Washington DC, 10 February 2012.

[254] Toperi, interview.

[255] Torumtay, *Orgeneral Torumtay'ın Anıları*, pp. 115-116; 'The World This Week', *Channel 4*, 2 January 1991; 'Newsnight', *BBC 2*, 24 January 1991; Pope, 'Iraq Land Claim'; 'Profile: Turgut Özal'.

[256] Kandemir, interview; Birand and Yalçın, *The Özal*, p.434-439.

[257] 'Still Needed, Still Stalwart', *The Economist*, 12 January 1991; Goltz, 'Dealing Turkey'.

[258] Akbulut, interview.

and Kurds intent on regional autonomy.[259] Iraq sent official warnings and veiled threats to Ankara in protest at Turkey's participation in the international coalition.[260] Ankara categorically rejected Iraq's allegations, holding the Iraqi government solely responsible for the crisis while reiterating the importance of Iraq's continued sovereignty and territorial integrity.[261] During the hostilities, Özal repeatedly stressed the need for a post-war regional security arrangement:

> Now that the liberation of Kuwait has begun, the international community must start thinking about ways to stabilize the region after the conflict. There is no question but that the crisis has had, and will continue to have, repercussions in the Middle East.[262]
>
> The Middle East will never be the same… The [regional] questions should be properly addressed… We may help bring peace to the region, but all these questions primarily need to be dealt with by the peoples of the region. Outside powers should facilitate their task.[263]

According to Özal, once the Gulf Crisis ended, it would be imperative to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, to build a 'peace water pipeline' to carry water from Turkey's Tigris and Euphrates rivers down to the Arabian Peninsula, and to create regional economic interdependence. Özal also urged the launch of a democratisation process in the region.[264]

The Gulf War ended on 28 February 1991 with a swift and decisive allied victory and Iraq's acceptance of 'immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait.' The coalition stopped the ground war without marching to Baghdad or overthrowing Saddam—a decision which would remain controversial in the following decade and generate a range of explanations. First, from the US perspective, the downfall of Saddam had not been a coalition objective and anyway fell beyond the mandate provided by the UNSC. The replacement of the Iraqi leadership would only have become an explicit US objective had Iraq sought to 'use chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, [support] terrorist acts against US or coalition partners anywhere in the world,

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[259] Jonathan C. Randal, 'US Use of Bases Poses Risk for Turkey', *The Washington Post*, 21 January 1991; Ray Moseley, 'Turkey May Win Gamble on Iraq', *Chicago Tribune*, 29 January 1991.
[260] Letter dated 21 January 1991 by Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Iraq, to Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemoçin, the Turkish Foreign Minister.
[261] Letter dated 28 January 1991 by Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemoçin, the Turkish Foreign Minister, to Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Foreign Minister.
[262] Özal, 'Turkey: Unwanted War'.
[263] Text of Statement made by President Turgut Özal, via satellite before the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, 3 February 1991.
[264] Özal, 'Turkey: Unwanted War'. Text of Statement, President Turgut Özal, 3 February 1991.

or destroy Kuwait's oil fields.'[265] Second, and above all, overthrowing Saddam would have demanded a tougher and more costly military effort. It would have required the US to assume responsibility for replacing his regime and governing Iraq. Such an undertaking could also have led to the break-up of Iraq, which the major US allies in the region—Turkey and Saudi Arabia—strongly opposed.[266] Third, while Washington publicly stated its preference for the removal of Saddam's regime, it hoped that this would be a by-product of the war. The US believed the security and stability of the region depended upon reducing Iraq's means to be a further threat to the region. For Bush, the normalisation of relations with Iraq could not be effected with Saddam in power, but it was inappropriate to try to shape or suggest the form the government should follow. The US looked for stability and order, and for 'somebody to lead that country in the way of peace,' preferring an Iraqi government 'that could work very compatibly with the Western powers ... without threatening its neighbours.'[267]

With victory achieved, the broader security questions regarding the future course of policy fell into two categories: The first question concerned Iraq itself. The US decided to continue the UN sanctions and only consider lifting them conditional on political commitments by Iraq including, to some degree, to whether Saddam remained in power. Washington was convinced that Iraq's ability to threaten its neighbours or wage war against them had been sufficiently diminished, if not totally eliminated.[268] It seemed very unlikely that Iraq would be able to reconstitute its military capability in the near-term. However, some of its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and its missile capacity and programs remained intact. The US wanted sanctions on weaponry and some forms of dual-use technology to remain in place, and hoped to prevent the use of oil revenues to rebuild Iraq's military capabilities. In short, Washington adopted a policy to 'neuter' Saddam's regime even if it survived the aftermath of the conflict.[269] The second question was the need to restore order in the Gulf and establish a regional security arrangement to prevent further hostilities. However, any initiative to create a regional security setting had to address the absence of a border settlement between Iraq and Kuwait, and the challenge of fitting Iran into that framework. It would also require

[265] National Security Directive 45.
[266] Freedman, *Choice of Enemies*, pp.229-230.
[267] President's News Conference with President Turgut Özal of Turkey, 23 March 1991, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-1991-book1/pdf/PPP-1991-book1-doc-pg303-2.pdf
[268] President's News Conference with Özal.
[269] Freedman, *Choice of Enemies*, pp.229-230.

some form of US military engagement, even though a continued US ground presence in the region could create political difficulties for Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries.

Turkey agreed with the fundamental US principles and strategy. The first area of convergence was the preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity and the restoration of stability. Throughout the crisis, the US had assured Turkey that the territorial integrity of Iraq was not in question as it felt that Iraq's stability would contribute to overall stability in the region. Even before the conflict began, the US had officially underlined that the US 'recognizes the territorial integrity of Iraq and will not support efforts to change current boundaries.'[270] The second area of concurrence involved the risk that the survival of Saddam's regime posed to regional peace. From the Turkish perspective, a strong Iraqi regime had to be a part of any strategy for ensuring Iraq's unity and stability—a calculation that the US seemed to agree with in principle. However, it posed a significant challenge for both countries to square this objective with their dislike for Saddam's regime itself. For Ankara, the continuation of sanctions until regime change would certainly have severe economic implications for Turkey, and pose a further political challenge. The third area of Turkey-US convergence was ensuring that Iraq would not become so weakened that it would fall prey to Iranian and Shiite influence, with all that implied for the regional balance of power.[271] Lastly, the two countries agreed on Turkey's role in the post-war settlements. Özal sought Turkish influence in security arrangements and peace plans for the Middle East, and Washington confirmed that Turkey could make a significant contribution as plans for security and stability in the Gulf developed.[272]

2.7. The Immediate Aftermath of the Gulf War: Dialogue with the Kurds and Operation Provide Comfort

Having refused to talk to the Iraqi Kurds for decades, Turkey now opened up an unofficial dialogue with the Iraqi Kurdish leaders—Jalal Talabani of the PUK and Masoud Barzani of the KDP—revealing a new aspect to Özal's policy of active involvement in the crisis.[273] The meeting took place in early March 1991 during the rebellion against Saddam's regime in Northern Iraq with the participation of Talabani

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[270] National Security Directive 45.
[271] Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.125-126, 130.
[272] President's News Conference with Özal.
[273] 'The World This Week'*, Channel 4*, 16 March 1991.

and Barzani's representative, Mohsin Dizaee.[274] According to the then KDP Spokesperson Hoshyar Zebari, when Turkish officials deliberately leaked details of the meeting to the media, it was 'a breakthrough for Iraqi Kurds.'[275] It was a remarkable move given the US had proscribed all contact with Iraqi dissidents since 1988, mainly to avoid alienating Turkey. The State Department had refused to talk to Talabani, who visited Washington in August 1990, just to prevent a backlash by Turkey and Iran, and undermining Talabani's hopes that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait might affect a change in US policy. At the same time, Washington repeatedly rejected the recommendations of the US Ambassador in Ankara to officially engage Iraqi Kurdish leaders. Yet, as Abramowitz explains, 'a few days later, we saw that Turkey started talking to them. Afterwards, we began to talk to the Iraqi Kurds, but we had to be exceedingly cautious.'[276]

To date, there are a number of explanations for Özal's 'dramatic' initiative to initiate contact with the Iraqi Kurds. More cynical explanations argue that it was Turkey's intention to achieve the annexation of Northern Iraq as compensation for its losses during the Gulf war. However, this argument does not withstand inspection since Turkey firmly and consistently stood by its policy of maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity.[277] The second argument is that, through talks with Iraqi Kurds, Turkey wanted to demonstrate its willingness to assist them in easing their suffering under Saddam. Ankara expected this policy would eventually prove that Turkey's real problem was with the PKK, rather than with Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin or the Iraqi Kurds. Third, Turkey was concerned that a power vacuum in Northern Iraq might enable the PKK to establish a base for terrorist operations there.[278] Given that the Iraqi Kurdish parties sheltered the PKK in the 1980s, Turkey believed its interests demanded isolating the PKK from the Iraqi Kurds and preventing their further cooperation, which had traditionally been supported by third parties. Fourth, Özal intended for Turkey to have a say in the construction of post-war Iraq. According to Abramowitz, 'Özal had some vision to deal with Iraqi Kurds and was more interested in ensuring Turkey would have an influence in Northern Iraq.'[279] Özal's response to the tremendous domestic criticism

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[274] Kamran Karadaghi, interviewed by author, London, 8 June 2008; Saffeen Dizai, interviewed by author, Erbil, 30 October 2009; Toperi, interview; 'The World This Week', *Channel 4*, 16 March 1991.
[275] Hoshyar Zebari, interviewed by author, Istanbul, 20 September 2009.
[276] Abramowitz, interview.
[277] 'The World This Week', *Channel 4*, 16 March 1991.
[278] 'Turkey and the Kurds: Trying to Please', *The Economist*, 30 March 1991.
[279] Abramowitz, interview.

of his policy revealed this vision: 'There is nothing to be afraid of in talking. We must become friends with them. If we become enemies, others can use them against us.'[280]

The dialogue with Turkey cleared the way for the Iraqi Kurds to establish contact with the US administration. Washington opposed the dismemberment of Iraq and set this as a prerequisite in its engagement with the Iraqi Kurds, urging the Iraqi Kurdish parties to heed Turkey's concern for Iraq's territorial integrity and renounce any secessionist course.[281] Ankara had no power of veto over Washington's contacts with any dissident Iraqi groups. However, Turkey was a major ally, and its contribution to US policy was crucial for Washington. The contacts would simultaneously serve as instruments to keep the Iraqi Kurdish agenda in line with Washington's strategy of organising a unified opposition to Saddam's regime.

Following the end of hostilities, a humanitarian crisis began to unfold in Northern Iraq, with mass displacements as people fled the Iraqi army's suppression of the Kurdish uprising. By 2 April, about 400,000 people, mostly Kurds, had fled to the Turkish border, a remote and mountainous area that was experiencing severe weather conditions. The Turkish government immediately started a relief operation to provide emergency food and medical aid to the refugees. At the same time, Ankara urged Baghdad to immediately cease its oppression and deportation of innocent people. On 5 April 1991, the UNSC, acting at the request of the Turkish and French governments, passed UNSCR 688, which condemned Iraq's actions and called for a large program of international relief. Özal introduced the idea of establishing camps in 'temporary settlement areas' in Northern Iraq, where geographical conditions were more convenient for effective relief actions, while putting pressure on Iraq to restore the conditions required for the displaced persons to return to their homes.[282]

The human tragedy in the north demanded US military intervention. However, the US administration, which was determined to achieve rapid military disengagement from Iraq, remained reluctant to intervene in an Iraqi civil war.[283] According to Scowcroft,

[280] İlnur Cevik, 'Özal Discloses Meeting with Talabani, Others', *Turkish Daily News*, 12 March 1991; Jonathan Randal, 'Turks Meet with Iraqi Opposition', *Washington Post*, 11 March 1991.
[281] James M. Prince, 'A Kurdish State in Iraq?' *Current History*, 92:570 (1993), pp.17-22.
[282] Mustafa Akşin, interviewed by author, Ankara, 28 October 2009; William D. Monalbano and Hugh Pope, 'Turgut Özal: The Kurds Must Go to Their Own Places', *Los Angeles Times*, 6 April 1991; 'Interview with President Turgut Özal of Turkey', *ABC This Week*, 7 April 1991, http://fednews.com/transcript.html?item=19910407z0108&op=&addr=NW1-FNSBI
[283] Elaine Sciolino, 'After the War: How Bush Overcame Reluctance and Embraced Kurdish Relief', *The New York Times,* 18 April 1991; President's Remarks at a Meeting with Hispanic Business Leaders and

any US involvement would require the occupation of Iraq and the replacement of the Iraqi regime, but the new government might be overthrown immediately after the departure of the coalition forces. US military involvement was therefore unacceptable from a policy standpoint.[284] However, Turkey was in trouble and the entire Turkish political spectrum placed the blame squarely on Özal, arguing that the situation was a direct result of his policies.

Following a joint tour of the region by Secretary Baker and Turkish Foreign Minister Alptemoçin on 8 April to assess the unfolding tragedy, Turkey and the US agreed to 'closely cooperate' to effect UNSCR 688 and an international relief operation that would enable the refugees to return to their homes.[285] In interview, Abramowitz confirmed that the main reason behind US intervention was 'Turkey's concerns.'[286] Özal's initial proposal of settlement areas in Northern Iraq evolved into a plan for a 'safe haven', introduced by British Prime Minister John Major.[287] Faced with the difficulty of acquiring a new UNSCR mandating military intervention, the US unilaterally informed Iraq that it should cease all military activities in the air and on the ground north of the 36th parallel so that relief operations could proceed. After securing Turkey's cooperation, on 16 April, Bush announced the beginning of OPC to create a safe haven in Northern Iraq while providing life-saving help to the displaced. OPC was mainly achieved by American, French and British troops operating from Turkish territory and the İncirlik base.[288]

2.8. Conclusion

Turkey-US cooperation during the Gulf Crisis stands out as an example of scenario 1 of the integrative model, in which Turkey and the US agreed on both independent variables one and two. The convergence of Turkey and the US' perceptions of the Iraqi threat, and the ensuing sense of urgency and concern yielded to a consensus in devising and implementing a coordinated strategy, resulting in cooperation on the response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, as table 3 shows.

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an Exchange with Reporters in Newport Beach, California, 5 April 1991, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-1991-book1/pdf/PPP-1991-book1-doc-pg332.pdf

[284] Interview with National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, 'Meet the Press', *NBC News*, 7 April 1991.

[285] Joint Statement by US Secretary of State J. Baker and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemoçin, 8 April 1991.

[286] Abramowitz, interview.

[287] For a detailed account of the safe haven solution see 'Haven from the Hell-Holes', *The Sunday Times*, 21 April 1991.

[288] Kirişçi and Winrow, *Kurdish Question,* pp.157-160; President's Remarks on Assistance for Iraqi Refugees and a News Conference, 16 April 1991, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-1991-book1/pdf/PPP-1991-book1-doc-pg378-3.pdf

Table 3: Integrative model of Turkey-US cooperation during the Gulf Crisis and War

Independent Variable 1: Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat	Independent Variable 2: Agreement on strategy to deal with perceived strategic threat	Dependent Variable / Result
Turkey and the US agree that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait posed vital threat to the regional and global order	Turkey and the US agree that reversing Iraq's aggression through implementation of sanctions and by use of force if necessary is the requisite strategy to deal with the common threat.	Cooperation

Independent variable one, agreement on a strategic threat, occurs at the systemic level. The integrative model argues that it appears in Walt's proposition about balance-of-threat against an external power and/or Schweller's balance-of-interests.

From the outset, the US defined Iraq's occupation of Kuwait as a vital threat to security, stability, and strategic balance in the Middle East, as well as to its regional interests. Turkey concurred with the US perception of threat from Iraqi action based on a number of factors. Before detailing these factors, it must be noted that the evolution of Turkish perceptions during the crisis was effected within a domestic political process. At this unit-level of analysis, it was President Özal who was the primary actor defining and formulating Turkey's perception of threat from Iraq with a view to responding to structural-level changes. In other words, in line with the neoclassical perspective, the assessment of the Iraqi threat at the structural-systemic level of analysis as well as how Turkey viewed its interests in terms of Schweller's balance-of-interests proposition was effected through the domestic process in which Özal was the key figure. It is thus necessary to analyse the factors that were instrumental in the way Özal perceived the crisis.

First, at the systemic level, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait occurred at a time when Turkey felt increasingly pressured by strategic changes in its international, regional and bilateral environment. While the Soviet threat had vanished, how the strategic relationship with the US/West could be maintained now became an important question. In this sense, Turkey's role in the Western alliance, and its relations with the US, was a key determinant of its policy during the Gulf Crisis; the first major international crisis since the end of the Cold War. Özal realised that the US would be the dominant and sole

super power in the new world order,[289] and he looked for ways to strengthen Turkey-US bonds.[290] The Gulf Crisis offered Özal a unique opportunity to redefine Turkey-US relations as the US focussed on addressing the threat posed by Saddam to regional stability and balance of power. Saddam's blatant invasion of an independent country made it impossible for Turkey to remain outside the global consensus,[291] and was thus a reminder of Turkey's strategic significance. The situation dictated Turkey's involvement, at the very least in the enforcement of the sanctions regime. Özal made 'a virtue out of necessity'[292] while seeking to secure an increased regional role for Turkey in the aftermath of Saddam's defeat.[293] Özal also expected Turkey's active involvement in the crisis to be rewarded with increased US backing,[294] and hoped it would raise Turkish prospects of joining the EC.[295]

Secondly, at the regional level, the strategic changes that had taken place in the 1980s in Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbourhood made it essential for Ankara to formulate strategies to address threats such as the rise in PKK terrorism, strained relations with Syria due its support for the PKK, and the water dispute with Iraq and Syria. At the bilateral level, after the Halabja massacre and the Iran-Iraq ceasefire, Turkey had become increasingly wary of Saddam's regional ambitions, his huge military arsenal, and Baghdad's more assertive tone, especially on the cross-border water dispute. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait compounded Turkey's concerns for its national security, including the disruption of the regional balance of power and the potential of a direct threat from Saddam's regime itself.

In short, Turkey believed opposing Iraq's antagonism conformed to its national interests both in the global and regional contexts. In essence, Özal took 'a grand position against Saddam, whose future looked bleak, and made no secret of his desire to see him overthrown.'[296]

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[289] Akşin, interview; Çetin, interview.
[290] Kandemir, interview.
[291] Richard Perle, interviewed by author, Washington, DC, 27 May 2008.
[292] Alan Makovsky, 'The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy', *SAIS Review,* 19:1 (1999), pp.92-113; Akşin, interview.
[293] Çetin, interview; Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy,* p.166; Bernard Lewis, 'The Region after Saddam', paper and comments from the AEI conference 'The Day After: Planning for a Post-Saddam Iraq', Washington, DC, 3 October 2002. See also Makovsky, 'New Activism'; Paul Wolfowitz, Fifth Annual Turgut Özal Memorial Lecture, 13 March 2002, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC07.php?CID=140
[294] Abramowitz, 'American Policy', pp.3–35.
[295] Larrabee, 'Turkey Rediscovers', pp.103–4.
[296] Zebari, interview.

Turkey and the US also agreed on independent variable two; the requisite strategy to address the commonly-defined threat and reverse Iraq's aggression. This strategy included ensuring immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait, deterring an immediate Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia, and restoring the ante bellum status quo and balance of power in the region. The instruments of this strategy were UNSC mandated international sanctions and use of force when economic coercion proved ineffective. Most importantly, US expectations of Turkey were also congruent with Turkish perceptions of its possible contribution in the actual implementation of that strategy. For instance, the US never asked to open up a ground front against Iraq through Turkish territory; a concept that Turkish politicians, including Özal, dismissed outright. The US requested Turkey's cooperation in the enforcement of sanctions, use of military bases on Turkish soil during any attack on Iraq, and deployment of Turkish troops to the Iraqi border. Turkey unequivocally condemned Iraq's actions, extended prompt and decisive support for sanctions, and closed the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline; all critical in rolling back Saddam's aggression.[297] Turkey also mobilised 100,000 troops along its northern border of Iraq, forcing Saddam to redeploy six to eight Iraqi divisions to the north,[298] and allowed coalition forces to use Turkish bases once military operations commenced on 16 January; also crucial to the allied victory. The US recognised at the time that Turkey had made 'an invaluable contribution to the military effort'.[299]

As a result of their agreement on independent variables one and two, Turkey and the US cooperated closely throughout the Gulf Crisis and Gulf War. Turkey's decision to strategically align with the US marked a milestone in Turkey-US relations and Turkey's Middle East policy.[300] It also added Iraq as a positive dimension of the alliance relationship, redefined Turkey's value as a security partner for Washington, and set Turkey-US bilateral cooperation in a new context. Turkey's alignment with US policies and the key role that it played during the crisis served its national interests well. Turkey and the US had been friends and NATO allies for over 40 years,[301] yet Turkey-US

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[297] Address of Vice President D. Quayle in the Annual Conference of the American Friends of Turkey, Washington DC, 22 February 1991, http://fednews.com/transcript.html?item=19910222z0497&op=&addr=FN30-NW1

[298] Address by Defense Secretary Richard Cheney at AEI dinner on the occasion of the visit of President Turgut Özal, 24 March 1991, http://fednews.com/transcript.html?item=19910324z0564&op=&addr=FN25-DF1

[299] Address of Vice President D. Quayle.

[300] Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy,* pp.4, 47; Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East*, Hale, 'Turkey, Middle East', pp.679-692; Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.170.

[301] Address of Vice President D. Quayle.

relations took a dramatic turn for the better with Özal's unhesitant and steadfast support of US actions to liberate Kuwait.[302] The strategic consensus on the Gulf Crisis added a new dimension to the US-Turkish security partnership. For Washington, it redefined Turkey's value as a strategic partner and set their bilateral cooperation in a new context. US Vice President Dan Quayle described the 'renewed appreciation in the US, in Europe, and in the Middle East, of Turkey's strategic and critical importance.'[303] Ankara was convinced that Turkey's regional role would continue to grow in the post-crisis period.

Throughout the Gulf Crisis, Özal's cachet in the US continued to grow. Even before the crisis, he was a 'well respected and popular figure in the US . . . notably because he was seen as pro-American and changing Turkey in the right direction.'[304] Richard Perle observes that Özal was an intelligent and visionary leader who had a clear understanding of where the world was moving and appreciated the value of the Turkey-US relationship.[305] Özal became a major ally and confidant of Bush,[306] helping to lead the effort to reverse Saddam's aggression, especially thanks to his 'leadership, courage and determination' in the 'hour of international crisis.'[307] In fact, the US administration even shared 'President's Eyes Only' reports with Özal.[308] Nevertheless, Özal's resolve also entailed political and security risks for Turkey, as well as high costs and economic hardship. Turkey suffered substantial economic losses and incurred significant security risks because of its support of the UN resolutions and US policy. The US did eventually help to offset some of Turkey's losses and provided military assistance for the modernisation of the TSK, particularly in the area of air defence. Nevertheless, in stark contrast to his heightened international prestige, Özal came under tremendous domestic criticism and lost his power base, largely due to the unintended consequences of the crisis following the allied victory. According to Abramowitz:

> Özal was under serious political attack in the country on the basis that he got so little after so heavily investing and taking risks in the crisis. He was disappointed with the US, not in a way to change the direction of Turkey-US relations, but the short-term benefits were incomparable to the heavy political risk that he had taken.[309]

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[302] Perle, interview.
[303] Address of Vice President D. Quayle.
[304] Abramowitz, interview.
[305] Perle, interview.
[306] Birand and Yalçın, *The Özal*, pp.427-428
[307] Address by Richard Cheney at the AEI; Abramowitz, interview.
[308] Murat Özçelik, interviewed by author, Ankara, 24 October 2009.
[309] Abramowitz, interview.

The residual consequences of the crisis also created certain difficulties for Turkey's national interests. The curbing of Iraq's military power was an achievement, but Saddam stayed in power, against Özal's strong conviction that his removal was essential for regional stability. The US decided to maintain the sanctions as long as Saddam survived as Iraq's leader, but their indeterminate continuation meant a greater burden on the Turkish economy, which was by then suffering a severe balance of payments problem and spiralling inflation. Moreover, the fate of the Iraqi Kurds surfaced as an international issue. OPC and its creation of a safe haven in Northern Iraq brought about new complications for Turkey, especially in its own struggle against PKK terrorism. In the final analysis, however, the prospects for enhanced and strategic Turkey-US relations in the new world order made the overall balance sheet look optimistic.

CHAPTER 3: THE PERIOD OF UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES, 1991-1994

During the period between 1991 and the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Turkey-US relationship with regard to Iraq was marked by both cooperation and a gradual emergence of discontent due to conflicting goals and interests. From Washington's perspective, Saddam's regime remained a significant threat to vital US interests—a conviction that persisted for nearly a decade after the Gulf War until the toppling of his regime in 2003. The elements of US strategy to deal with that perceived threat were maintaining sanctions, preventing Iraq's WMD and missile programs through intrusive inspections to ensure Iraqi compliance with all relevant UNSC resolutions, containment and isolation of Saddam's regime to prevent it from threatening its neighbours, organisation and support of Iraqi opposition groups to secure regime change, and use of limited force against Iraq for tactical and strategic purposes.[310]

In contrast, the Turkish perception of threat from Saddam's regime gradually abated as it began to experience the negative repercussions of the unintended political and economic consequences of the Gulf War. Turkey nevertheless remained a US partner in implementation of the sanctions regime to force Iraq to comply with all UNSC resolutions and the US policy of containment in broader terms.[311] The two essential elements of the containment strategy—the continuation of the sanctions regime and the military enforcement of the NFZ through OPC II—both depended heavily upon Turkey's continued cooperation with the US.[312] Yet, the unintended consequences of the Gulf War, and the dilemmas that they created for Ankara, generated several interlinked dynamics that would characterise the Turkey-US joint agenda on Iraq in the following decade. Major challenges included the economic losses Turkey incurred by maintaining sanctions, the increased PKK presence in and terrorist activity from Northern Iraq, and the emergence of a de facto Iraqi Kurdish entity.

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[310] Daniel Byman, 'After the Storm: US Policy towards Iraq Since 1991', *Political Science Quarterly*, 115:4 (2000-2001), pp.493-516. Statement of Edward S. Walker, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, US Department of State in *Saddam's Iraq: Sanctions and US Policy, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations*, US Senate, 106th Congress, 22 March 2000, 67–659 CC (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2000).
[311] The Testimony of the Secretary of State James Baker before the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, 22 May 1991. For example, see the Statement of C. David Welch, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, US Department of State, in *United States Policy towards Iraq, Hearing Before the Committee on International Relations*, House of Representatives, 106th Congress, 23 March 2000, Serial No.106-134 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2000).
[312] Zalmay Khalilzad, interviewed by author, Munich, 6 February 2009.

This chapter aims to examine the emergence of the unintended consequences of Gulf War on Turkey's political, security and economic interests from 1991 to 1994, and trace their effects on Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq. During the period, despite the gradual changes in threat perception, the ensuing shifts in priorities, and some grievances, Turkey-US cooperation on containing Iraq remained largely within the concepts of security cooperation and alliance politics. This chapter analyses the paradox of the gradual divergence of Turkey-US perceptions of threat from Iraq yet continued cooperation on strategy. In the following period, covered in chapters 4 and 5, these issues and problems would expand to have a more direct impact on alliance relations.

3.1. The First Stage: Defending Northern Iraq and the Iraqi Kurds, 1991

3.1.1. Evolution of OPC into a Deterrent Force

By the end of June 1991, as a result of OPC's success, the Kurdish refugees had returned to their homes, and the situation had stabilised sufficiently for coalition ground units in Northern Iraq to redeploy to Turkey. However, Washington was determined to continue protecting the peoples of Northern Iraq, maintaining the sanctions for ensuring full compliance of Iraq with all relevant UNSC resolutions, and encouraging a change in Iraq's leadership.[313] The US believed the best way to bring about Iraqi compliance was through deterrence. Washington informed Ankara of its intention to continue with the OPC, arguing that a complete withdrawal would constitute abandonment of the Iraqi Kurds, and signal that Iraq would enjoy a free hand in Northern Iraq. Initially, Washington recognised the need to limit the duration and extent of its involvement in Iraq and did not want to undermine the prospects for an accord between the Iraqi Kurds and Baghdad.[314] Nevertheless, the restoration of sufficient stability seemed unlikely, and the US remained ready to respond militarily to Iraqi actions as the situation warranted.[315] OPC would maintain an appropriate level of air and ground forces to prevent recurrence of Saddam's oppression against the Kurds, and to ensure Iraqi compliance with the UNSCRs and the conditions laid down by the coalition. The air components of the OPC would ensure the continued prohibition on Iraqi aircraft above the 36th parallel. Iraqi military and special/secret police would remain prohibited in the

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[313] Testimony of John Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State, before the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, 17 June 1991.

[314] According to Alan Makovsky, who served in OPC as State Department Representative, January-September 1992, his instructions were that, if the Kurds asked whether they should talk to Saddam, he would respond that it was their decision. Alan Makovsky, interviewed by author, Washington, DC, 7 December 2009.

[315] John Murray Brown, 'Allies Finish N. Iraq Withdrawal', *Washington Post*, 16 July 1991.

security zone.[316] The US also informed the Kurds of the decision to perpetuate OPC for their protection, but explicitly stated that the US forces would not respond to any Iraqi action that the Iraqi Kurds provoked.[317]

On 18 July 1991, the Turkish government informed its OPC partners of its agreement to the activation of OPC-II. Turkey would allow the use of İncirlik and Batman installations for non-NATO purposes 'on an exceptional basis.' It would contribute to OPC-II by assigning an appropriate-sized unit under national command whose commander would be of equal rank with that of the multinational component. However, it did specify that certain ground rules would apply to the conduct of the operation. Turkish territory, territorial waters and air space would under no circumstances be used for operations of an offensive nature against Iraq without explicit approval of the Turkish government. The operation would last until 30 September 1991, extendable only once for a maximum of 90 days.[318]

3.1.2. Iraq's Unilateral Withdrawal from Northern Iraq

Concurrently with OPC, the Iraqi government and the Kurdish Front (KF), composed of eight Kurdish groups including the KDP and PUK, entered into negotiations to set the terms and the boundaries of the Kurdish Autonomous Region (KAR) in line with the 1974 autonomy agreement. Disagreements over the KAR boundaries remained a key area of conflict. The KF sought to incorporate the oil-rich province of Kirkuk, and demanded international guarantees for a prospective agreement and the introduction of democratic reforms, all of which the Iraqi regime rejected.[319] In addition, despite their apparent solidarity in the KF, there were reportedly divisions between the two Kurdish leaders. The history of animosity between the Barzani family and Talabani dated back to the Kurdish uprisings in the 1960s and 1970s; notwithstanding their armed clashes during the Iran-Iraq War, they had long been rivals for control of the Kurdish movement. It was also reported that they disagreed on the nature of a possible agreement with Saddam's regime.[320] While Barzani sought to get the best possible agreement that the current conditions allowed, Talabani believed it was imperative to reach a satisfactory agreement with Baghdad regardless of the timeframe. The key

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[316] Philip A. Meek, 'Operation Provide Comfort: A Case Study in Humanitarian Relief and Foreign Assistance', *Air Force Law Review,* 37 (1994), pp.225-238.
[317] Makovsky, interview.
[318] Verbal Note of the MFA to Coalition partners, 18 July 1991.
[319] Alan Cowell, 'Iraq's Kurds Reject Autonomy Deal as Allied Plan Stirs Some Confidence', *The New York Times*, 30 June 1991.
[320] Michael C. Dunn, 'The Kurdish 'Question': Is There an Answer? A Historical Overview', *Middle East Policy*. 4:1-2 (1995), pp.72-86.

difference between them concerned the status of Kirkuk: Talabani refused to support any agreement that would not include Kirkuk in the KAR, while Barzani seemed more flexible, and willing to concede that Kirkuk's status be determined at a later date.[321] The Iraqi Kurds were wary of Saddam's real intentions and would not feel secure so long as he remained in power. At some point in the near term, Saddam would apparently seek to reassert full control of the north and scale back Kurdish autonomy.[322] The continuation of OPC and the US resolve to deter Baghdad constituted the only security guarantee restraining the Iraqi regime. The Iraqi Kurds, therefore, fervently called for Washington not to abandon their security.[323]

In late October 1991, Saddam made an unexpected move which would henceforth change the status of Northern Iraq. Iraqi forces unilaterally withdrew beyond the boundaries of the KAR as defined in the 1974 law on autonomy, which also encompassed a region south of the 36th parallel, and re-established a defensive line just outside. This was followed by a blockade of food and fuel and the cutting off of the salaries of all officials, pensioners, and state and municipal employees.[324] The exact reasons for Baghdad's decision to give up significant control of the region were uncertain. First, Baghdad might have judged that the Iraqi army would be in a stronger defensive position to contain the Kurds, thereby consolidating security in the rest of Iraq. Second, Baghdad would have had a political argument for creating a KAR in accordance with the 1974 autonomy agreement. A third and more plausible reason was that Baghdad aimed to isolate the Kurdish region from the rest of Iraq and impose an economic blockade that would strangle the Iraqi Kurds to the point where they would accept the terms the central government dictated.[325]

The KF denounced the withdrawal as a selective economic blockade and an act of economic warfare against the Kurdish population. The Kurds now faced a precarious situation, subjected to two simultaneous embargos from the UN sanctions and the economic and political isolation imposed by the central government. The KF had to administer and secure the KAR while providing subsistence without adequate economic

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[321] *Kurdistan in Time of Saddam, A staff report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the US Senate, November 1991* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1991), p.1-7; William Safire, 'The Kurds Come to Washington', *The New York Times*, 3 October 1991; Jonathan C. Randal, 'Iraqi Kurds Unprepared for Winter', *Washington Post*, 17 October 1991.
[322] Kurdistan in Time of Saddam, p.11.
[323] Jonathan C. Randal, 'Kurds Urge Allies to Stay in Iraq', *Washington Post*, 15 June 1991.
[324] Hugh Pope, 'Kurds Whisper', *The Independent*, 19 May 1992.
[325] For a similar discussion, see, Daniel Byman, 'Let Iraq Collapse', *The National Interest*, 45 (1996), pp.48-61.

resources.[326] It remained uncertain how long the new status quo of de facto autonomy for the Kurdish region could persist. The continuation of OPC-II, dependant on Turkey's agreement, was the only security umbrella against Baghdad, making Turkish links even more significant for the Iraqi Kurds. Ankara's support also became essential for the economic survival of the region since Turkey remained the key viable outlet and source of economic activity for the Kurdish region.[327]

3.2. The Second Stage: Further Consequences of Containment, 1991-1994

During this period, the US pursued a policy aiming at regime change in Baghdad. However, US expectations from Ankara on Iraq policy focused on Turkish support in maintaining sanctions and agreement to continue its deterrence through OPC-II.[328] The issues arising over this cooperation created a number of interlinked dynamics in the Turkey-US joint agenda. Fundamentally, a tripartite relationship emerged between Turkey, the US and the Iraqi Kurds. Secondly, Saddam's oppression of the Iraqi Kurds led to the entry of a broader Kurdish issue onto the international scene. Additionally, the security umbrella that OPC-II provided and Baghdad's loss of control over Northern Iraq progressively led to the creation of a de facto independent Kurdish state in the region. Finally, the resultant political and military power vacuum created the conditions for the PKK to use Northern Iraq as a sanctuary and a base for escalating cross-border terrorist attacks, posing a growing challenge to Turkey's security and stability.

3.2.1. Internationalisation of the Kurdish Issue and Emergence of a De Facto Iraqi Kurdish State

Saddam's renewed oppression of the Iraqi Kurds after the Gulf War led to the emergence of a broader Kurdish issue, which took on 'a momentum of its own'[329] on the international scene. As a CIA report on the Kurds from 1992 stated:

> The Gulf War and rising ethnic consciousness and conflict around the world have created a new context for the long-standing struggle of the Kurds to achieve autonomy if not outright independence. More broadly, Pan-Kurdish identity is being strengthened… OPC, the presence of coalition states and international relief workers in Northern Iraq, and continuing international press attention introduce some new dynamics to

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[326] Nechirvan Barzani, interviewed by author, Erbil, 30 October 2009.
[327] Tarık Oğuzlu, 'Turkey's Northern Iraq Policy: Competing Perspectives,' *Insight Turkey,* 10:3 (2008), pp.5-23.
[328] Marc Grossman, interviewed by author, Washington, DC, 13 April 2010; Makovsky, interview.
[329] Graham E. Fuller, 'The Fate of the Kurds', *Foreign Affairs*, 72:2 (1993), p.108.

one of the world's oldest ethnic problems.[330]

For the CIA, the establishment of an internationally protected zone under the security umbrella of OPC-II had emboldened the Iraqi Kurds to achieve greater autonomy from Baghdad.[331] During this period, the KF established new institutions of self-government. Elections were held in May 1992, followed by the establishment of a 'Kurdish Parliament,' 'Kurdish government,' and the declaration of a 'Federated Kurdish State' within Iraq. Iraqi Kurdish groups also lobbied intensively for US recognition of the legitimacy of the de facto entity in Northern Iraq, and requested commitments from Washington regarding continued protection, economic freedom, and political status within Iraq. They also became active in US-sponsored anti-Saddam Iraqi opposition activities. US commitment through OPC-II remained the only effective instrument for Iraqi Kurds to ensure their protection from Saddam. OPC-II was critical in 'determining the prospects' of Iraqi Kurds maintaining the new self-governing institutions and de facto autonomy. Therefore, OPC's non-extension by Turkey would potentially have led to the swift reassertion of Iraqi control over Northern Iraq.[332]

The Iraqi Kurdish leadership, while resourcefully striving to establish de facto statehood, was also constantly trying to reassure Turkey and the US that it did not intend to create an independent Kurdish state, but simply increase Kurdish autonomy inside Iraq. According to Talabani, the Kurdish leadership had recognised that changing the maps of all the countries across which the Kurds were dispersed was implausible, and had therefore set itself no impossible goals.[333] The strategy of the Iraqi Kurdish leadership in declaring the limited prospects for independence was a reflection of their rational assumptions. The neighbouring states of Turkey, Iran and Syria all had Kurdish populations and were all concerned about the spill-over effect of any pan-Kurdish movement for their security,[334] and all ardently opposed the disintegration of Iraq and the emergence of a Kurdish state. Any Kurdish entity would therefore be precarious as it would be landlocked in largely mountainous terrain, depending totally on neighbouring states' for trade routes and economic partnership. It would also require

[330] CIA, 'National Intelligence Estimate: The Kurds; Rising Expectations, Old Frustrations', NIE92/27, September 1992, p.1,
http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000469140.pdf
[331] CIA, 'National Intelligence Estimate', p.1.
[332] Ibid., p.11.
[333] Atef El Ghamry, 'A Dialogue with the Kurdish Leader Jalal Talabani', *Al Ahram*, 6 November 1991; Carlyle Murphy, 'With West's Protection, Kurds Realize a Precarious Dream', *Washington Post*, 9 November 1992.
[334] Henri J. Barkey and Ellen Laipson, 'Iraqi Kurds and Iraq's Future', *Middle East Policy,* 12:4 (2005), pp.66-77.

much more sophisticated weaponry for its defence than it had, and would therefore need international support to guarantee its borders.[335]

In fact, the security of the Iraqi Kurdish zone depended exclusively on Turkish approval for the continuation of OPC-II, but Turkey strictly opposed any Kurdish move towards independence. Turkey repeatedly reminded the US that maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity was vital for regional peace and stability. Washington responded that the US was absolutely committed to preserving Iraq's independence and territorial integrity, which it viewed as an essential element of security in the region. It would therefore not support the emergence of an independent political entity in Northern Iraq. Additionally, regional security and stable relations with close allies was the cornerstone of US policy. For Washington, the greatest threat to Iraq's territorial integrity was Saddam's regime, and it sought a government in Baghdad able to maintain Iraqi borders without threatening its neighbours. Finally, the US vision for Iraq was a pluralistic country in which all groups could be represented.[336]

Nevertheless, Kurdish autonomy in Northern Iraq continued to progress towards a de facto statehood that increasingly undermined Iraq's territorial integrity and sovereignty. For Ankara, the challenge was to find ways to curtail the Iraqi Kurds' ambitions for increasing autonomy even while the continued protective umbrella of OPC-II created circumstances for them to further their agenda for a de facto independent state.

3.2.2. Continuation of OPC-II

For Washington, OPC-II had evolved into an essential deterrent to renewed Iraqi aggression and was preventing Saddam from reinstituting control over Northern Iraq.[337] It was thus significant to the US administration both as a military instrument of containment, and in conforming to its determination to remove Saddam's regime. Any refusal by the Turkish government to renew OPC-II's mandate would thus drastically undermine US policy. American officials now began to explicitly underscore that Ankara's cooperation against Saddam's regime through OPC-II was a crucial factor in Washington's perception of Turkey-US relations.[338]

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[335] CIA, 'National Intelligence Estimate', p.3.
[336] Turkish official, interviewed by author, Ankara, 1 February 2011.
[337] USIA Foreign Press Center Briefing, Current Developments in Iraq and the Gulf, Attribution to: State Department Official, Transcript ID: 821214, 15 April 1992.
[338] Çetin, interview.

Washington insistently lobbied to secure Turkish parliamentary authorisation to maintain OPC-II. However, OPC-II and the NFZ undermined the territorial integrity and political unity of Iraq, which Ankara viewed as vital for regional stability, irrespective of who held power in Baghdad. The US was resolved to sustain the policy of limiting Iraqi sovereignty in Northern Iraq as long as Saddam stayed in power, creating circumstances for the Iraqi Kurds to march towards semi-independent statehood. The Turkish public was frustrated with a situation in Northern Iraq that also paved the way for an escalation of PKK terrorism against Turkey.[339] The US again sought to provide Turkey with assurances about OPC-II, Iraq's territorial integrity, and US opposition to its fragmentation.

3.2.3. Escalation of PKK Terrorism

As international recognition for the Iraqi Kurds' establishment of self-rule in Northern Iraq was increasing, the PKK mounted intensified terror attacks against Turkish security forces and civilian targets. The PKK had been conducting a separatist terrorist campaign against Turkey since August 1984. Its central camp was in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa valley in Lebanon, and its leader, Abdullah Öcalan, lived in Damascus, sponsored by Syria.[340] During the 1980s, Syrian support had been instrumental in the PKK shifting its focus to Northern Iraq and establishing a common front with the KDP.[341] The declaration of KDP-PKK solidarity in 1983 provided shelter for the PKK in KDP-controlled regions of Iraq. The PKK then used the region as a base for terrorist incursions into Turkey.[342] Operating from camps in Turkey's Syrian border and Northern Iraq, it commenced hit-and-run activities in August 1984, later escalating to full-scale indiscriminate terrorist attacks against soldiers, local civilians and economic targets.[343]

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[339] Bülent Aras, 'Iraqi Partition and Turkey's War on Terror: A Wider Perspective', *Insight Turkey*, 9:3 (2007), pp.59-67.

[340] For Syria's ties with the PKK, see Bruinessen, 'Between Guerrilla War and Political Murder', pp.40-46; International Sources of Support to the PKK, A Briefing Note by the MFA, http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/studies3.htm; Michael M. Gunter, 'The Kurdish Problem in Turkey', *Middle East Journal*, 42:3 (1988), pp.389-406; Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür, 'From Distant Neighbors to Partners? Changing Syrian-Turkish Relations', *Security Dialogue* 37:2 (2006), pp.229-248; Patricia Carley, *Turkey's Role in the Middle East: A Conference Report* (Washington, DC: USIP, 1995), p.16; Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East*, p.50.

[341] Damla Aras, 'Threat as a Peace-Maker: Turkey's Coercive Diplomacy towards Syria during the October 1998 Crisis' (PhD diss., King's College London, 2008); Gunter, 'Kurdish Problem', p.401.

[342] Interview with Masoud Barzani, 'We Did not Ask for a Separation of Iraq but We Want a Democratic Iraq', *Al Akhbar* (November, 1992).

[343] Altunışık and Tür, 'Distant Neighbors'.

In late 1992 and 1993, the situation deteriorated as the PKK embarked on a full-scale campaign of terror. Ankara now came to believe the PKK had increasingly become an instrument of countries with disagreements or conflicts of interest with Turkey; particularly Syria and Iraq.[344] Indeed, the protection and logistical and financial support of the Syrian regime was critical for the PKK.[345] The PKK also became more valuable to Damascus in the new strategic environment of the early 1990s. As Soviet support faded away with the end of the Cold War, Turkey emerged as a more assertive power allied with the US, putting additional pressure on already strained Turkey-Syria relations. Despite Ankara's tireless efforts to establish a cordon sanitaire along its Middle Eastern borders, Syrian sponsorship enabled the PKK to escalate its terrorist violence. The new situation in Northern Iraq further compounded the situation. From the Iraqi perspective, while OPC-II and the NFZ were designed to deter and restrain its actions against Iraqi Kurds, they also declared Northern Iraq beyond Baghdad's control. The consequent power vacuum and chaotic situation enabled the establishment of PKK terrorist camps outside the Turkish border, from which the PKK could pose a growing threat to Turkey's stability. Baghdad now reportedly extended the PKK logistical and material support to exact revenge for Turkey's Gulf War policy, and also sought to use the PKK against the KDP and PUK.[346]

For Ankara, the intensified PKK campaign of terror constituted a serious threat to its national security. The military dimension of the strategy to deal with the threat required cross-border military operations against PKK safe havens in Northern Iraq. The political dimension involved enlisting political support (if not active assistance) from the US and Western allies in the fight against the PKK and ensuring that the PKK was recognised as a terrorist organisation. Both dimensions of the strategy, however, faced severe challenges. Western democracies were increasingly failing to make a distinction between the Kurdish question in Iraq and the aims of the PKK, and Ankara had to strive to prevent the international legitimisation of the PKK due to the plight of the Iraqi Kurds.[347] It was also having difficulty curbing PKK violence in south eastern Turkey,[348] and the half-hearted measures taken by the KDP and PUK against the PKK in Northern Iraq fell short of rooting out the terrorist presence in the region.

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[344] Barkey and Fuller, *Kurdish Question*, p.31.
[345] For a detailed analysis of Turkey's problems with Syria with regard to the PKK see Aras, 'Threat as a Peace-Maker'.
[346] CIA, 'National Intelligence Estimate', p.1.
[347] Frank J. Gaffney Jr., 'The Kurdish PKK: Terrorists, Not Victims', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March 1992.
[348] Sayari, 'Turkey: Changing European Security', pp.9-21.

3.2.4. Reaction to the Economic Sanctions

Another significant unintended consequence of the Gulf War was the profound economic losses Turkey suffered due to the continuation of the sanctions. The halting of all trade with Iraq, the closing down of the two oil pipe-lines, the financial losses of Turkish contractors operating in Iraq, and the decline of tourism revenues all added up to billions of dollars lost. The impact of the sanctions on the economy of south eastern Anatolia was considerable, exacerbating the high unemployment rate and low level of income. This in turn created a fertile ground for the propaganda and recruitment activities of the PKK.[349] Turkish public opinion turned against the US-led embargo, accusing the Turkish government of being 'more royalist than the king' in enforcing it.

3.3. Major Contours of the Turkey-US-Iraqi Kurdish Trilateral Relationship

Cooperation on Iraq policy became one of the major determinants in the broader post-Cold War Turkey-US alliance relationship, which Ankara strove to elevate to an enhanced partnership. During this period, the US referred to Turkey as 'a model, a bridge, and a gateway' for the newly emerging states of Central Asia. For Ankara, the US was the major partner in assisting these republics to establish democracy and free market economy, and integrate into Western institutions. The two nations also agreed on the need to curb the influence of non-democratic and non-secular models in the region, namely Iran. For instance, Washington's support was essential in Turkish efforts to energise the EC and the international community to address the turmoil in the Balkans, especially the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, and in resolving the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.[350]

In terms of specific policy objectives on Iraq, the US remained the driving force of the UN and international community's overall strategy, and the future of US policy was tied to whether Saddam would remain in power. There was no clarity, however, on how long the situation would endure and what would happen if Saddam continued to rule Iraq. Washington's persistence in maintaining OPC-II and the renewal of its mandate every six months thus created a dilemma for Ankara. On one hand, Ankara had to take into account that the operation was the key factor in averting recurrence of the very large-scale humanitarian problems in Northern Iraq in 1991. On the other, the Turkish public increasingly deemed OPC-II an umbrella to help the Iraqi Kurds create an independent

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[349] Mahmut Bali Aykan, 'Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991-95', *Middle Eastern Studies,* 32:4 (1996), pp.343-367.
[350] US Department of State, *Dispatch*, 3:7, 17 February 1992, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1992/html/Dispatchv3no07.html

Kurdish state.[351] Fierce rhetoric against OPC-II while in opposition notwithstanding, the ruling parties needed to identify a rational policy to reverse the emergence of a de facto Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, which was dependent on the continuation of OPC-II, irrespective of the operation's major objectives. Each extension of six months sparked questions over whether ending OPC-II was conditional on the removal of Saddam from power, to which the US had no convincing answer. In addition, the debate about OPC-II caused the Turkish public to scrutinise the duality of the US approach: Why had the international community acted so fiercely to reverse Iraqi aggression against Kuwait and protected the Iraqi Kurds from Saddam's revenge, but failed to take any action against Armenian aggression in Nagorno-Karabakh or the Serbian massacres of Bosnian Muslims?[352]

It seemed that, if US policy stayed on the same course, Turkey would continue to have to live with the UN sanctions that substantially damaged the Turkish economy, the emergence of a de facto Kurdish state, and the PKK presence in Northern Iraq. Despite growing discontent in Turkey with the implications of US policy, Ankara continued to see cooperation with Washington as the only viable alternative. Nevertheless, Ankara also devised a multi-track strategy to address the post-Gulf War situation. The first component was imposing certain operational restrictions on OPC-II. The second and most crucial aspect was the fight against the PKK. From the Turkish perspective, Washington's support for Turkey's military and diplomatic strategies against the PKK became a crucial element in the Turkey-US relationship. The US extended solid political support and explicitly endorsed Turkey's fight against PKK terror, even when Ankara faced harsh criticism from several European countries.[353] Washington defined the PKK as an organisation engaged in terrorist acts that was not representative of the Kurdish people of Turkey,[354] and it supported Turkey's right to defend itself against terrorism.[355] This support was in sharp contrast to the positions of countries like Germany, which cut off arms shipments to protest Turkish use of German weapons against the PKK.[356] At the same time, Ankara sought US assistance in urging the Iraqi Kurdish leaders to take a firmer stand against the PKK and expand their cooperation

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[351] Çetin, interview.
[352] Sanberk, interview.
[353] Grossman, interview.
[354] USIA Foreign Press Center Briefing.
[355] John M. Goshko and George Lardner Jr., 'In Iraqi Kurds' Plight, Problems for US', *Washington Post*, 5 April 1992; CSIS, 'Decision Brief: With Friends like Germany, Does Turkey Need Enemies?', No.92-D 30, 27 March 1992.
[356] 'The Turkish Question', *Independent*, 1 April 1992.

with Turkey. US officials regularly raised the issue of the PKK in contacts with the Iraqi Kurdish leadership, stressing how essential it was for them to both prevent support for the PKK and stop it from operating out of Iraqi territory.[357] In essence, Ankara and Washington both faced a dilemma in protecting the Kurds in Northern Iraq through OPC-II while also trying to prevent the PKK from exploiting the power vacuum that OPC-II had created. Washington also urged the Syrian government 'to cease its toleration of these kind of terrorist activities, either in Syria or in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon.'[358]

The relationship with the Iraqi Kurdish leadership was the third component of Turkey's strategy. During this period, Turkey's ties with the KDP and PUK substantially improved.[359] Barzani and Talabani made prominent visits to Turkey and were received by the whole spectrum of Turkish leadership, whilst both Kurdish parties posted permanent representatives in Ankara. For Ankara, improving cross-border ties with the Iraqi Kurds was essential to wield influence over developments in Northern Iraq.[360] The Iraqi Kurdish leadership's cooperation with Turkey was also crucial to both improving border security and curtailing PKK presence and activities in the region.[361] The strategy aimed to prevent a recurrence of the cooperation between the PKK and the Iraqi Kurds in the 1980s, and focused on isolating the PKK and preventing the region from becoming a base for its terrorist activities.[362] It was also designed to rein in any influence that Iran and Syria could wield in Northern Iraq. Syria persisted in its hostility against Turkey, using the PKK as its proxy. Iran, though Syria's principle strategic ally in the region, did not seem directly involved with the PKK, but did have ties with the KDP and PUK as tactical allies in its conflict with Iraq.

In terms of international diplomacy, improving ties with the Iraqi Kurds would also potentially serve to demonstrate Turkey's willingness to ease their suffering and eventually to draw a distinction between the Iraqi Kurdish issue and Turkey's policy of curbing PKK terrorism. To this end, Ankara even promised the Iraqi Kurds security guarantees. During discussions with Barzani and Talabani from 1992, Prime Minister Demirel and senior officials underlined that Turkey would no longer remain indifferent

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[357] USIA Foreign Press Center Briefing.
[358] USIA Foreign Press Center Briefing. For instance, President Clinton raised the PKK with H. Al-Assad in a meeting in 1994, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/WCPD-1994-01-24/pdf/WCPD-1994-01-24-Pg96.pdf
[359] Süleyman Demirel, interviewed by author, Ankara, 4 September 2010.
[360] Dizai, interview.
[361] Osman Korutürk, interviewed by author, Ankara, 30 August 2010.
[362] 'Turkey and the Kurds', *The Economist*.

to the suffering or persecution of the Iraqi Kurds on the basis of their kinship with Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin. Turkey would neither leave the Iraqi Kurds to their fate nor permit any recurrence of Saddam's oppression, even if the coalition states were unable to provide such protection.[363] Ankara also made the pledge public, announcing that Turkey would act as 'the guarantor of security for all peoples such as Kurds, Turkomens, Arabs and Assyrians' and would never allow these peoples to be subjected to oppression.[364] Turkey's preference was a democratic Iraq, respectful of the rule of law and human rights, where all parties, including the Kurdish groups, were equally represented in government. The new Turkish strategy was a stunning departure from its pre-Gulf War approach towards the Iraqi Kurds.

For their part, Barzani and Talabani were also interested in cultivating and developing good relations with Turkey. The Iraqi Kurdish leadership 'fully recognized Turkey's importance in the Western alliance and its crucial role to permit the OPC-II to provide protection for the Kurds against any Iraqi aggression.'[365] They recognised that they depended on Turkey's benevolence for the continuation of OPC-II, which provided them with security and an opportunity to control territory. Turkey was also the crucial lifeline for Northern Iraq, which had suffered mounting economic problems due to the continued UN sanctions and Baghdad's simultaneous blockade of the north that together stifled economic activity in the region.[366] The economic vitality of the Kurdish political entity was contingent upon the partial exemption of Northern Iraq from application of the UN sanctions regime,[367] and increased economic activity with Turkey. Moreover, it was Turkey's blessing and encouragement that cleared the way for the Iraqi Kurds to engage in direct dialogue with the US administration. Talabani even suggested that the Iraqi Kurds would prefer to join a democratic Turkey as the only serious alternative if they could no longer survive in a non-democratic Iraq.[368]

As a result, Talabani and Barzani were partially responsive to Turkey's demands that they curtail the PKK presence in Northern Iraq, issuing public condemnation and denouncement of PKK terrorism:

> We have publically condemned and denounced PKK terrorism. We are

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[363] Demirel, interview; Interview with KDP Leader Masoud Barzani, *Al-Hayat*, 22 June 1993.

[364] Statement issued by the Turkish Council of Ministers, 8 October 1992.

[365] Andrew Finkel, 'Embargo and Poor Harvest Threaten Safe Haven', *The Times*, 19 August 1992.

[366] CIA, 'National Intelligence Estimate', pp. 5-6; 'Independence by Stealth', *The Economist*, 9 May 1992, pp.65-66.

[367] John Murray Brown, 'Kurds Seek Access to Turkish Lira', *Financial Times*, 28 May 1993.

[368] Fuller, 'Fate of the Kurds'.

> diametrically opposed to the PKK philosophy, means and tactics. Their
> activities are detrimental to the Kurdish cause. We are committed to
> deprive them of sanctuary and prevent them from making use of our
> present difficulties. We have taken a number of practical measures to
> ensure border security and to tighten control of important crossing point
> areas… We will not sacrifice the interests of the Kurdish people for the
> sake of the PKK's idealistic and terrorist objectives.[369]

Barzani further directed serious accusations against the PKK: First, the PKK had a 'self-righteous regard for themselves as the sole representative of Kurds everywhere';[370] second, the Iraqi Kurds would never accept any dictatorship by Öcalan, whose organisation was used by Syria and outside powers as a tool to apply pressure on Turkey;[371] and third, the PKK did 'Saddam's work for him.'[372] During contact with Turkish officials, Barzani stated that PKK terrorism was a shared problem, that Baghdad was using it to undermine Turkey's dialogue with the Iraqi Kurds, and that the KDP would take every necessary measure to cooperate with Turkey against the PKK.[373] The Iraqi Kurdish leaders also provided Turkey with evidence of the links between Iraqi intelligence and the PKK.[374] Öcalan, in contrast, continued to insult the Iraqi Kurdish leaders as 'backward, tribal, and lackeys of imperialist and regional powers.'[375]

Nevertheless, Barzani and Talabani had divergent perspectives on the PKK presence in the region. The PKK posed a direct challenge to the KDP since it used areas that the KDP controlled, including the Turkish/Iraqi border. Barzani, therefore, was Turkey's most willing partner in military actions against the PKK.[376] Talabani, on the other hand, denounced PKK terrorism, relayed documents to Ankara that showed Iraq's links with the PKK, yet was less willing to condemn the organisation. He claimed that the PKK presence in Northern Iraq could only be tolerated if the organisation renounced its 'guerrilla activities and operated solely as political party.'[377] He also assumed a self-declared role of mediator between Ankara and the PKK. The KDP accused Talabani of insincerity based on his close relationship with the PKK and advised Turkey to urge

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[369] Masoud Barzani's 13 May 1992 Reply to the US Government's 6 May 1992 Message on Turkey and the PKK.
[370] Jonathan Rugman, 'Kurdish Leader Hits Out at Militants', *The Guardian*, 2 April 1992.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Finkel, 'Embargo and Poor Harvest'.
[373] Demirel, interview.
[374] Rugman, 'Kurdish Leader'.
[375] 'Independence by Stealth', pp.65-66.
[376] The KDP fought against the PKK especially in the 1992-93 period with substantial assistance from Turkey. Turkey helped the KDP to establish around 65 military control points, and provided weapons for 12,000 peshmarga forces to prevent PKK infiltration from the Iraqi side of the Turkish-Iraqi border.
[377] MFA, Talking Points of 22 June 1992. This was regarding the meeting between Demirel and Talabani in Ankara, 9 June 1992.

Talabani to dissociate himself from the terrorist organisation.[378] However, the increasing PKK presence and influence in the region directly threatened the power bases of both the KDP and the PUK. The PKK even retaliated against the KDP and PUK's alignment with Ankara by blocking Turkish trucks bringing essential supplies to Northern Iraq.[379] Thus, even without their uneasy alliance with Turkey, the Iraqi Kurds had their own motivation to reassert their authority and expel the PKK from Northern Iraq. In October 1992, Barzani and Talabani joined forces with the Turkish military in a major operation in Northern Iraq against the PKK, delivering a heavy blow to the terrorist organisation.[380] In interview, then Prime Minister Demirel asserted that the Iraqi Kurdish groups' fight against the PKK was motivated by self-interest rather than loyalty to Turkey, since the KDP and PUK were mainly Kurdish liberation movements seeking to place Northern Iraq under their own rule.[381]

The fourth component of the new Turkish strategy involved alliance politics. In December 1992, Ankara succeeded in establishing a political and consultation mechanism with its OPC-II allies—the US, the UK and France—to address its concerns over the situation in Iraq. In this consultative mechanism, the allied nations reiterated their governments' commitment to the preservation of the independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Iraq, confirming their determination to oppose actions that could lead to its division and dismemberment.[382] They also agreed that the future political structure of Iraq had to be decided democratically by all Iraqi citizens, and the allies would not encourage any constitutional arrangement that did not reflect the will of all of Iraq's peoples. The allied nations condemned terrorism, voiced their full support for Turkey's right of self-defence against the violence of the PKK, and confirmed that the territory of Iraq should not be a safe haven for terrorists. They called upon the government of Iraq to lift the economic embargo and all restrictions that it had imposed upon the northern part of the country and acknowledged the heavy economic losses that Turkey had incurred due to the Gulf War.[383]

The fifth aspect of the Turkish strategy involved increased regional engagement, including establishment of a regional trilateral consultation mechanism between Turkey,

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[378] The Minutes of the Meeting between Hoshyar Zebari of the KDP and MFA officials, Ankara, 15 June 1992.
[379] Alan Cowell, 'Turkey Says Bush Rejects Kurdistan', *The New York Times*, 4 September 1992.
[380] Barzani, interview.
[381] Demirel, interview.
[382] Press Statement by the Turkish Embassy in Washington DC on the meeting between high-level officials from Turkey, France, the UK, and the US in Ankara on 11 December 1992.
[383] Press Statement by the Turkish Embassy, 11 December 1992.

Iran and Syria and diplomatic rapprochement with Baghdad. These countries all had distinct approaches to the Kurdish issue in general, and enjoyed a complex set of relations with various Kurdish groups which they would, at times, even direct against each other in pursuit of rivalries. However, their interests converged in preserving the status quo, maintaining the inviolability of national boundaries, and thus preventing any Kurdish secessionism. In November 1992, the Turkish government convened a Turkey-Iran-Syria trilateral mechanism at the foreign ministers level in the conviction that any move towards independence by the Iraqi Kurds would prove futile provided all three nations opposed it. Ankara initially considered Iraqi participation in the mechanism, yet both the situation in Iraq and international circumstances prevented Baghdad's involvement.[384] Through meetings held every six months at senior and foreign minister level, the three nations reaffirmed the importance they attached to the 'preservation of the territorial integrity and political unity of Iraq' and their resolve to oppose any efforts to 'divide Iraq and developments that could lead to its disintegration' which would have 'negative and dangerous consequences for regional peace and stability.'[385] Turkey also sought to ensure that Iran and Syria agreed to condemn terrorism. However, the statements of the trilateral meetings made no explicit reference to the PKK as a terrorist organisation due to the fervent objections of Syrian officials, and despite agreement on the Iranian side.[386]

During this period, Iraq complained bitterly that the 'anomalous situation' in Northern Iraq was the result of direct military intervention by the US, Great Britain and France. According to Baghdad, the threat of force through OPC-II prevented Iraqi authorities from exercising their functions in this part of the country, despite being ready to resume all of their normal responsibilities in the region. Baghdad argued that this was interference in Iraq's internal affairs, that the region had come under the control of 'armed bands,' that 'a state of virtual secession was imposed,' and that the region had become open to interference by the Iranian regime.[387]

By 1994, Turkey had also started to suggest to the US that OPC-II should simultaneously work for the 'normalisation' of the conditions in Northern Iraq. The emphasis on normalisation reflected Turkey's understanding that the ad hoc political

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[384] Çetin, interview.
[385] Statement by Hikmet Çetin, the Turkish Foreign Minister, following the Trilateral Meeting on 14 November 1992.
[386] Korutürk, interview.
[387] Letter dated 10 June 1993 by Muhammed Said Al-Sahaf's to the UNSC on the humanitarian and security situation in Iraq.

process in Northern Iraq had to remain a temporary arrangement that would not undermine Iraq's territorial integrity. This strategy reflected Ankara's preference for the reinstitution of Iraq's sovereignty in the region, and its resolve to deter any Kurdish move towards independence. It was an extension of Turkey's warnings to the Iraqi Kurdish leadership to contain their aspirations for independence and its calls for the resumption of dialogue with Bagdad. Another part of this new Turkish strategy was the decision to resume the operations of the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad at the chargé d'affaires level. Ankara argued that this decision was not in itself a change in its Iraq policy, which would remain within the framework of and in conformity with UNSC resolutions. From Ankara's viewpoint, such a channel would be useful in approaching the Iraqi government to urge full compliance with UNSC resolutions, an end to Baghdad's economic embargo against Northern Iraq, and de-escalation of the tension between the Iraqi military and Kurdish groups. This new strategy, however, diverged from the US policy of maintaining Baghdad's diplomatic isolation. Washington expressed deep and serious concern about Turkey's decision to elevate relations with Iraq, and requested Ankara not encourage or accept high-level Iraqi delegations.

The sixth component of Turkish strategy related to the damage that the continued sanctions were inflicting on the Turkish economy. Iraq continued to defy the sanctions, and it seemed that, irrespective of whether Saddam fully complied with UNSC obligations, the removal of the sanctions depended solely on regime change in Baghdad. Apart from Iraq itself, Turkey was the country hit hardest by the sanctions, and the economic burden seemed set to worsen for an indeterminate period. Turkey requested US assistance as compensation for part of the economic losses that it incurred during and after the Gulf Crisis. Under the 'oil for food' program encapsulated in UNSC Resolutions 706 and 712, the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık oil pipeline had been allowed to resume operation so Iraq could export $1.6 billion worth of oil for humanitarian purchases. Turkey then argued that the pipeline itself was at serious risk of corrosion, and a potential rescue operation could flush the system with fresh crude oil on an exceptional basis. Washington, in contrast, categorically opposed any modification of the sanctions while recognising their implications for Turkey's economy. Turkish endeavours for even a limited reoperation of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline within the sanctions regime became a problem for Washington, threatening 'a potential crisis in Turkish-US relations.'[388] The question for both countries was to find a way to save and

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[388] Mark Parris, interviewed by author, Washington, DC, 8 December 2009.

maintain the pipeline without damaging the integrity of the UN sanctions regime. Following a long process of negotiations, an agreement was reached to allow Turkey to drain the pipeline and sell the proceeds, and the UN agreed to allow an exception to the sanctions regime to make that possible, yet its implementation was cancelled due to Saddam's refusal. As the sanctions remained with no end in sight and its calls for compensation went unheeded, Turkey's discontent turned into ever deepening frustration with US policy on Iraq.

The last Turkish concern involved the fate of the ethnic Turkomen in Northern Iraq, whose welfare Turkey sought to protect.[389] In essence, Turkey remained wary of successive Iraqi regimes' policy of repression of the Turkomen minority and sporadic execution of Turkomen leaders.[390] Ankara had intermittently directed harsh criticism against Iraq's suppression of the Turkomen people—even at times of improved relations with Baghdad during the 1970s. The Turkomen issue was a sensitive one with public interest and had had a substantial impact on successive Turkish governments' Iraq policy. It was almost impossible for Ankara to remain indifferent to the fate of the Turkomen, who lived just a few hundred miles away from Turkish territories. Ankara was concerned about the dual pressure on the Turkomen from both the central Iraqi government and the Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq. From 1991 onwards, Turkish society rediscovered their plight and became increasingly interested in their situation in Northern Iraq. The desire was to help and protect an ethnic group of Turkish origin under attack by Saddam and losing ground due to rising Kurdish influence in their historic homelands. The widespread concern in Turkey was that Kurdish groups would dominate and force the Turkomen either to submit to Kurdish rule or leave their territories. A more political reason was to generate a Turkomen dynamic as a balancing element against the Kurdish groups in the region. Consequently, the Turkomen became a substantial factor in Turkey's Iraq policy.

3.4. Conclusion

Iraq became a central factor in continued Turkey-US strategic ties in this period. In interview, Zalmay Khalilzad underlined that Iraq was part of the regional issues in the Caucasus, the Balkans, and the Middle East which became preeminent in Turkey-US relations, replacing the Soviet issue in the post-Cold War era. According to him, the Turkey-US agenda adapted to a more regional focus, in which Turkey became

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[389] Fuller, 'Fate of the Kurds'.
[390] Even before Saddam came to power, Iraq had executed the leaders of the Turkomen community in the 1950s and 1960s.

> extremely important in relation to many of these regional issues in which
> the US was very active, with the case of Iraq, during the Iraq-Kuwait
> crisis or the Balkans, which preoccupied Washington for a substantial
> period of the 1990s and remained a continuing concern.[391]

Alan Makovsky also noted that, in the aftermath of the Cold War, Iraq became the primary issue that 'gave Turkey relevance in US policy priorities.'[392] However, according to Marc Grossman, then US Ambassador to Turkey, despite the significance of continued Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq, it was only 'one of the three or four top issues' in Turkey-US relations. Grossman stressed that while Iraq 'remained a constant part of the conversation between Turkey and the US,' Washington wanted to expand the Turkey-US agenda 'beyond the security question' in the 1990s. He underscored that cooperation on Iraq had 'its own logic,' but issues such as support for Turkey's bid for EU membership, its democratisation process, and endorsement of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project were equally important topics on the Turkey-US agenda at this time. Washington's support on these issues, according to Grossman, was part of a US vision for Turkey as a member of the EU with advanced pluralism and democracy.[393]

Table 4 below illustrates the integrative model of Turkey-US cooperation in this period.

Table 4: Integrative model of Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq, 1991-1994

Independent Variable 1: Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat	Independent Variable 2: Agreement on strategy to deal with perceived strategic threat	Dependent Variable / Result
I. The US Saddam's regime remained a significant threat to vital US interests. **II. Turkey** Saddam's regime no longer considered a significant threat.	Agreement on strategy and its elements 1. Regime change (-) 2. Containment (+) i. Maintaining sanctions (+) ii. NFZs through OPC-II (+)	Cooperation despite Turkey's increasing resentment of US policy: 1. Risks of non-cooperation higher than cooperation 2. Importance that Turkey attached to its alliance relationship with the US Factors straining Turkish cooperation with the US: 1. Economic losses 2. Increased PKK terrorism from bases in Northern Iraq 3. Emergence of a de facto Iraqi Kurdish state 4. Need to mediate between fighting Iraqi Kurdish groups

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[391] Khalilzad, interview (2009).
[392] Makovsky, interview.
[393] Grossman, interview.

In terms of independent variable one, a fundamental change occurred in Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq during 1991–1994. Thus, while the US continued to perceive a vital threat from Saddam's Iraq, Turkey's perception of threat from Iraq diverged from that of the US for two key reasons. First, the curtailment of Iraq's military power and its continued isolation through the containment strategy removed Iraq's potential threat for Turkish policy makers. Second, but more importantly, the enormous costs and burdens of the unintended consequences of the US strategy on Iraq for Turkey's national security and economic interests took precedence over any other concerns vis-à-vis Iraq. This led to a shift in Ankara's perception of threat from the Iraqi regime, as well as the emergence of a view that continued cooperation with Washington on Iraq ran counter to Turkey's national interests.

On independent variable two, the strategy to deal with the perceived threat, Turkey still felt compelled to cooperate with the US. The US persisted with its strategy of containment and, if possible, regime change in Iraq, and Turkey wielded no influence over the US policy course. The cooperation on strategy had a number of elements. First, Ankara fundamentally agreed with Washington that Iraq had to fully comply with the UNSC resolutions, and supported maintaining the sanctions. However, Turkey had to bear substantial economic losses and political costs when the sanctions remained in effect for longer than initially planned. Despite endorsing the US policy, Turkey's numerous calls for compensation went unheeded. The economic impacts were most severe in south eastern Anatolia, one of the most underdeveloped regions in Turkey, creating a fertile basis for the PKK's propaganda and recruitment activities.

Second, there was divergence between Ankara and Washington over the policy of seeking regime change in Baghdad. During the 1990–1991 crisis and war, Özal stated a preference for a change in Iraqi leadership and establishment of a democratic government representative of Iraq's different groups.[394] In the post-war period, there was a broader agreement on the need for a change in Iraqi leadership. Since Ankara no longer viewed Saddam's regime as an urgent threat, Turkey distanced itself from involvement with the Iraqi opposition and from US activities and covert operations against Saddam. However, when the initial US covert operations aiming at regime change failed and the removal of Saddam became a precondition for lifting the

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[394] David Aikman, 'Interview with Turgut Özal: Hoping Saddam Would Just Go Away', *Time*, 13 May 1991.

sanctions, Ankara increasingly sought to decouple its Iraq policy from the US strategy of regime change.

Third, the military dimension of the US policy of isolation and containment of Saddam's regime and the enforcement of the NFZ in Northern Iraq rested mainly on OPC-II, conducted from the Turkish base at İncirlik. OPC-II gradually evolved from a deterrent against the recurrence of a refugee crisis in Northern Iraq into a military component of the US strategy to isolate Baghdad and to provide security, mainly for the Iraqi Kurds. However, Baghdad's limited sovereignty over part of its territory and Saddam's decision to withdraw his forces from Northern Iraq in October 1991 enabled the Iraqi Kurds to establish the institutions of a de facto state in the region under the protection provided by OPC-II. This development had implications for separatist Kurdish nationalism in Turkey and constituted a further dilemma for Ankara. The containment policy had thus resulted in precisely what Turkey opposed.

Turkey's concern for the preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity now presented a paradox. Despite Turkey-US agreement on this objective, their views diverged on how to restore Iraq's unity. Turkey viewed the risks to Iraq's territorial integrity as a direct consequence of US policy. Moreover, it considered the situation in Iraq to be an ad hoc arrangement that had to end with normalisation and the reinstitution of Baghdad's authority over the whole country as the only viable alternative. The US, in contrast, was resolved to contain Iraq until Saddam was removed from the scene. The resultant political and military power vacuum in Northern Iraq created the conditions for the PKK to use the region as a base for cross-border terrorist attacks against Turkey. This became a major threat to national security and Turkey had to fight the PKK both at home and in Northern Iraq by carrying out cross-border military operations. Turkey also encountered heavy diplomatic costs in the form of harsh criticisms of these operations by European and Arab nations.

In this context, Turkish cooperation with the US on Iraq strategy suggests a case of alliance security dilemma. Accordingly, Turkey cooperated with the US strategy, despite the repercussions of such cooperation on its interests, since the costs of non-cooperation were more certain than the benefits. The perception of Turkish policy makers remained that continued cooperation with the US on Iraq suited broader Turkish interests by underpinning the strategic value of Turkey-US relations in the new post-Cold War international setting. US expectations from Ankara on Iraq fit into this

broader strategic perspective of Turkish regional leadership in an enhanced partnership with the US. In the wake of the Gulf War, Ankara acknowledged that continued cooperation with the US on Iraq had become a major component of Turkey-US ties.

However, the costs of cooperation were also high because of the difficulty of pursuing divergent interests on the strategy, and, ultimately, the net costs surpassed the relative gains in achieving Turkish interests during this period. As a result, while Ankara maintained its cooperation with the US on economic sanctions and allowed OPC-II to use Turkish bases for military deterrence against Saddam's regime, it simultaneously devised a multi-level strategy for dealing with the damage to its national interests. By 1994, Turkey was arguing for normalisation of relations with Baghdad, a concept that Washington categorically rejected. Nevertheless, despite all the dilemmas it faced, Turkey continued to support the US strategy of containment.

Such cooperation also entailed the response of Turkish foreign and security policies to the internationalisation of the Iraqi Kurdish issue, which involved working to ensure Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It also involved the fight against the escalating terrorism of the PKK consequent on the power vacuum in Northern Iraq. Washington's support was critical in containing Iraqi Kurdish aspirations for self-rule within the limits of Iraq's territorial integrity. Turkey also increasingly looked for US political support for its cross-border military operations against PKK terrorism in Northern Iraq. In May 1994, the start of intra-Kurdish hostilities further aggravated Turkey's dilemmas in unwillingly cooperating with the US on Iraq policy, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: THE FIRST CLASHES BETWEEN IRAQI KURDISH FACTIONS, 1994-1996

During the period 1994-1996, the fundamental dynamics of Turkey-US relations continued to follow the same course in relation to their respective strategies on Iraq; Turkey cooperated with US containment of Iraq despite its growing discontent with the unintended consequences of the post-Gulf War period. Northern Iraq also emerged as a separate issue in Turkey-US deliberations on Iraq due to two factors. First, while the KDP and PUK united their forces to create a de facto Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, the US became interested in creating 'a stable area in this region' to 'allow the (Iraqi) opposition to have a toehold inside the country.'[395] The region became a centre for the US-sponsored activities of the Iraqi National Council (INC) and opposition to Saddam's regime.[396] Second, the conflict between the KDP and PUK became a common challenge that would last from May 1994 to the Washington Agreement in September 1998. The intermittent clashes among the Iraqi Kurdish factions, the ensuing increase in the PKK presence and activities, and the interference of Baghdad and Tehran in developments in the region all meant that Northern Iraq gradually became a new strategic priority in the Turkey-US relationship on Iraq policy.

This chapter presents an account and analysis of the Turkey-US relationship during 1994-1996 with a particular focus on Northern Iraq. While the period of conflict and Turkey-US joint efforts towards Kurdish reconciliation continued until 1998, this chapter will focus only on 1994-1996 to introduce the dynamics present in the initial situation in more detail. The period leading from 1996 to the inauguration of the Bush-Cheney administration in 2001, a turning point in US policy towards Iraq, will be covered in the following chapter.

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[395] Robert S. Deutsch, interviewed by author, Brussels, 15 October 2010.

[396] For a detailed account of INC activities in Northern Iraq, see the Statement of Ahmed Chalabi, President of the Executive Council, INC, *Iraq: Can Saddam Be Overthrown? Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations US Senate*, 105th Congress, 2 March 1998, US47-150 CC (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1998). The INC even planned and initiated an unsuccessful military operation from Northern Iraq in March 1995, from which the US allegedly withdrew its support at the last minute. Robert Baer, *See No Evil: The True Story of a Ground Soldier in the CIA's War on Terrorism* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2002).

4.1. First KDP-PUK Clashes

The KDP-PUK arrangement for administration of Northern Iraq operated on a sensitive power sharing agreement. The Parliament was split with 50 seats for each party, with five seats allocated for Assyrian Christians.[397] Both parties agreed to address outstanding problems in the administration of the region and hold general elections in May 1995. However, in May 1994, a factional armed conflict broke out between the KDP and the PUK. This arose after dispute over the power sharing arrangement, representation in the Kurdish Parliament and government, and, above all, access to customs revenues, primarily from the Habur border gate with Turkey.[398] The KDP collected far more revenues than the PUK, primarily from the sale of diesel to Turkish truck drivers (a violation of UN sanctions), the collection of customs duties levied at the Turkey's border with Iraq, and taxes on trade across the demarcation line with Baghdad-controlled territory. The PUK, however, only had access to customs duties levied on trucks crossing the Iran-Iraq border and a few other internal sources.[399] This disparity in revenue created serious problems of political survival for the PUK, which found itself unable to meet its expenditure requirements. The conflict between the two sides escalated and became increasingly volatile despite the efforts of the INC to act as an intermediary.[400]

Turkey and the US now pursued separate efforts for KDP-PUK reconciliation with distinct motivations. In the initial stages of the conflict, Barzani requested military assistance from Turkey, claiming that the KDP now had to simultaneously fight the PKK and PUK. Ankara followed the KDP-PUK clashes with growing concern since it feared the collapse of political authority would lead to increased PKK activism in the region. PUK-PKK ties would potentially be strengthened, and the PKK had already contacted the PUK to offer support against the KDP. More importantly, the PKK sought to exploit the situation to gain concessions from both parties. In fact, while courting the PUK, Öcalan instructed PKK terrorists in the region to pressure Barzani to conclude an agreement that would allow PKK's presence and camps in the KDP-controlled region. It

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[397] The ethnic Turkomen had not participated the body in protest at the low number of seats they were allocated.

[398] The Iraqi name of the gate is Ibrahim Khalil. Turkey reopened the Habur gate to facilitate the cross-border diesel trade in 1993. Around 2,000 trucks crossed the Habur border, controlled by the KDP, and the customs tax levied on these trucks provided approximately 60 percent of the funds available to the regional administration. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms,* p. 333. Süleyman Demirel suggests that, even more than OPC-II, it was these the revenues and custom duties levied at Turkish-Iraqi border and collected from Turkish truck drivers that helped the Kurdish factions to establish a de facto state in Northern Iraq. Demirel, interview.

[399] Alfred Prados, 'The Kurds: Stalemate in Iraq', *CRS Report for Congress*, 16 November 1995.

[400] David Hirst, 'West Embarrassed as Kurd Kills Kurd', *The Guardian*, 14 May 1994.

was also apparent that the KDP would not engage in a direct fight with the PKK without Turkey's active and ongoing support. The most viable strategy for Ankara seemed to be active engagement with Barzani and Talabani to check the course of events. This strategy was based on pursuit of balance between the KDP and PUK. To resolve the conflict and address its concerns about the PKK's role in Northern Iraq, Turkey convened a meeting of KDP and PUK representatives in Silopi, a Turkish town near the Iraqi border, on 30 May 1994.[401] Turkish messages to the Kurdish parties focused on growing concern about KDP-PUK hostilities and the opportunities that the conflict created for the PKK. Turkey advised the parties of its resolve to eliminate the PKK in the region and warned them that it would not tolerate any cooperation with the terrorist organisation. Barzani and Talabani shared responsibility for exercising authority in the region in the absence of Baghdad's control. Ankara was ready to host both leaders to resolve their factional differences. The Kurdish parties agreed to work together with Ankara for a swift end to the conflict, to restore stability in Northern Iraq, and to address Turkey's 'legitimate security concerns' about PKK terrorism.[402] However, when Barzani objected, Turkey's call for a meeting went unheeded.

In contrast, US concern over the continued KDP-PUK conflict focused on its implications for Iraq policy. The conflict undermined the fundamental logic of OPC-II, weakened the opposition to Saddam, and jeopardised the international relief effort in the region. Washington encouraged the INC to resolve the conflict, urged the parties to refrain from further hostilities and called for negotiations to resolve their political differences and prevent Baghdad from exploiting the political instability in the region.[403]

While Turkey and the US embarked upon these individual efforts to stop the conflict, France entered the picture, convening a series of meetings between KDP and PUK officials in Paris on 16-22 July 1994. The meeting was organised under the auspices of President François Mitterrand and the Kurdish Institute in Paris. Representatives from the US and UK attended the meetings as observers.[404] Turkey was the only OPC-II partner nation that was not invited to the meetings. The Paris meetings produced a draft KDP-PUK agreement to end the conflict, and called for elections in Northern Iraq to be

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[401] KDP-USA Press Release, Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish Officials Meet to Resolve the Current Crisis in Iraqi Kurdistan, 30 May 1994.
[402] Turkish official, interview.
[403] For the INC's role in Northern Iraq, see Andrew Cockburn and Patrick Cockburn, *Out of the Ashes: The Resurrection of Saddam* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999), pp.178-179.
[404] Gunter, *Kurdish Predicament*, p.77.

held in 1995. The agreement was to be signed in September in Paris by Barzani and Talabani at a meeting chaired by Mitterrand.[405]

Turkey reacted harshly to the Paris meetings which it perceived had turned into an international conference on the future of 'Kurdistan'. Ankara opposed the involvement of non-regional countries in the affairs of Northern Iraq and any further internationalisation of the Iraqi Kurdish issue.[406] The draft agreement, furthermore, contained provisions for the creation of a separate Kurdish state without any commitment or reference to the territorial integrity of Iraq. In order to placate Turkey, the KDP and PUK reassured Ankara of their preference for addressing the conflict internally and reiterated their commitment to Iraq's territorial integrity.[407] As a result of Turkey's pressure and objections on all sides, the second round of Paris meetings, scheduled for September, was cancelled.[408]

Despite the Paris talks, the fundamental KDP-PUK disagreement over control of the region remained divisive, and there were several abortive ceasefires from August to December 1994.[409] During this period, Talabani complained that Ankara was taking sides in the conflict while he himself was engaged in contacts with the PKK. The KDP denied Talabani's claims and announced that Turkey had 'observed neutrality and mediated in conflict and played a constructive role to contain the internal conflict.' According to the KDP, Ankara had also provided the Kurdish parties with military and logistical support, facilities and freedom to travel on an equal basis 'despite the PUK's relations with the PKK.'[410]

The KDP and PUK reached a fourteen-point agreement on 24 November 1994.[411] However, the agreement did not hold and another round of conflict ensued. The resumption of hostilities led to a new unilateral Turkish attempt to mediate in January 1995, and Turkey extended $13.5 million in aid to the regional administration.[412] The

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[405] Barham Salih, 'Status for Prospects for the Kurdish Question in Iraq', Statement to the Conference on Europe and the Kurdish Question Vienna, 2-3 July 1998; 'Whatever Happened to the Paris Conference', *Turkish Probe*, 30 September 1994, p.8.

[406] Sanberk, interview.

[407] İlnur Cevik, 'Ankara Tough on Northern Iraqi Kurds', *Turkish Probe*, 26 August 1994, pp.13-15.

[408] 'Turkey Seeks to Prevent Kurdish Summit in Paris', *Turkish Daily News*, 28 September 1994.

[409] For instance, see, KDP UK Representation Press Release, A Comprehensive Peace Agreement Signed between KDP and PUK in Iraqi Kurdistan, 24 November 1994.

[410] KDP Press Release, Turkey Has Not Taken Sides in the Kurdish Internal Conflict in Iraq, 10 September 1994.

[411] 'A Comprehensive Peace Agreement'.

[412] Robins, *Suits and Uniforms,* p.334.

Turkish effort was followed by a US mediation initiative at the end of January 1995.[413] Washington urged the Kurdish leadership to stop the fighting and avoid any contact or dialogue with Baghdad. The intra-Kurdish fighting had increased the prospects of each Kurdish party seeking Saddam's help and consequently some reinstitution of Baghdad's control in the region; the worst of all alternatives for the US policy of containment. It appeared that, to prevent the collapse of the containment policy, the US would intensify its attempts at mediation between the KDP and PUK. There was also the prospect that the US would attempt to ease the UN sanctions vis-à-vis Northern Iraq and create economic conditions to encourage the Kurdish groups to resolve their conflict. Lastly, the US strategy attributed a central role to the INC for the resolution of intra-Kurdish hostilities and in monitoring the ceasefire.[414]

4.2. Ankara's Review of Iraq Policy and Cross-border Military Operations

The continued KDP-PUK conflict and the involvement of outside parties forced Ankara to review its policy on the situation in Northern Iraq.[415] Turkey's primary interest was in maintaining the regional balance of power, which required preventing any country from attaining a dominant position in the region.[416] Iraq's disintegration along ethnic or sectarian lines would eventually provide Iran with the strategic advantages to wield assertive regional dominance. The preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity and unity and the re-establishment of the pre-Gulf War status quo were critically important in sustaining some form of balance between Iran and Iraq. The greatest single threat to Iraq's unity was Kurdish secessionism, which, from Ankara's perspective, was a challenge to regional stability even without the prospects of its spill over effect on Turkey. Turkey's third interest was in maintaining the fight against the PKK. Baghdad's lack of control in Northern Iraq posed a challenge for Turkish national security as the region became a base for the PKK's terrorist activities. The situation had further deteriorated due to KDP-PUK clashes and the PKK terror attacks continued to mount. The regional balance of power and Turkey's national security and stability would remain in jeopardy until the situation in Iraq was normalised. Such normalisation meant restoration of Baghdad's sovereignty and control over all parts of the country and its

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[413] Carol Migdalowitz, 'Turkey's Military Offensive in Northern Iraq', *CRS Report for Congress,* 13 April 1995.
[414] Prados, 'The Kurds: Stalemate in Iraq'.
[415] İlnur Çevik, 'Turkey Toughens Up on Northern Iraq', *Turkish Probe*, 2 September 1994, p.9; Robert S. Greenberger, 'Turkey, American Ally in Gulf War, Asserts Its Independence from US', *Wall Street Journal,* 3 October 1994.
[416] For instance, in the 1970s, Turkey was able to carefully balance its relations with Iran and Iraq, and pursued a policy of active neutrality during the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s.

return to the family of nations through reconciliation with its neighbours and its people. Ankara also recognised that the US insistence on the containment policy and the trust gap due to the tragedies perpetrated on the Kurdish people by Saddam would prevent any meaningful dialogue between Baghdad and the Kurdish parties. Normalisation thus remained less a policy than an objective reflecting Turkey's preference for keeping Iraq intact.

Furthermore, Ankara saw that the rivalry between Barzani and Talabani for control of the region would persist and even escalate with the involvement of Syria and Iran. Damascus would clearly continue to use the PKK as a trump card against Turkey. Despite the expansion of Turkey-Iran commercial ties,[417] political relations between Turkey and Iran were fraught with sporadic tensions over Tehran's interference in Turkish domestic politics, clandestine operations against Iranian dissidents residing in Turkey, and inadequate cooperation on border security.[418] Ankara remained wary of Iran's ties to the PKK due to its reluctance to cooperate against it and of Tehran's attempts to undermine the Iraqi regime and curtail Turkish and US influence by interfering in Northern Iraqi affairs.[419]

On the other hand, it was clear that the PKK would exploit the KDP-PUK hostilities. Talabani would not satisfactorily meet Turkey's demand to cooperate against the PKK[420] and would most likely seek its assistance in the PUK's hostilities with the KDP. Barzani principally favoured Kurdish solidarity, and would not compromise the military strength he needed against the PUK by also fighting the PKK. Thus both the KDP and PUK could potentially use the PKK as a lever in their dealings with Turkey.[421]

Turkish officials were also mindful of possible Israeli intervention in Northern Iraq. According to Sanberk, Tel Aviv took an interest in developments in the region since, together with Iran, Saddam's Iraq represented a significant part of Israel's perception of threat.[422] Onur Öymen, then undersecretary at the MFA, noted in interview that Israel had historical connections with the Iraqi Kurds and special ties with the Barzani family, and considered Northern Iraq a springboard for its policies vis-à-vis Iraq and Iran. For

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[417] Mustafa Aydın and Damla Aras, 'Political Conditionality of Economic-Relations between Paternalist States: Turkey's Interaction with Iran, Iraq, and Syria', *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 27:1-2 (2005), pp.21-44.
[418] John Calabrese, 'Turkey and Iran: Limits of a Stable Relationship', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 25:1 (1998), pp.75-94.
[419] Korutürk, interview.
[420] Ibid.
[421] İlnur Çevik and Hayri Birler, 'Turkish Government Set to Revitalize Baghdad's Authority in Northern Iraq', *Turkish Daily News*, 29 August 1994.
[422] Sanberk, interview.

Öymen, the Iraqi Kurds were traditionally a strategic asset for Israel against Baghdad and for subversive activities against the Iranian regime.[423] Sanberk also asserted that influential figures in the US administration took Israel's security interests into account in crafting Washington's strategy of dual containment. However, he also underlined that Ankara carefully refrained from raising the Israeli factor, since any perceived correlation between US policy, Israel and the situation in Northern Iraq would create additional political problems.[424] Then Deputy Director General for the Middle East at the MFA Osman Korutürk, on the other hand, noted that Israel's primary aim was to weaken Baghdad due to Saddam's anti-Israeli policies, but that it did not support the dismantling of Iraq to preserve its good relations with Turkey and prevent any change of the regional power balance in Iran's favour.[425]

Ankara's conclusion was that Turkey's Iraq policy was in a vicious circle. Turkey worked with the US to protect the Iraqi Kurds, essentially constraining Iraqi sovereignty, while the PKK exploited the situation in Northern Iraq, and the KDP-PUK fighting exacerbated Turkey's problems.[426] The intermittent clashes prevented the Iraqi Kurdish groups from curtailing PKK activities in the region, and Turkey became particularly concerned about increased PUK-PKK ties.[427] Ankara now decided to take on the PKK on its own terms. The major cross-border military operation 'Stealth' was launched on 20 March 1995, with Turkey sending 35,000 troops to eliminate PKK encampments and an estimated 2,500–3,000 terrorists in Northern Iraq. Ankara justified the operation on the grounds that since there was no authority that could be held responsible under international law for terrorist acts committed or originating there, the Turkish government had to carry out an operation to stop such acts, duly limited in duration and scope, and with due respect for Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Ankara gave assurances that Turkish troops would be withdrawn immediately following the elimination of the PKK targets.[428]

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[423] Onur Öymen, interviewed by author, Ankara, 2 February 2011.
[424] Sanberk, interview.
[425] Korutürk, interview.
[426] Ibid.
[427] Talabani argued that certain circles in Turkey had taken a position against the PUK because of his initiative leading to the declaration of a unilateral ceasefire by Abdullah Öcalan in 1993. Talabani claimed that the initiative was coordinated with President Özal and other senior officials. Raşit Gürdilek, 'Interview with Talabani: KDP Has the Money, We Have the People', *Turkish Daily News*, 8 March 1995.
[428] Letter dated 28 March 1995 of the Turkish Permanent Representative to the UN, to the UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali.

The US extended Turkey firm support in its fight against the PKK: First, the US recognised the PKK as a terrorist organisation, and expressed understanding and support of Turkey's legitimate fight against the PKK. Second, the US officially endorsed the cross-border military operation.[429] Washington's support was crucial at a time when there was increasing condemnation of the Turkish operation, especially from France and Germany.[430] The German government reacted to the operation by suspending military aid to Turkey while the EU warned that the proposed customs union was at risk.[431] The League of Arab States also called for an end to the 'Turkish military invasion' of Northern Iraq.[432] Third, Washington categorically rejected PKK requests that the US act as an intermediary with Turkey, refusing to enter into dialogue or meet with members of the organisation. Fourth, the US recognised that the administrative vacuum created as a result of OPC-II and the NFZ had allowed the PKK to establish terrorist camps in Northern Iraq as a springboard for attacks into Turkey. Fifth, the US urged Syria to cut its ties with the PKK, and called on the Iraqi Kurds to work with Turkey against the PKK presence in the region. However, US endorsement of Turkey's struggle against the PKK and cross-border military operations in Northern Iraq was not unqualified. Washington expressed opposition to any kind of permanent Turkish military presence in Iraq, and expected that the operation would be limited in scope and duration with full respect for the rights of non-combatants.[433]

During the operation, Ankara contemplated establishing a buffer zone in Northern Iraq to stop the infiltration of PKK terrorists into Turkey. President Demirel made a statement at the time that the border between Turkey and Iraq had not been correctly delineated, but that resolution of the problem was not under consideration. This remark reflected the resentment over the notion that Turkey suffered injustice at the 1926

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[429] 'Turkey Unleashes a Massive Raid on Kurdish Bases in Iraq', *International Herald Tribune*, 21 March 1995.

[430] Migdalowitz, 'Turkey's Military Offensive'.

[431] Tony Paterson, 'Turks Risk Losing Customs Union', *The European*, 31 March 1995.

[432] Diplomatic Note Verbal dated 16 April 1995, Ref: 3/1587 of the General Secretariat of League of Arab States to Turkey.

[433] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefings in 1995 on

22 March, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9503/950322db.html;

24 March, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9503/950324db.html;

27 March, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9503/950327db.html;

28 March, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9503/950328db.html;

31 March, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9503/950331db.html;

6 April, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9504/950406db.html;

10 April, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9504/950410db.html;

13 April, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9504/950413db.html; Statements by President Clinton and Prime Minister Çiller during the photo opportunity at the White House, Washington DC, 19 April 1995, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/WCPD-1995-04-24/pdf/WCPD-1995-04-24-Pg659.pdf

Turkey-Iraq border delineation. Turkey claimed the borders with Iraq were drawn without taking into consideration the security requirements of the two countries, and particularly the need to prevent terrorist infiltration.[434] Washington remained non-committal over the idea and expressed its readiness to give fair consideration to a Turkish proposal.[435] Yet, in face of harsh reactions from Iraq, the European capitals and the Arab world, Turkish officials swiftly dismissed the idea and declared that no decision had been made over a new border arrangement with Iraq.[436]

The reaction of the KDP and PUK to the Turkish military operation was cautious. The PUK stated that the Kurdish leadership appreciated Turkey's legitimate security concerns about the PKK. From their perspective, the only effective and reliable way to address the security of Turkey's border with Iraq was through cooperation between the Turkish government and the Iraqi Kurdish authorities. The PUK expected the earliest possible withdrawal of the Turkish troops, enabling a more viable collective security arrangement along the border region. The PUK believed that the long-term stability of the region depended on encouraging peace and reconciliation between the KDP and PUK and assisting the Kurdish leadership in their 'desire to help neighbours regarding their legitimate security concerns.'[437] The PUK, accordingly, expected the government of Turkey to help them achieve this common objective.

4.3. Turkey-US Joint Mediation in Northern Iraq: Towards the Drogheda Process

Turkey concluded the Stealth operation in mid-May and withdrew all Turkish forces from Northern Iraq. The problems that Turkey had encountered forced Ankara to explore alternative strategies to respond to the situation. The question was simple: The continuation of OPC-II for an indeterminate period created severe implications for the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. In view of the connection between OPC-II and the emergence of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, the introduction of certain changes to

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[434] The Turkish position paper handed over to Iraq's Foreign Minister by the chargé d'affaires of the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad, as annexed to the letter dated 6 May 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the UN addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/1995/361, 6 May 1995; Tuncay Özkan, *Bush ve Saddam'ın Gölgesinde Entrikalar Savaşı* (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2003), pp.30-31.

[435] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing on 24 and 27 March 1995.

[436] Letter dated 13 June 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the UN, to the President of the Security Council, S/1995/484, 14 June 1995.

[437] Letter dated 27 March 1995 by the PUK Foreign Relations Committee to Erdal İnönü, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs.

OPC-II seemed essential. However, it was not clear whether and to what extent negotiations with the US would make changes to OPC-II possible.[438]

For Ankara, even though the reinstitution of Baghdad's authority in Northern Iraq was the desired outcome, whether that would result in the elimination of the PKK presence in the region was doubtful. Cross-border military operations offered the only effective alternative for dealing with the PKK in the region. However, while fighting the PKK, Turkey faced damage to its international reputation, even leading to difficulties in approval of the customs union with the EU. Ankara's problems were amplified by international sympathy for the Kurds and the difficulty of explaining the distinction between Turkey's Kurdish population and the PKK, or between the PKK and the Iraqi Kurds. The third and most viable alternative seemed to be to compel the Iraqi Kurds to cooperate with Turkey. The military operation's success in destroying the PKK's bases, infrastructure and logistical supply lines would not suffice to prevent it returning to the region so long as KDP-PUK hostilities continued and neither party took action against it. The remedy was to devise a three-fold strategy of KDP-PUK reconciliation, formation of a security mechanism between Turkey and Iraqi Kurdish factions, and more efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance to the region.[439] This strategy, in essence, was the revival of Turkey's failed 1992 agreement with the KDP and PUK to eliminate PKK terrorism in Northern Iraq.[440] Its success, however, hinged upon arranging a permanent KDP-PUK ceasefire and ensuring the cooperation of the Kurdish groups, especially Barzani's KDP, in working with Turkey to secure the border against the PKK. The strategy involved establishment of checkpoints and joint border controls by Turkish troops and the KDP. Washington supported Turkey's new strategy to reconcile the Kurdish factions as it conformed to US interests,[441] agreeing to join Turkish efforts in pressing both Kurdish factions to stop the internecine fight.[442] The KDP and PUK also welcomed the Turkish initiative. For their part, it was a welcome change in Ankara's previous policy to pressure them to pursue dialogue with Baghdad and a demonstration of Turkish intention to open up a new page in relations that would

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[438] Sanberk, interview.

[439] MFA Background Note of 30 March 1995 to EU Troika on Turkish Military Operations in Northern Iraq.

[440] Amberin Zaman, 'Turkey Tries to Sooth Allies over Incursion', *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 April 1995.

[441] Patrick Cockburn, 'Ankara Plans for Iraqi Kurds to Police Border', *The Independent*, 11 April 1995.

[442] Steven Greenhouse, 'US Backing Turkish Plan to Use Iraq Kurds to Prevent Raids', *The New York Times*, 14 April 1995; Alan Makovsky, 'Turkey Merits US Backing as It Hunts Terrorists', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 18 April 1995.

help bring stability to the region.[443] The PKK reacted harshly against a possible Turkey-KDP-PUK security agreement and Washington's endorsement of this strategy. Öcalan declared that, even though the PKK desired to improve ties with the KDP and PUK, if they improved relations with Turkey, he would consider it a declaration of war.[444]

The fourth aspect of Turkey's reviewed strategy involved the Turkomen issue. Ankara had been concerned about the fate of the Turkomen in Iraq for a long time, and had traditionally opposed Iraq's assimilation policies during bilateral contacts.[445] In the aftermath of the Gulf War, the fate of the Turkomen and the potential damage that the KDP-PUK fight in Northern Iraq would inflict upon them became a crucial Turkish concern. However Ankara had to deal with the Turkomen issue in a discreet manner, without pushing it to the forefront of its Iraq agenda, to prevent creating the impression that Turkey's was exploiting its links to the Turkomen to advance its interests in Northern Iraq.[446] In 1988, Ankara had been instrumental in the formation of the Iraq National Turkomen Party (*Irak Milli Türkmen Partisi*, IMTP). Following the Gulf War, the Turkomen were divided due to sectarian differences and conflicting interests, and Ankara launched an initiative to unify the Turkomen parties and ensured the establishment of the Iraqi Turkomen Front (ITF) on 24 April 1995. From Ankara's perspective, the Turkomen and their representative, the ITF, had to be part of the equation regarding the situation in Northern Iraq.

In line with the new strategy, Turkey hosted the Kurdish leadership in May 1995. During the talks, Barzani requested the reconstruction and resettlement of 350 villages destroyed by Saddam in areas adjacent to Turkish border, claiming that populating the area would prevent PKK infiltration. His second request was to form Peshmerga forces numbering 20,000 men to protect the Iraqi side of the border on a permanent basis. For Ankara, these proposals were unviable; the establishment of 350 villages was a huge long-term undertaking that would require enormous financial resources, and the KDP's ability to curb PKK infiltration into Turkey was questionable. The formation of a 20,000 strong Peshmerga border forces was also unrealistic since Barzani's existing Peshmerga force of only 25,000 was already fully engaged in fighting the PUK instead

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[443] Interview with Talabani, *Al Hayat*, 9 April 1995; John Pomfret, 'US Backs Turkish Plan for Iraq Border', *International Herald Tribune*, 12 April 1995.

[444] APO to Barzani and Talabani, 'War If You Side with Turkey Against Us', *Mideast Mirror*, 7 April 1995, pp. 11-13; Interview with Abdullah Öcalan, *Assharq Al-Awsat*, 14 April 1995; Interview with Abdullah Öcalan, *Al-Hayat*, 16 April 1995.

[445] Korutürk, interview.

[446] Korutürk, interview.

of opposing the PKK. A similar measure had failed in 1992 and Turkey now doubted how reliably committed the Kurdish leaders were. Nevertheless, the KDP-PUK hostilities could also invite interference from Iran and Syria in Northern Iraq, and Ankara felt it crucial to prevent Barzani and Talabani from becoming tools in the hands of Tehran or Damascus.

As part of new strategy, Ankara requested that Washington use its influence on Barzani and Talabani to urge them to cooperate with Turkey. Washington proposed increased US engagement with the KDP and PUK to restore stability, provide some kind of longer-term solution to the situation in Northern Iraq, and address Turkey's security concerns. However, US interests remained preventing Saddam from re-establishing control in Northern Iraq and continuing OPC-II.[447] The US proposal was to jointly explore a new mediation process to reach an agreement on the plan that the US negotiated with the Kurdish parties with the INC's participation in January 1995. The new strategy of mediating Kurdish reconciliation with Turkey's active involvement marked a change from Washington's previous initiatives. In interview, Mark Parris, then at the State Department's Near East Affairs Bureau, observed that Washington recognised Turkey's concerns about the situation in Northern Iraq, particularly regarding the PKK and the Turkomen's vulnerability during intra-Kurdish hostilities. The US strategy became to address these concerns to ensure Turkey's participation in brokering a peace that would also keep Saddam from moving back into the north. According to Parris, the US began to realise at that point that 'you couldn't really manage this problem in the north without Turkey being happy . . . making sure that Turkey's interests were covered [became] part of US consciousness in dealing with this part of the world.'[448] Robert S. Deutsch, then a director at the US State Department's Near Eastern Affairs Bureau, underlined that Washington had acknowledged that 'Turkey had been part of what the US was trying to do to stabilize the area' and the only way to make the Turkish government comfortable with the US efforts was to be 'completely transparent.'[449] However, Turkey-US interests still diverged on the details. Turkey's interest in Northern Iraq was primarily related to the PKK and restraining any Kurdish drive for independence. In contrast, as Deutsch points out, for Washington, 'the PKK issue at that point was very much secondary' since the US was 'more concerned

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[447] Transcript of the Unpublished Briefing by Alexander Vershbow, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for European Affairs at the National Security Council, Washington Press Center, 17 April 1995.
[448] Parris, interview.
[449] Deutsch, interview.

with trying to sustain Northern Iraq [as] a separate, stable part of Iraq.' In the end, Deutsch notes, the US 'had no option but was obliged to manipulate its actions to be acceptable to Turkey' as it 'had no access to Northern Iraq except through Turkey.'[450]

Talabani now accepted the US proposal for a renewed reconciliation process while Barzani remained reluctant. Washington sought Ankara's assistance to convince Barzani and requested Turkish participation in the planned preparatory meeting. Ankara agreed with Washington's proposals and informed the KDP of Turkey's endorsement of the US initiative for KDP-PUK reconciliation.[451] The KDP instead put forward a new four-stage peace proposal for the restoration of peace in Northern Iraq.[452] Despite the new Turkey-US cooperation for Kurdish reconciliation,[453] KDP-PUK fighting again broke out in Erbil in mid-July, sparking a harsh reaction from the US. Washington warned the Kurdish parties that their conflict was incompatible with US efforts to help re-establish peace and security in Northern Iraq and urged them to withdraw to their positions prior to the breakdown of the ceasefire. The KDP and PUK stated that they welcomed continued US mediation, claiming that stopping the fighting was extremely difficult without a neutral separating force on the ground. The clashes raged on and the situation appeared to be degenerating even further. Washington again warned the Kurdish parties that their conflict threatened US interests in Northern Iraq; a secure and peaceful region was a central US objective, Iranian involvement was a US redline, and the US opposed any negotiations of the Kurdish parties with Baghdad. The US was willing to actively seek a comprehensive settlement to the disputes on the condition that each party committed to refrain from military action for the duration of negotiations. The US plan attributed a special role to the INC, separating the forces and providing a neutral security service in certain areas. Both parties publicly announced their agreement with the US proposal.[454]

The first stage of the KDP-PUK peace process took place in Drogheda in Ireland on 9-11 August 1995 under the auspices of the US, with the INC and Turkey as observers. The discussions produced the Drogheda statement outlining confidence and security-building measures (CBMs) and principles for a more comprehensive agreement. The

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[450] Ibid.
[451] Korutürk, interview.
[452] KDP USA Press Release, KDP's Proposal to End Fighting and Instil Peace in Iraqi Kurdistan, 10 June 1995.
[453] Deutsch, interview.
[454] PUK Press Release, Statement by the Political Leadership of the PUK Regarding US Initiative to Restore Peace to Iraqi Kurdistan, 23 July 1995; KDP USA Press Release, KDP Welcomes US Peace Initiative to Bring About a Comprehensive Settlement, 26 July 1995.

Kurdish factions agreed to maintain the ceasefire and make it permanent, to continue talks aimed at finalising a peace agreement that would include the demilitarisation of Erbil, formation of a neutral INC commission to monitor the ceasefire, and the deposition of the customs revenues and all fees collected by each party into bank accounts under the supervision of a neutral commission acting on behalf of the regional authority. At Turkey's insistence, the KDP and PUK agreed to include a paragraph in the statement about respect for Iraq's territorial integrity and consideration for Turkey's legitimate security concerns,[455] referring to the PKK presence and activities in Northern Iraq.

4.4. From Dublin to the Chairman's Text: The PKK as a Third Party in Northern Iraq

On 24 August 1995, the PKK declared all-out war on the KDP to terminate the Drogheda Agreement. The objectives of the PKK attack were to occupy the KDP-controlled northern districts of Dohuk and Erbil and establish a 'democratic federation' in Northern Iraq.[456] The KDP announced that the PKK's 'unwarranted aggression' was instigated and motivated by regional powers that wanted to undermine the reconciliation efforts.[457] Ankara believed the PKK attack on the KDP was a result of a coordinated strategy devised jointly by Syria, the PUK, and the PKK. For Ankara, the Syrian regime's primary motivation was to undermine the Drogheda process. This would help to curtail Turkey's growing influence on the Iraqi Kurdish groups, which could potentially lead to the elimination of the PKK, Syria's chief protégé against Turkey, and thereby increased Syrian influence in Northern Iraq.[458] An additional Syrian motive seemed to be curbing the extension of US influence in the region.[459] KDP officials informed Ankara that the PUK, dissatisfied with the Drogheda Agreement, also sought to undermine its implementation by using the PKK in close collaboration with Syria. The PUK, however, denied any cooperation with the PKK, reaffirmed its commitment to Drogheda, and claimed that the future stability of the region was contingent upon the peaceful resolution of the KDP-PUK conflict. For the PUK, the restoration of the 'rule of law of Iraqi Kurdistan's regional authority' and the end of KDP's militia rule were imperative to reassure neighbouring countries regarding their security concerns. The

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[455] See the text of the Drogheda Statement of 11 August 1995.
[456] Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), pp.121-123; 'Kurds in Crisis, Current Affairs', *The Middle East*, November 1995, pp.6-10.
[457] KDP Press Release, PKK Suffers Major Military Defeat in Iraqi Kurdistan', 3 September 1995.
[458] Uğur Ziyal, interviewed by author, Ankara, 31 August 2010; Korutürk, interview.
[459] Gunter, *Kurds and the Future*, p.123.

PUK also underscored that it was not party to and would not intervene in the KDP-PKK conflict.[460] Talabani assured Turkish officials in early September that the PUK was not involved in the PKK attack against the KDP. He claimed Iran and Syria instigated the attack to mitigate Turkish and US influence in the region. Talabani also pledged the PUK would not attack the KDP during the KDP-PKK conflict.[461] However, Ankara remained sceptical of Talabani's explanations. It seemed that a relationship with the PKK was part of PUK's complex set of ties, especially with Syrian intelligence. Any association of the KDP or PUK with the PKK was unacceptable for Ankara, which based its relationship with both parties on their stance vis-à-vis the terrorist organisation. The KDP was motivated to fight the PKK, which created a dynamic for extended Turkey-KDP cooperation. This could provide the KDP with an advantage in the power struggle with the PUK over control of Northern Iraq. This factor made the PUK careful to take into account Turkish demands about the PKK. It appeared that Talabani was pursuing a prudent strategy for intensified engagement with the US, whilst observing the realities on the ground that dictated a balanced relationship with Turkey, Iran and Syria.

As the KDP-PKK conflict escalated, Washington explored ways to build on the Drogheda accord to revitalise the ceasefire, and a second meeting took place in Dublin on 12-15 September 1995. During the meetings, Turkish officials continued to insist that any agreement had to conform to Iraq's territorial integrity. The responsibility of the KDP and PUK to prevent the use of Northern Iraq by the PKK was a Turkish prerequisite for any agreement. Also, all ethnic groups, including the Turkomen, had to have proportional representation in temporary administrative bodies.[462] Ultimately, however, the Dublin talks ended in failure, largely because the PUK objected to relinquishing control of Erbil while the KDP refused to share its custom revenues. The PUK delegation also opposed a provision in the final statement recognising Turkey's legitimate security interests, claiming the PKK was a political organisation, members of which committed terrorist acts; a stark deviation from Talabani's previous assurances to Turkey that the PUK recognised the PKK as a terrorist organisation. Talabani further accused Turkey of not wanting inter-Kurdish reconciliation to take place under international auspices.[463] In an effort to deflect the PUK's responsibility for the failure

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[460] PUK Press Release, Statement on KDP-PKK Confrontation, 29 August 1995.
[461] Turkish official, interview.
[462] The Turkish MFA Non-paper on Guidelines for the Dublin Meeting, 12-15 September 1995.
[463] Interview with Jalal Talabani, 'Kurdish Struggle Within', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 9-15 November 1995.

of the Dublin talks, he argued that it was Ankara's desire to impose its position on the Iraqi Kurdish groups that had impeded KDP-PUK agreement.[464] Talabani now approached Tehran, stating that Iran could play an influential role in the settlement of the intra-Kurdish hostilities.[465] In September, KDP and PUK delegations met in Tehran for talks, raising the prospect that the Iranian-supported Badr Brigade of the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) could assume a monitoring role in Northern Iraq. Washington warned both parties that Iran had no useful role to play in the region, and that any Iranian influence ran counter to US interests. The US criticised any public commitment by the KDP and PUK to Iranian-sponsored mediation and categorically objected to a security or monitoring role for the Badr Brigade.[466]

Talabani's second move was to meet with Öcalan twice, allegedly in Lebanon, although in reality the meetings took place in Damascus. Talabani stated that the PUK refused to act as 'Turkey's policeman' to guarantee border security. The PUK would also not interfere on behalf of any party in the armed KDP-PKK confrontation. He claimed that Turkey supplied the KDP with arms and financing, and had thus relinquished its neutral position. For Talabani, the PKK's new orientation called for a peaceful solution of Turkey's Kurdish problem; Öcalan had pledged to renounce terrorism and declare a unilateral ceasefire to enable a political solution within the framework of Turkey.[467] For Talabani, the PKK was not a terrorist organisation; on the contrary, it was 'one of the most powerful Kurdish parties, mainly based in Turkey.'[468] However, during meetings with Turkish officials, Talabani complained that both Syria and Iran supported and encouraged the PKK to limit Turkish influence in Northern Iraq, which he claimed was manifested through the KDP. He also admitted that the Syrian government had provided support for PKK attacks against the KDP.[469]

As KDP-PKK fighting escalated in August-September 1995, Washington warned Talabani not to engage in any hostilities against the KDP, and urged Damascus to cut its ties with the PKK. The KDP requested Turkey increase its financial assistance and provide military supplies. While fighting the PKK, Barzani also sought Turkish guarantees against the alleged agreement between Iran, Syria, the PUK and the PKK to

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[464] Interview with Jalal Talabani, 'Kurds Will Not Be Turkey's Policeman', *Al-Hayah Arabic*, 24 September 1995.
[465] IRNA Interview with Jalal Talabani, *Kayhan International*, 16 September 1995.
[466] Briefing note on US Secretary of State's messages to the leaders of the KDP and PUK, 30 October 1995.
[467] Talabani, 'Kurds Will Not Be Turkey's Policeman'.
[468] Talabani, 'Kurdish Struggle Within'.
[469] Turkish official, interview.

eliminate the KDP, and thereby the influence of Turkey and the US in Northern Iraq. Ankara assured Barzani that, irrespective of whether such an agreement had been concluded or not, Turkey would act decisively against any party that sponsored PKK terrorism. Turkey maintained neutrality towards both the KDP and PUK until it became obvious that the PUK was collaborating with the PKK while the KDP fought against it. Turkey could therefore not pursue a balanced policy so long as the PKK was attacking the KDP. A KDP-PUK ceasefire and establishment of peace and stability in the region would serve Turkish interests. If the PUK-PKK engaged in joint aggression against the KDP, Turkey would extend its full support to the KDP. On the other hand, Ankara calculated that cutting off all ties with Talabani would potentially make him desperate for assistance from Iran and Syria in the fight for survival against the KDP, eventually making him another instrument to be used against Turkey along with the PKK. Consequently, Turkish officials met with Talabani, who claimed that the PUK, far from wishing to damage Turkish interests, would even prefer to have Northern Iraq integrated with Turkey. His chief complaint centred on Turkish assistance to the KDP.[470]

In the midst of the KDP-PKK clashes, Turkey-US interests converged in the reconciliation strategy to end the intra-Kurdish rivalry. The implications of the continued instability were obvious. Iran had initiated an alternative mediation effort between the Kurdish parties in early October 1995,[471] and its renewed proposal for deployment of the Badr Brigades aimed to substitute the US proposal for a 'Neutral Commission.' It seemed that, without a settlement to the conflict, the Kurdish parties would not long resist pressure from Iran, which was willing and able to affect the outcome of the KDP-PUK rivalry. The result of an Iranian-sponsored agreement would be continued instability in the region, manipulation of the Kurds as agents of Iranian influence, and long-term weakening of Iraq into any post-Saddam era. Based on this calculation, the US, in coordination with Turkey, presented a draft agreement—the 'Chairman's Text'—to the parties on 29 September 1995 as a follow up to the Drogheda and Dublin meetings. This was followed by a joint Turkey-US delegation to Northern Iraq on 12-18 November 1995. Once the parties consented to the Chairman's Text, the next step would be the signing of the final agreement. The draft agreement called for a neutral commission established under the auspices of the INC. It would be responsible for security in the open city of Erbil, monitoring the separation of the KDP

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[470] Turkish official, interview.
[471] Gunter, *Kurdish Predicament,* p.85.

and PUK forces, policing services within revenue collection facilities, monitoring the collection and deposit of revenues, and assisting in resolving disputes.

During the joint Turkey-US efforts for the resolution of the KDP-PUK conflict, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire on 10 December 1995 following a three and a half month conflict with the KDP. The KDP accepted the ceasefire the following day, on the condition that the PKK took steps to end its intervention in the affairs of Northern Iraq. According to the KDP statement, the PKK had to respect the Northern Iraqi people's 'free will . . . to decide their own political choices and future which has been determined through parliamentary election.'[472] Ankara reacted fiercely to the KDP acceptance of the PKK ceasefire, and urged Barzani to refrain from entering into any agreement that would legitimise the PKK presence in Northern Iraq. According to Zebari, the KDP had been disappointed at the inadequate assistance from Turkey and having to fight the PKK with only its own means.[473]

4.5. An Impasse in Kurdish Reconciliation

By the end of 1995, the question of Iraq, and the situation in Northern Iraq, had become defined by a complex set of issues for both Turkey and the US. The problem of how to deal with Saddam seemed likely to continue for an indeterminate period with sporadic tensions between the US and Iraq. The containment policy and the attempts of the Iraqi opposition had fallen far short of overthrowing the regime. The efforts to reconcile KDP-PUK differences had produced no stability in Northern Iraq, and the region remained divided into two separate administrative regions controlled by the KDP and the PUK. Turkey's relations with the KDP had cooled due to the KDP-PKK ceasefire. The PKK was seeking to create 'liberated regions' under its control. Tehran made efforts to impose the Badr Brigade as a monitoring force to manipulate developments in the region, which thus risked falling under Iranian influence. Syria continued to use the PKK to curtail Turkey's influence in the region. In the following months, it was reported that Iran had stepped up its efforts to foster closer ties with both Kurdish factions, and had persuaded the KDP to sign a peace agreement with the PKK.[474]

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[472] KDP Press Release, A Statement on Cease-Fire between PKK and KDP, 11 December 1995.
[473] Zebari,   interview.
[474] Patrick Cockburn, 'US Seeks Deal between Iraqi Kurds', *The Independent*, 3 April 1996; Scott Peterson, 'While US Slept, Iran Gained Toehold among Iraq's Kurds', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 18 April 1996.

Paradoxically, the US now failed to provide funds for the $4 million operating costs of the INC's Neutral Commission.[475]

Nevertheless, Turkey and the US once again sought a new round of KDP-PUK reconciliation to constrain rising Iranian influence. A US delegation visited Northern Iraq on 22-24 April 1996, accompanied by Turkish officials as observers. The purpose of the talks, with the participation of the INC, was to recommit the Iraqi Kurdish leadership to the proposals in the Dublin process, to discuss how UNSCR 986 related to the region, to address Turkey's legitimate security concerns, and to warn the Kurdish factions to limit Iran's increasing influence in the region.[476] Both parties reaffirmed their commitment to the eight-month-old ceasefire and the reconciliation process, but no agreement was reached to further the Chairman's Text as the basis for a final agreement.

By the end of April 1996, however, Ankara was becoming increasingly frustrated with the situation in Northern Iraq. It felt that the Gulf War had had a tougher legacy for Turkey than any other country, with the exception of Iraq itself. Turkey had suffered billions of dollars of financial losses and severe security problems with real political implications.[477] It seemed that the Turkish and US perspectives on how to preserve and promote Iraq's territorial integrity were not convergent. The KDP and PUK remained hostile to each other and sought to expand their spheres of influence while the PKK continued to gain ground. OPC-II entered into its sixth year and the Kurdish institutions for statehood flourished. In Turkey, the ruling ANAP government was able to secure a three-month extension of the mandate for OPC-II at the end of March as a result of conditional support from the Democratic Left Party (*Demokratik Sol Parti*, DSP), which otherwise opposed further extension of the operation in its existing form. The TBMM also introduced new conditions for the conduct of OPC-II.[478] While Turkey recognised that the continuation of OPC-II constituted a major element of US Iraq policy, the public perception was that PKK terrorism hurt Turkey and not the US, and that Turkey thus had a much greater interest in Iraq's territorial integrity. Terrorism also created far

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[475] Chalabi, *Iraq: Can Saddam Be Overthrown?*; Jim Hoagland, 'Failures in Kurdistan', *Washington Post*, 31 March 1996.

[476] Oran, *Kalkık Horoz*, pp. 195-197. UNSC Resolution 986 stipulated that a 13% share would be allocated for Northern Iraq to be dispensed by the UN without Baghdad's interference.

[477] According to one contemporary estimate, the fight against the PKK cost approximately around $7 billion a year and tied down nearly three-quarters of Turkey's army. 'Springtime Means Wartime', *The Economist*, 11 May 1996, pp.49-50.

[478] See the decision of the TBMM dated 28 March 1996, '409 Sayılı ve 28 Mart 1996 Tarihli TBMM Kararı', *Resmi Gazete*, 30 March 1996.

more serious political problems for Turkish governments than it did for the US administration.

Consequently, Turkey requested that the US issue a high-level statement to dispel public misperceptions about OPC-II, affirm US commitment to Iraq's territorial integrity, offer its support against PKK terrorism and prohibit Western NGOs from political and intelligence activities. The second Turkish demand was to change the structure of OPC-II and introduce additional restrictions on its conduct. Thirdly, Ankara asked for greater support in fighting PKK terrorism, including US assistance to establish effective border monitoring systems and intelligence sharing. Fourth, Turkey requested that the US exert pressure on Damascus to withdraw its support of the PKK and keep Syria on the list of state sponsors of terrorism.[479] During this period, Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz warned Syria over providing a safe haven to the PKK. This warning came after the disclosure that Turkey and Israel had signed a military cooperation agreement in February 1996. The Arab world reacted negatively to the agreement and it sparked public protests in Iran and Syria, worsening their relations with Turkey.[480] A final Turkish request was the implementation of UNSCR 986 to allow Iraq to sell oil for food, particularly through the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline.

The TBMM was scheduled to debate the future of OPC-II in June 1996. The US intensified consultations with the Turkish government on OPC-II related problems and agreed to issue a public statement on Northern Iraq and PKK terrorism. Washington relayed the elements of its position: First, the objectives of OPC-II were to secure Iraqi compliance with all relevant UNSCRs and deter Baghdad's repression of the Iraqi Kurds by enforcing the NFZ. Second, the US supported Turkey's efforts to deal with PKK and believed that Northern Iraq should not serve as a sanctuary for PKK activity, nor should the PKK receive support from any quarter. Washington would enhance intelligence sharing with Turkey, and assist in developing a border-monitoring regime along Turkey's Iraqi border. The US also urged the Kurdish factions to deny the PKK opportunities to exploit Northern Iraq for its own purposes. Third, the US supported the independence, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and would not support an independent state for Iraqi Kurds. Fourth, the US recognised the great economic and

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[479] Oran, *Kalkık Horoz*, pp. 198-200; The Turkish MFA Talking Points on Iraq and Provide Comfort, 1 June 1996; Meliha Benli Altunışık, 'Turkish Policy towards Israel', in Makovsky and Sayarı (ed), *Turkey's New World,* p.65.
[480] 'Turkey: Its Problems, Its Triumphs', *VOA*, 7 May 1996.

other losses Turkey had incurred and would favourably consider Turkish requests to alleviate these losses with coalition partners. The US would also work with Turkey on the implementation of UNSCR 986.[481] Lastly, Washington would keep Syria on the state sponsors of terrorism list and make a statement that Syria supported terrorist groups, including the PKK. The US also regularly urged the Syrian government to desist from supporting the PKK. [482] The US expected to resolve the issues pertaining to OPC-II and looked forward to a positive decision by the TBMM.[483]

However, 6 June 1996 saw the resignation of the ANAP-led minority coalition government which had secured the extension of OPC-II until the end of July. On 8 July 1996, a new coalition government emerged in Ankara, led by the Islamic-oriented Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP) of Necmettin Erbakan and the True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi*, DYP) of the former Prime Minister, Tansu Çiller. In opposition, Erbakan had vigorously criticised OPC-II and vowed to eliminate it, also pledging to revoke Turkey's military agreements with Israel.[484] In view of the risk of non-extension of OPC-II by the TBMM, the White House issued the previously agreed statement on 26 July 1996.[485] With this new and publicly announced modus vivendi with the US on Iraq's territorial integrity, the situation in Northern Iraq, support against the PKK, and redesigned rules of conduct for OPC-II, the new coalition government was able to secure the TBMM's approval for renewal of OPC-II's mandate on 31 July 1996.[486]

In August, Ankara made a formal application to the UNSC Sanctions Committee for Iraq to be allowed 'to resume on an urgent basis its import of petroleum and petroleum products from Iraq in limited quantities essential for Turkey's own needs,'[487] while assuring the committee that it remained committed to enforcing the sanctions.[488] Washington expressed interest in addressing Turkish concerns within the framework of

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[481] Turkish official, interview.

[482] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefings on
30 April 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9604/960430db.html, and
6 May 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9605/960506db.html

[483] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing on 13 June 1996,
http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9606/960613db.html

[484] Alan Makovsky, 'How to Deal with Erbakan', *Middle East Quarterly*, 4:1 (1997), pp.3-8.

[485] The White House Office of the Press Secretary, Statement by the Press Secretary on Iraq and OPC, 26 July 1996.

[486] During 1994-1996, Turkish domestic politics was in a state of flux characterised by short-lived coalition governments. For instance, Ambassador Onur Öymen worked for six different ministers in the period, but insists that Turkish policy towards Northern Iraq maintained an element of continuity as President Demirel was instrumental in the conduct of foreign policy at this time. Öymen, interview.

[487] Letter dated 6 August 1996 by the Turkish Permanent Representative to the UN to the President of the UNSC.

[488] Ibid.

the sanctions regime. However, it opposed Turkish requests for committee approval for increased cross-border trade with Iraq outside procedures related to the implementation of UNSCR 986. From Washington's viewpoint, Turkey would thereby accrue benefits from the implementation of UNSCR 986, as the majority of the oil exported would be sent through the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline and the UN envisaged a mechanism to buy humanitarian goods in Turkey for distribution in Iraq. On 26 August, the sanctions committee deferred action on Turkey's request for relief from UN sanctions 'until an evaluation of all technical aspects of the application can occur and the economic impact of the UNSC Resolution 986' be determined.[489]

4.6. Resumption of Intra-Kurdish Conflict and Baghdad's Entry

The tentative intra-Kurdish balance and yearlong ceasefire collapsed yet again on 17 August 1996. A fierce KDP-PUK fight erupted, again over regional control and customs revenue. The KDP claimed the PUK had initiated the clashes with heavy weapons obtained from Iran.[490] The PUK occupied areas that were traditionally under KDP control. Washington urged the parties to immediately cease hostilities, and resist Iranian interference.[491] The US obtained KDP and PUK agreement for a ceasefire on 30 August at talks held in London. However, the Kurdish parties were not convinced of the need for broader reconciliation, and continued factional hostilities.[492]

Talabani had allegedly become desperate to guarantee the PUK's supply line, and had allowed an Iranian ground force incursion into Northern Iraq. Talabani allegedly cut a deal with Iran in return for light artillery and other supplies necessary for conflict with the KDP. Barzani was concerned that Iranian support to the PUK would change the balance in its favour and requested US help to stop Iranian intervention.[493] The PUK seized a few strategic positions and additional PUK successes seemed certain. However, Robert Pelletreau argues that, according to a later account of events, 'there was no direct Iranian intervention in the fighting.'[494] The situation became so critical that Barzani

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[489] Statement by the office of press and public affairs of the US Permanent Representation to the UN, on the Turkish Application to the UN for sanctions relief, 28 August 1996.
[490] KDP USA Representative Press Release, PUK Violates the Year-Long Cease-Fire by Initiating a Major Offensive Attack on KDP Positions in Iraqi Kurdistan, 17 August 1996, and KDP USA Representative Press Release, PUK's Attack on KDP Position Continues, 19 August 1996.
[491] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing on 9 August 1996,
 http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9608/960809db.html
[492] Michael Evans and James Bone, 'US Calls Off Kurdish Peace Talks in London', *The Times*, 2 September 1996.
[493] Cockburn, *Out of the Ashes*, pp.235-238.
[494] Robert Pelletreau, *Al Hayat*, 2 August 1998, as quoted in Thomas W. Lappman, 'US Aims to Unify Foes of Saddam: War Crime Case Is Considered', *Washington Post*, 2 August 1998.

requested support from Baghdad, and US intelligence disclosed that an Iraqi military build-up was underway.[495] It seemed that Iraq was preparing for an attack to re-establish control over the north. Washington requested assistance from Ankara in urging the KDP and PUK to focus on fulfilling and maintaining their ceasefire commitments, to make clear to Baghdad that the US would not tolerate military action and repression in Northern Iraq, and to urge the Iranian government not to seek to exploit intra-Kurdish tensions. The US also directly warned Iraq not to use military force.[496]

The US secured commitments from both parties to work towards restoration of the ceasefire. However, during US efforts at mediation, Barzani sent a letter to Saddam on 22 August asking for Iraqi forces to intervene to provide support to the KDP to fend off 'the foreign threat and to end the conspiracy and treason of Jalal.'[497] Barzani claimed that his reasons for seeking Baghdad's assistance were Iranian intervention on behalf of the PUK against the KDP and abandonment by the US despite calls for help against the PUK-Iran alliance.[498] Saddam, seeing an opportunity to regain control of Northern Iraq, ignored US warnings, and launched a major attack on Erbil with the support of the KDP on 31 August.[499] Iraqi forces swiftly seized control of the city, which had been at the centre of the KDP-PUK power struggle since December 1994. Iraqi special forces executed the vestiges of pro-Iranian groups, the PUK, and dozens of Iraqi opposition figures.[500] Baghdad declared its right to act in its own country on principle of sovereignty and to defend Iraqi citizens. Iran's attempts to control the region, directly or indirectly through the PUK, were a grave threat to Iraq's sovereignty, security and national unity and would not be tolerated.[501]

The US, however, decided not to intervene militarily in the Kurdish civil war. According to American officials, this choice was consistent with US national interests,[502] which were not tied to which party prevailed in the conflict in Northern

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[495] Press Conference of William Perry, the Secretary of Defense and General Ralston, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 3 September 1996.

[496] Status on Iraq: Communication from the President of the United States, 5 September 1996, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CDOC-104hdoc259/pdf/CDOC-104hdoc259.pdf

[497] Statement by Tarik Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Iraqi National Accord (INA), 31 August 1996.

[498] Hugh Pope, 'US Abandoned Us, Say Kurds', *The Independent*, 4 September 1996; Patrick Cockburn, 'US Blamed for Causing Iraq Crisis', *The Independent*, 6 September 1996.

[499] Press Release by the US Mission to the UN, 3 September 1996.

[500] Chalabi, *Iraq: Can Saddam be Overthrown?*.

[501] Statement by Tarik Aziz.

[502] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing on 10 September 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960910db.html

Iraq.[503] Washington reacted strongly to the Iraqi military action by stating that the KDP alliance with Baghdad could not justify the unleashing of the Iraqi army 'against the civilian population of Erbil.'[504] The US and UK launched a limited military strike with cruise missiles against Iraqi military installations in southern Iraq and extended the NFZ from below the 32nd to the 33rd parallel. The strike was carried out in southern Iraq whereas the Iraqi forces had attacked the region above the 36th parallel. The purpose was to prevent Iran backing the PUK against the KDP-Iraqi alliance, ensure the continuation of OPC-II, and send a warning to both Iran and Iraq to keep out of the region above the 36th parallel.[505]

The involvement of Baghdad in the intra-Kurdish conflict created a paradoxical situation for Washington. First, OPC-II and the NFZ were in place to protect the Kurds from Saddam. However, the PUK had enlisted Iran's support against the KDP, and the KDP, in retaliation, had invited Saddam, archenemy of the Kurds, to attack the PUK. It was a dramatic and unexpected setback for US Iraq policy that undermined OPC-II and the NFZ as pillars of the policy of containing Saddam and protecting Northern Iraq.[506] Due to Barzani's alliance with Baghdad, the covert CIA operation in Northern Iraq to overthrow Saddam's regime collapsed. With Turkey's cooperation, the US now evacuated nearly 2,500 local people who worked for the US in the anti-Saddam opposition.[507] Second, the continued KDP-PUK conflict enabled Saddam to extend his power in Northern Iraq, despite the US policy of containment. The KDP's defeat of the PUK led to a dramatic change in the strategic situation. The overall US strategy of containment then depended upon the type of relationship Barzani chose with Saddam, enmeshing the US in Kurdish politics. Third, it seemed that consolidation of Barzani's political power and control of the region would lead to a stronger and more unified Kurdish political entity. This would ultimately clash with Iraq's interests in the region, making any long-term KDP-Saddam alliance unsustainable. Relying on Saddam's regime had been a choice that tipped the balance in favour of the KDP in the fight for political survival. However, as a leader of Iraqi Kurdish people who had suffered years of oppression by Baghdad, Barzani had to put some distance between himself and

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[503] Press Conference of Perry, 3 September 1996.
[504] Press Statement by President Clinton, 3 September 1996.
[505] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing on 3 September 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960903db.html, and 10 September 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960910db.html
[506] After 1991, the US spent $130 million a year protecting the Kurds and providing them with food and medicine. Elaine Sciolino, 'US Strike Picks Up Where Bush Left Off after "Unfinished" Gulf War', *The New York Times*, 4 September 1996.
[507] Jim Hoagland, 'Saddam's Mission Accomplished', *Washington Po*st, 6 September 1996.

Saddam's regime. Barzani also needed to take a balanced approach in cooperation with Baghdad to maintain US support. Nevertheless, without Saddam, it seemed that the PUK would continue to challenge the KDP hegemony by any means available.

The intra-Kurdish hostilities had also provided Iran and Syria with the opportunity to play off one Kurdish faction against the other. The KDP and PUK both used the prospects of intervention by Iran and Syria and a possible political deal with Saddam as instruments to pressure the US administration to get involved in the inter-Kurdish rivalry and extract US guarantees of protection for the Kurdish region.[508] Barzani also threatened that, if the US and its allies did not fulfil their commitments, the KDP would enlist the support of any party able to protect the Kurds from injustice and invasion.[509] Zebari argues that the KDP's move changed the political landscape, attracted international attention, and demonstrated that Kurdish parties were not mere tribal actors but capable of real politics.[510]

The US called the hostilities a tragedy for Iraqi Kurdish people and urged Barzani to re-engage in negotiations with Talabani instead of trusting Saddam, who had tried to exterminate the Kurdish people, and to work with the Turkish, British, French and American governments for stability in Northern Iraq, which the US viewed as an issue of national interest. Washington asked both Kurdish leaders to put aside their differences, to provide a better measure of stability in Northern Iraq, and not to accept offers of an alliance from either Iran or Saddam. The US, again in cooperation with Turkey, now embarked on a new mediation between the Kurdish factions.[511] Restoration of the balance of power was essential to resolve intra-Kurdish disagreement and to prevent the interference of third parties in the conflict.

For Ankara, KDP-PUK reconciliation and the restoration of stability in Northern Iraq were imperative to prevent the PKK from exploiting the chaotic situation. The clashes had allowed the PKK to become a third power in the region through its potential to make alliances. A simultaneous Turkish objective remained checking Kurdish aspirations for independence. Turkey made clear that preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity and sovereignty was vital and that it would categorically oppose any effort to

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[508] David Hirst, 'Saddam's Kurdish Foes Retake Base', *The Guardian*, 14 October 1996; Hugh Pope, 'Kurdish Leader Pleads For West's Help', *The Independent*, 6 September 1996; Martin Walker, 'US Credibility and Manhood at Stake', *The Guardian*, 2 September 1996.
[509] 'Kurd Chief May Seek Iraqi Help', *Washington Post*, 18 October 1996.
[510] Zebari, interview.
[511] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 3 September 1996.

establish an independent state in Northern Iraq. Ankara called for resumption of KDP-PUK dialogue to end hostilities and achieve reconciliation. Ankara also warned that all interested nations ought to adopt constructive approaches instead of pursuing policies that would escalate tensions. Turkey's position was a reflection of its assessment that the PUK's relationship and cooperation with Iran had been a miscalculation by Talabani. It seemed he would now seek to retake Erbil to reinstitute his power base and balance the situation. Any potential Iranian intervention to help the PUK or involvement by Syria would create further destabilisation of the region. For Ankara, Syria was chiefly concerned with being constrained in Northern Iraq due to increasing American and Turkish influence. The Syrian regime had opposed the Drogheda and Dublin processes, the strengthening of either Kurdish faction against the other, and the reinstitution of Saddam's control in Northern Iraq. Talabani's cooperation with Iran, Syria's regional ally, and the enhanced PUK-PKK cooperation conformed to Syrian interests. Ankara also calculated that the KDP would engage in a renewed effort to improve its relations with Turkey, including cooperation against the PKK, in order to maintain dominance in Northern Iraq. The renewal of dialogue between Turkey and the KDP would also serve US interests, given that it would curtail Iranian and Syrian influence in the region. The PKK would likely try to exploit the KDP-PUK conflict by forcing concessions from each party, which Turkey had to prevent. Provided they broke all ties with the PKK, Turkey would extend support to the KDP and PUK.[512] Öcalan, on the other hand, threatened to enter the fighting if the KDP killed prisoners.[513]

In a new military move, Turkey declared a 'temporary security zone' to extend from 5 to 15 miles on the Iraqi side of the border to prevent infiltration by PKK terrorists. Foreign Minister Çiller stated that Turkey would take every precaution to protect its borders and would not permit any action that undermined the balance in Northern Iraq.[514] For Ankara, the authority vacuum in Northern Iraq was the main cause of the security threat that Turkey had faced ever since the Gulf War. Turkish policies were not responsible for either Iraq's inability to exercise authority in the north or its direct consequences. Turkey would not remain idle when its own territorial integrity and security were threatened by the cross-border attacks of the PKK, based in and operating from Iraqi territory. Given that Iraq was in no position to prevent the terrorist acts

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[512] Statement by Tansu Çiller, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkey, regarding developments in Iraq, 4 September 1996.
[513] 'Rebels in Threat to Intervene', *The Times*, 3 September 1996.
[514] Statement by Çiller.

emanating from its territory, or to fulfil other international requirements, Turkey would continue to undertake that responsibility. Washington supported Turkey's initiative as legitimate self-defence against the PKK.[515] Iraq, in contrast, strongly protested Turkey's initiative as interference in Iraqi internal affairs, an occupation of Iraqi territory, and a threat to Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity.[516] According to Iraq, Turkey and the US were collaborating in a major interference in its internal affairs, 'undermining Iraq, changing its national political regime and threatening its territorial integrity.'[517] Ironically, while protesting the temporary danger zone, Iraqi officials also proposed Turkey and Iraq revive the 1983 MOU that permitted limited cross-border military operations against terrorist groups.

Overall, the struggle between the Kurdish factions undermined both Turkish and US interests. Consequently, Turkey-US strategic calculations converged in robust mediation efforts to reconcile the KDP and PUK and restore stability in Northern Iraq. For Washington, its containment policy required preventing the Kurdish groups entering any deal involving the reinstitution of Baghdad's control, and a KDP-PUK truce was essential to re-establish the region as a base for Iraqi opposition to Saddam's regime. A common Turkey-US strategic concern in the restoration of stability was to prevent any Iranian interference or role in intra-Kurdish hostilities or the region. The extension of Iranian influence in Northern Iraq through alliances with either Kurdish faction would give Iran direct access to its strategic ally, Syria, and the ability to supply arms to Hezbollah in Lebanon. Both Turkey and the US also wished to avoid becoming embroiled in an internecine Kurdish fight. Against the backdrop of these shared aims, a new initiative to reconcile the Kurdish factions and restore US influence in Northern Iraq was launched in September 1996,[518] as examined in the next chapter.

4.7. Conclusion

The period between 1994 and 1996 was marked by the deepening impact of divergent Turkish and US perceptions on the nature of the Iraqi threat and the resultant nonconformity between their respective definitions of national interest in their respective strategies on Iraq, as table 5 overleaf shows.

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[515] 'This Week with David Brinkley', *ABC Channel*, 8 September 1996.
[516] Letter dated 9 September 1996 from the MFA of Iraq, to the President of the UN Security Council, S/1996/731, 10 September 1996.
[517] Letter dated 30 September 1996 from the MFA of Iraq addressed to the UN Secretary General, A/51/438- S/1996/812, 30 September 1996.
[518] Lappman, 'US Aims to Unify Foes of Saddam'.

Table 5: Integrative model of Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq, 1994-1996

Independent Variable 1: Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat	Independent Variable 2: Agreement on strategy to deal with perceived strategic threat	Dependent Variable / Result

I. The US
Saddam and his regime remained a threat to vital US interests.
	I. Elements of US strategy
	1. Regime change (-)
	2. Containment (+)
	   i. Maintain sanctions (+)
	   ii. NFZ's through OPC-II (+)
	3. Protect Northern Iraq as base for Iraqi opposition to Saddam (-)
		Unwilling cooperation
		1. No alternative strategy
		2. US ability to define Iraq strategy
		3. Alliance security dilemma / entrapment:
		   i. No concurrence of interests
		   ii. Turkey supports US strategy of containment despite repercussions on Turkish national interests.
		   iii. Asymmetrical Turkish dependence on the US means preserving alliance outweighs risks and costs of cooperation on Iraq

II. Turkey Saddam's regime was no longer a threat.	**II. Elements of Turkish strategy** 1. Fight against the PKK in Northern Iraq (+) 2. Check Iraqi Kurdish aspirations for self-rule/federation (-) 3. Prevent Iraqi Kurdish independence (+) 4. Address Turkey's economic losses (-) 5. Protect interests of the Turkomen (-)	4. Turkey's need for US support in fight against the PKK in Northern Iraq, including cross-border military operations and preventing Kurdish independence 5. US reliance on Turkish cooperation on the containment strategy, including mandate for OPC-II and access to Northern Iraq

The alliance security dilemma became more evident in this period. Turkey and the US still cooperated on independent variable two, the strategy of containment, despite evident disagreement on independent variable one, the nature of the Iraqi threat. In other words, Ankara's commitment to US Iraq strategy was not in its own interests since Turkey incurred substantial economic and security costs. As a result, Turkish and US interests became increasingly divergent during this period while they paradoxically strove to realise compatible and conflicting interests. Simultaneously, both nations were constrained by the need to coordinate their policies and accommodate their mutual interests to a certain extent. Thus, even though Turkey and the US had no identical and even some conflicting preferences for Iraq strategy, this did not disrupt their cooperation due to their relative dependence on each other's assistance in pursuit of their respective interests. For Turkey, this period was marked by increased pressures from the unintended consequences of the Gulf War and the US strategy of containment.

First, in strategic terms, the Kurdish administration in Northern Iraq gradually turned into a de facto state, rendering the future of Iraq's territorial integrity and unity

questionable. Ankara feared that the dismemberment of Iraq would undermine regional balance, create severe ethnic and sectarian tensions, and leave Turkey alone to check Iran's influence.[519] Second, Ankara was concerned about the possible effect an independent Kurdish state would have on Turkey's own Kurdish population. However, the KDP-PUK clashes demonstrated that the Iraqi Kurds were far from forming a unified administration in Northern Iraq, let alone establishing their own state. Besides, both Barzani and Talabani acknowledged that the prospects for independence were remote despite their aspirations. While Kurdish self-esteem increased, the Kurdish leaders assured Ankara of their respect for Iraq's territorial integrity, and that they strove to achieve a federal arrangement with greater autonomy from Baghdad.[520] Ankara, though, opposed Kurdish federalism on the grounds that all Iraqis should decide on such an arrangement and insisted the Kurds remain within the 1970 arrangement for autonomy.[521] An additional Turkish concern was the plight of the Iraqi Turkomen community in Northern Iraq during the intra-Kurdish conflict. In the final analysis, preserving Iraq's territorial integrity and preventing Kurdish secessionism remained the cornerstones of Turkey's policy vis-à-vis Iraq. Third, for Ankara, developments in Northern Iraq increasingly became a profound security threat. The PKK used the region as a base and springboard to dramatically expand its terrorist attacks against Turkey, costing thousands of lives.[522] Ankara had to deal with the PKK presence in Northern Iraq, either by direct cross-border military operations or with the support of Iraqi Kurdish groups. Ankara pursued a strategy of providing military and logistical support, mainly to the KDP, to prevent PKK infiltrations. That strategy proved ineffective when KDP-PUK clashes created more favourable conditions for the PKK in Northern Iraq.[523] Fourth, Turkish frustration at the economic implications of the seemingly indefinite sanctions deepened. The economic and social toll mounted while Ankara's numerous calls for compensation and partial relief from the sanctions regime remained unaddressed. In short, as Parris argues, Ankara had to cope with the largest

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[519] Sanberk underlines that the Turkish MFA examined the impact of Iraq's possible dismemberment, giving special consideration to the Shiite factor and the prospects for Iran's increased regional influence. Sanberk, interview.

[520] Prepared statement of Mark R. Parris, *Hearings to Examine Threats, Responses, and Regional Considerations Surrounding Iraq, Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations*, US Senate, 107th Congress, 31 July-1 August 2002.

[521] Korutürk, interview.

[522] Barkey and Fuller, *Kurdish Question,* p.51.

[523] Korutürk, interview.

share of the Gulf War's unintended strategic, security and economic consequences, and came to believe that it had emerged a loser in its aftermath.[524]

In terms of the alliance security dilemma, and Schweller's balance-of-interests proposition, Turkey and the US felt the need to balance their divergent interests and priorities with respect to their strategy on Northern Iraq. During 1994–1996, the situation in Northern Iraq was in constant turmoil due to continuous KDP-PUK clashes. While Turkey and the US appreciated and acknowledged their respective positions regarding Northern Iraq, their analysis of the situation and perception of their interests in the region differed quite radically. First, Turkey's primary interests in Northern Iraq remained preventing the fragmentation of Iraq, constraining the Kurdish drive for a quasi-independent state, wiping out the PKK presence, preventing the KDP-PUK from entering into cooperation with the PKK, and limiting the interference and influence of Iran and Syria. US interests in the region were a subset of Washington's overall Iraq policy to 'prevent the regime in power in Iraq from regenerating itself and re-establishing itself in a position to be the biggest threat to its neighbours again,'[525] and therefore, to 'contain Saddam at all costs.'[526] For Washington, Northern Iraq became a base for anti-Saddam opposition and 'a significant part of the US policy of containment.'[527]

Second, from Ankara's perspective, the new status quo in Iraq after the Gulf War created fundamental security challenges, including the viability of Iraq as a unified state. Ankara fervently called for US assurances over Iraq's territorial integrity, and underlined its preference for Iraq to regain complete control of its territory, irrespective of who remained in power in Baghdad.[528] Korutürk argues that Turkey was also frustrated with Saddam over Baghdad's maltreatment of Iraq's Turkomen population and the security challenges emanating from his regime. However, for Ankara, the Iraq question was larger than the fate of Saddam. Maintaining the regional balance of power, and especially Iraq's key role in balancing Iran, required the restoration of Baghdad's authority in the country.[529] Washington, however, was in favour of the new status quo until a change occurred in Iraq's leadership. US officials gave numerous assurances of US commitment to Iraq's territorial integrity while dismissing Turkish calls for the re-

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[524] Parris, *Hearings to Examine Threats.*
[525] Deutsch, interview.
[526] Parris, interview.
[527] Deutsch, interview.
[528] Barkey and Fuller, *Kurdish Question,* pp.169-171.
[529] Korutürk, interview.

establishment of Baghdad's authority in Northern Iraq. Turkey-US priorities also diverged in terms of the PKK. For Turkey, PKK terrorism was the prime threat to its vital national interests. The PKK issue was a secondary one for the US, however, which was 'much more concerned with trying to sustain Northern Iraq as a separate and stable base against Saddam's regime.'[530]

Despite this divergence of interests and priorities and Ankara's growing frustration at the repercussions of the overall situation, Turkey and the US were able to achieve some accommodation and harmony on their Iraq policies.[531] First, Turkey was a key partner and ally in global US interests, and remained central to Washington's policy of containment. The success and viability of sanctions and the continuation of OPC-II all depended on Turkish cooperation.[532] Second, as American officials underlined, the US had no option other than to accommodate Turkish concerns since it had no access to Northern Iraq except through Turkey.[533] It was essential to ensure Turkey was involved and its interests covered to manage the situation in Northern Iraq.[534] Third, Ankara recognised that US commitment and endorsement were crucial in preserving Iraq's territorial integrity, and in Turkey's fight against the PKK, particularly its cross-border military operations. Fourth, given its vital contribution to US policy and interests on Iraq, Ankara believed cooperation with Washington was the key to sustaining an enhanced partnership with the US on regional and global issues. Fifth, as Hale underscores, by providing rights to İncirlik, Ankara retained a certain degree of influence on US policy in Northern Iraq and the conduct of OPC-II.[535]

Another reason for Turkey and the US to balance their interests on Iraq strategy involved the need to stop KDP-PUK clashes and to devise a common strategy to restore stability in Northern Iraq. For Ankara, the KDP-PUK conflict had severe implications for its fight against the PKK in Northern Iraq. For Washington, the internecine fighting undermined the credibility and viability of the US policy of containment. An additional motive for both was that the continued instability enabled the interference of outside parties, particularly Iran and Syria. However, Turkey's role in the process remained contentious, and prominent Iraqi Kurdish politicians accused Ankara of subverting the

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[530] Deutsch, interview.
[531] Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.227.
[532] Robins, *Suits and Uniforms,* pp.334-335.
[533] Deutsch, interview.
[534] Parris, interview.
[535] Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, pp.224-225.

reconciliation efforts from within.[536] Likewise, the then PUK Representative to the US Barham Salih argues that Turkey always considered the Iraqi Kurdish issue 'a security threat related to its own Kurdish situation.'[537] He also claims that Turkish policy inhibited a viable settlement to the conflict by promoting disunity among the Iraqi Kurdish groups, which Ankara perceived as an opportunity to undermine the credibility of Kurdish self-government in Iraq and 'frustrate the Americans and Europeans and force their disengagement from Iraqi Kurdistan.'[538] However, the Turkish officials involved in the process at the time all insist that Ankara preferred stability through KDP-PUK reconciliation. According to Korutürk, for Turkey, unlike Iran, stability in Northern Iraq enabled it to maximise its national interests in the Middle Eastern neighbourhood, including Iraq. He observes that Ankara worked for Kurdish reconciliation to establish stability, which served the fundamental Turkish interest of preventing the region from becoming a base for the PKK.[539] Likewise, Öymen underscores that Turkey was eager for reconciliation since Ankara perceived instability on Turkey's borders as contrary to its security interests. He also notes that the consequences of continued conflict were difficult to foresee, particularly in terms of the potential advantages for the PKK, a new refugee exodus to Turkish borders, or the interference of countries such as Iran and Syria.[540] On the other hand, according to Demirel, Turkish decision makers were cognizant that the KDP and PUK would only fight the PKK for their own reasons, to sustain control of Northern Iraq, rather than to satisfy Turkish demands.[541] Whether Turkey really desired a settlement of the KDP-PUK conflict remains a contentious issue. Ankara evidently opposed the statements by Iraqi Kurdish groups in favour of a federation in Northern Iraq. The continued KDP-PUK clashes, the PKK factor, and the essential role of the region in the US policy of containment meant that both Ankara and Washington became embroiled in intra-Kurdish politics and the affairs of Northern Iraq. The conflict created the need for both countries to coordinate and pursue a common agenda to balance their divergent interests and priorities, and reinforced the trilateral nature of the relationship between Turkey, the US and the Iraqi Kurdish groups.

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[536] Salih, 'Status for Prospects for the Kurdish Question in Iraq'.
[537] Barham Salih, interviewed by Author, Ankara,1 September 2012.
[538] Ibid.
[539] Korutürk, interview.
[540] Öymen, interview.
[541] Demirel, interview.

CHAPTER 5: THE PERIOD 1996-2001

From 1996 to the end of 1998, overall US policy on Iraq continued to rest on the strategy of containment.[542] It focused on preventing Iraq from crossing US redlines: rebuilding or deploying WMD, aggression towards its neighbours, challenging allied aircraft in the NFZs, or moving against the people living in the Kurdish-controlled areas of Northern Iraq.[543] However, with the enactment of the Iraq Liberation Act (ILA) on 31 October 1998, the official US strategy became containment plus regime change.[544] The ILA authorised the president to provide $97 million assistance to the Iraqi opposition and made the removal of Saddam's regime the fulcrum of US Iraq policy.[545] The ILA was a result of increased pressure by Republican-controlled Congress, which claimed that the Democratic administration had no Iraq policy, and the belief that containment, despite being cost-effective, was seeing limited success. Critics further argued that support for the US strategy was eroding; while containment kept Saddam in his box, it had failed to bring his regime down or compel him to come clean about Iraq's WMD program.[546] However, the Clinton administration never fully embraced the ILA, arguing that the weak and divided Iraqi opposition could not effectively challenge Saddam.[547] It remained a statutory policy with no effect until the inauguration of the Bush administration in 2001.

During this period, Ankara continued to reluctantly cooperate with Washington on overall US strategy on Iraq. Turkey remained an essential ally in the US containment strategy yet kept its distance from the policy of regime change.[548] Ankara was discontented with the repercussions of US policy toward Iraq on its own national interests. For Washington, 'keeping Turkey on the same page as the US on Iraq'

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[542] Remarks by Samuel R. Berger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, National Press Club, 23 December 1998, http://clinton4.nara.gov/WH/EOP/NSC/html/speeches/19981223.html

[543] Statement of Edward S. Walker in *Saddam's Iraq: Sanctions and US Policy*; Statement of Elizabeth Jones, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, in *US Policy toward Iraq: Mobilizing the Opposition, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations*, US Senate, 106th Congress, 23 June 1999, US61–045 CC (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1999).

[544] Statement of Jones in *US Policy toward Iraq*.

[545] Statement of Welch in *US Policy toward Iraq.*

[546] *US Policy Toward Iraq, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations*, United States Senate, 107th Congress, 1 March 2001, 71–541 DTP, (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 2001).

[547] Haass, *War of Necessity*, p.166.

[548] Albright, interview.

became a challenge during this period.[549] It sought to address Turkey's primary concern with numerous statements of US commitment to the territorial integrity of Iraq and opposition an independent Kurdish state in the north.[550] At the same time, Turkey-US cooperation expanded on the situation in Northern Iraq. They pursued a common strategy for KDP-PUK conciliation, beginning the Ankara Process under Turkey-US co-sponsorship in late 1996. However, the process achieved only limited success in settling the Kurdish factional problem. The US then introduced a separate track without Turkish participation, leading to the Washington Agreement between the PUK and KDP in September 1998. This was a milestone in ending the intra-Kurdish hostilities, yet proved limited in its aim to unify the Kurdish administration in Northern Iraq. During this period, the US continued to extend support to Turkey's in its fight against PKK terrorism, and Turkey-US cooperation in this respect reached a high point when the US ensured the delivery of the PKK leader Öcalan, captured leaving the Greek Ambassador's residence in Kenya, in 1999.[551]

The overall Turkey-US relationship reached its peak with President Clinton's visit to Turkey in November 1999, during which Clinton defined Turkey as a 'strategic partner' of the US.[552] Parris underlines that the concept of strategic partner, which had previously only been used for countries like Great Britain and Israel, also applied in the case of Turkey. He notes that Turkey's performance as a US partner on a wide range of difficult international issues, from the Balkans to the Middle East, Iraq, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, and over energy security, elevated Turkey to 'the group of countries [among] the inner core of America's close friends.'[553] This chapter follows the evolution of the respective Turkish and US Iraq strategies from 1996, through the close but sometimes unwilling cooperation of the Clinton years, to the eve of the paradigm shift in 2001.

5.1. Towards the Ankara Process

In view of the convergence of Turkey and US strategic interests in the restoration of stability in Northern Iraq, in September 1996 they agreed to launch a robust mediation effort to reconcile the KDP and PUK. The US sought to involve all OPC allies, but

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[549] Statement of Parris, in *Hearings to Examine Threats*.

[550] Albright, interview; Grossman, interview; Deutsch, interview; Statement of Jones in *US Policy toward Iraq*; US State Department, Daily Press Briefing, 7 October 1996,
 http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9610/961007db.html

[551] Demirel, interview; Albright, interview; Ziyal, interview.

[552] Parris, interview.

[553] Ibid.

France withdrew from OPC-II and rejected engagement, arguing that the Kurdish groups had to enter into negotiations with Baghdad.[554] The primary questions remained whether Barzani's KDP would continue its alliance with Baghdad, whether Talabani's PUK would look to Iran for further assistance, and whether both factions would respond to the mediation efforts of the US, UK and Turkey.[555] Barzani announced that Iran would no longer be allowed to base forces in Iraqi Kurdistan, and that his cooperation with Baghdad had been a one-off arrangement. Nevertheless, in view of the possibility of an Iranian sponsored PUK counterattack, the prospects for continued KDP collaboration with Baghdad seemed high.

In response to calls from Washington to resume dialogue among the Kurdish factions, Barzani sent a message to US Secretary of State Warren Christopher requesting contact with the US administration.[556] As a first step, the US consulted Turkey over a coordinated mediation initiative. US Secretary of Defense William Perry visited Ankara to solicit support for continuing the containment policy and OPC-II and resuming dialogue between the Iraqi Kurdish factions. Turkey and the US were in agreement about their common interest in stabilising the situation and constraining Iran's influence in Northern Iraq. Turkey believed that creating a coherent strategy without a clearly defined ultimate objective on Iraq's future was impossible. It conceded that it was Saddam's regime that had forfeited Baghdad's control in the region. Turkey concurred with the US in opposing the intra-Kurdish fight and expressed its preference for a balance of power between the two groups. Supporting one against the other would lead to infiltration of Iran and Syria into Northern Iraq to exploit the divisions. Iran, by employing the PUK as a proxy, and especially in the case of increased cooperation between the PUK and the PKK, would be able to establish a direct corridor to its strategic ally Syria. It was, therefore, crucially important to engage in a joint Turkey-US effort to resolve the KDP-PUK dispute. Ankara was resolved to eliminate the PKK presence and ensure a full role for the Turkomen people in Northern Iraq; two cardinal issues on which the US promised to extend its support to Turkey.[557]

The next step was to find out whether Barzani, by now the key leader in the region, was committed to strategic engagement with Turkey and the US over KDP-PUK

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[554] Lappman, 'US Aims to Unify Foes of Saddam'.
[555] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 13 September 1996,
http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960913db.html
[556] William Safire, 'Be Nobody's Puppet', *New York Times*, 5 September 1996.
[557] Korutürk, interview.

negotiations.[558] The starting point would be to reengage Barzani through incentives, the most efficient of which was an assurance to maintain OPC-II. The second instrument would be the implementation of UNSCR 986 in Northern Iraq on a fair distribution mechanism. Turkey invited Barzani to Ankara for bilateral talks and a meeting with then US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Robert Pelletreau on 15-18 September 1996.[559] During the bilateral discussions with Barzani, the key Turkish messages were the significance of preserving Iraq's territorial integrity and sovereignty, of KDP cooperation against the PKK, and of engaging the Turkomen to allow them an appropriate role in the affairs of the region. Barzani replied that the KDP was committed to Iraq's territorial integrity, aspired towards the establishment of a democratic regime in Iraq, and looked favourably upon Turkomen participation in the administration of the region.[560] Barzani insisted that KDP relations with Baghdad were limited, had been directed only to defeating the PUK-Iran alliance, and augured no prospect of a political agreement with the Iraqi regime. The KDP sought Turkish and American security assurances and assistance, including the continuation of OPC-II, and pressed for the return of a coalition presence in Northern Iraq. The KDP, according to Barzani, considered the PKK a security threat to itself, to Turkey, and the region. He hoped that the elimination of the 'Talabani threat' would open the way up for KDP cooperation with Turkey to wipe out the PKK presence in Northern Iraq through a comprehensive and coordinated action plan. The KDP needed time before enacting that plan to reconsolidate its power and establish stability in the region while PKK border crossings into Iran had to be curtailed. Moreover, the KDP had to have assurances of Turkey-US protection in the event of Iranian interference on behalf of the PUK.[561]

In the trilateral Turkey-US-KDP talks, Pelletreau emphasised to Barzani that the US had done a lot for the Iraqi Kurds, and was seriously disappointed by both the KDP and PUK for their respective alignments with Saddam and Iran. The instability caused by intra-Kurdish clashes and Barzani's relationship with Saddam were key US concerns. For the US, the way to address the problems of Northern Iraq was peaceful settlement

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[558] US Department of State, Daily Briefings.
20 September 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960920db.html; 23 September 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960923db.html; Jim Hoagland, 'Diplomacy in Denial', *Washington Post*, 22 May 1997.
[559] Korutürk, interview; KDP Europe Press Release, KDP Leader Masoud Barzani Concludes Productive Talks in Ankara with American, British and Turkish Officials, 19 September 1996.
[560] Statement by Tansu Çiller, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, 18 September 1996.
[561] Turkish official, interview.

of the KDP-PUK dispute and not alliances with either Baghdad or Tehran.[562] Barzani reaffirmed that the KDP relationship with Saddam was limited to the common objective of countering the threat posed by the Iranian-PUK alliance and that he had no political agreement with Baghdad. Nevertheless, if the KDP once again faced a choice between Baghdad and Tehran, he would not hesitate to seek Saddam's assistance despite the brutal oppression that his regime had inflicted on the Kurds. The KDP, therefore, looked for Turkey-US security assurances and assistance and counted on the continuation of OPC-II. In terms of a settlement with the PUK, Barzani said he would meet Talabani only in Northern Iraq, would only allow the PUK to function as a political party and not as a military force, and no longer recognised the validity of a fifty-fifty power share. Barzani agreed to Turkey's demand for increased cooperation against the PKK and for a proper Turkomen role in Northern Iraq.[563] In view of Barzani's conciliatory attitude, the US invited a KDP delegation to visit Washington that October.

5.2. Factors Leading to a Common Turkey-US Understanding on Northern Iraq

The situation in Northern Iraq had become the focal point of Turkey-US cooperation as both countries responded to the implications of the shifting strategic environment in the region. For Turkey, the first objective in cooperation with the US was to prevent Kurdish separatism and secure continued US support for opposition to a Kurdish state.[564] Washington recognised this and gave public assurances on US opposition to the dismemberment of Iraq and a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq.[565] The second and equally important dynamic was to ensure that the US recognised the importance of supporting Turkey's fight against the PKK, both in terms of Turkey-US strategic cooperation in Northern Iraq and elsewhere. Indeed, the US remained much more supportive of Turkey's fight against the PKK than any other country.[566] The third motivation for Ankara was gaining US support for increased Turkomen participation in the administration of regional affairs. The common Turkey-US strategic objectives consequent on these aims were to work with the KDP to attain stability in Northern Iraq, to maintain OPC-II to pressure Baghdad to comply with UN obligations, and to curtail the terrorist threat from the PKK. However, Ankara's contacts with Baghdad

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[562] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing,
17 September l996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960917db.html
[563] Turkish official, interview.
[564] Korutürk, interview.
[565] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 7 October 1996.
[566] Grossman, interview.

remained a contentious issue for Washington, which consistently urged Ankara not to associate itself in any cooperative way with the Iraqi leadership.[567] An additional component of the joint Turkey-US strategy was to check Iranian influence in Northern Iraq. The KDP's victory against the PUK was a blow to Iran's interests, and it seemed plausible that, if dissatisfied with the KDP, Tehran could sponsor a PUK counter attack. The PUK would accept any sponsors in its effort to retake Sulaymaniyah, and the most feasible was Iran. Washington and Ankara agreed that a KDP-PUK balance of power was essential to prevent Talabani from becoming an Iranian instrument. The new Turkey-US strategy involved assurances to Kurdish parties on the continuation of OPC-II, a reinvigorated enforcement of the NFZ, and the return of a coalition presence in Northern Iraq. The increased stability would pave the way to the implementation of UNSCR 986 with its resulting economic benefits for the Kurdish parties.[568] Consequently, the US, in close coordination with Turkey, finalised its invitation to the KDP for talks in Washington on 17 October 1996.

On 13 October, PUK forces counter attacked and retook much of the territory that they had lost to the KDP. The KDP made statements that the PUK had received help from the Iranians.[569] The US said that there was no conclusive evidence and urged both sides to agree to an immediate ceasefire and to engage in conciliation talks. Washington warned both Iran and Iraq to stay out of the fighting and remained in close contact with Ankara 'to rely upon the advice, counsel, and the friendship of the Turkish government.' The joint assessment was that neither of the Kurdish factions could prevail militarily on the battlefield. [570]

5.3. The Ankara Process

The PUK counterattack yet led to the re-establishment of the KDP-PUK balance of power,[571] creating an opportunity to launch an intensified reconciliation initiative. Given the bitter experiences of August, Washington urged both parties to refrain from undertaking any action that would weaken the diplomatic course to a peaceful resolution of their dispute. At Turkey's request, Washington also agreed to maintain close contact

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[567] US Department of State, Daily Briefing, 20 September 1996.
[568] Turkish official, interview.
[569] KDP, Press Declaration, 13 October 1996.
[570] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefings,
 15 October 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9610/961015db.html, and
16 October 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9610/961016db.html
[571] An anonymous Turkish official claimed that the US had provided intelligence reports to the PUK about KDP military positions to this end. Turkish official, interview.

with the Turkomen population.[572]

Turkey now hosted a series of separate and coordinated talks with Barzani and Talabani—the 'Ankara Process'—chaired by the American side with Turkish participation. The KDP and PUK agreed to a two-stage process of commitment to a ceasefire followed by reconciliation talks. After the conclusion of negotiations, Pelletreau made a joint statement on behalf of OPC-II allies Turkey, the US and UK. The statement indicated that the KDP and PUK had agreed to form an interim coalition government, work to eliminate terrorism from the region, make the city of Erbil neutral territory, share the revenues of the region, and set a new date for general elections. The statement also emphasised preference for the participation of all parties in the talks, including the Turkomen and Assyrians, to restore stability to Northern Iraq within Iraq's unity and territorial integrity. A neutral peace monitoring force (PMF) of Turkomen and Assyrians would be formed to demarcate and monitor the ceasefire line.[573] Washington underscored continued US support for the territorial integrity of Iraq and opposition to the establishment of a Kurdish state.[574] One change in Talabani's previous position in the Drogheda and Dublin process was to oppose addressing Turkey's security concerns as part of the KDP-PUK reconciliation. During a follow-up visit to Turkey in January 1997, Talabani said he realised the significance of better relations with Ankara and that a stance against the PKK was crucial to maintaining those relations. The PUK sought direct access to Turkey to limit its dependence on Iran, but declared it impossible to sever ties with Tehran in the face of the Iraqi threat.[575]

By the end of 1996, the US had agreed to end OPC-II on Ankara's insistence that the structure of the operation be changed. On 31 December, the headquarters of the Military Coordination Center (MCC) in Northern Iraq ceased operations and OPC-II became Operation Northern Watch (ONW), limited to reconnaissance missions and, when conditions required, interception flights.

The Ankara Process became the major expression of Turkey-US cooperation on Northern Iraq. Its key objectives were to maintain the KDP-PUK ceasefire, devise CBMs, and work towards a comprehensive political settlement to stabilise the situation.

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[572] USDOS DBP, 16 October 1996.

[573] Statement by Ambassador Robert Pelletrau, Assistant Secretary of State, 23 October 1996, Ankara, Turkey; 'US Aims to Unify Foes of Saddam'; Gunter, *Kurdish Predicament,* p.87.

[574] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 24 October 1996, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9610/961024db.html

[575] Turkish official, interview.

A high-level Supervisory Peace Monitoring Group (SPMG) comprising officials of the three co-sponsor nations plus representatives of the KDP, PUK and ITF was formed to review and implement the progress of the Ankara Process.[576] In order to monitor and demarcate the ceasefire line between the parties, the neutral Turkomen and Assyrian PMF was established with US funding and became operational in April 1997.[577] The key dispute remained the sharing of customs revenues and the PUK persistently threatened to resume fighting unless there was credible progress on this question. Turkey and the US drafted proposals for a neutral revenue sharing programme along with a mechanism to pay the salaries of civil servants in PUK-controlled areas.[578]

The Ankara Process became a positive and satisfactory mechanism for Turkey-US strategic coordination and cooperation. Turkey believed its co-sponsorship of the process was essential to restore stability as well as maintain a level of control over developments in Northern Iraq. However, there remained intermittent tensions as the PUK insisted that the reconciliation process had to progress as a single package, and would not accept the permanent partitioning of the north. The KDP, in contrast, argued for a step-by-step reconciliation process, dragged its feet on the question of revenue sharing and opposed handing money directly to the PUK, even for public services in PUK-controlled areas. The KDP position was that general elections were indispensable for the establishment of a coherent administration. The PUK, in response, claimed that Barzani would not agree to a final settlement unless the co-sponsors imposed heavy pressure. According to the PUK, the KDP was satisfied with the status quo, especially its high income from the Habur border gate, but the PUK was unable to tolerate the situation indefinitely.[579] It appeared that the long-standing KDP-PUK disputes would not be so easily settled. As both parties strove against Saddam's regime and each other for survival, they would continue to manipulate the other actors to their own advantage.

For its part, Tehran remained hostile to the Ankara Process. Its strategy focused on increasing its influence and presence in Northern Iraq and neutralising Iranian opposition groups. It put pressure on both the KDP and PUK to engage in an alternative negotiation process and an Iran-sponsored peace deal. Despite joint Turkey-US protests,

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[576] Statement by Co-chairman on the situation in Northern Iraq, 15 January 1997.
[577] KDP Europe Press Release, Internal Kurdish Conflict in Iraqi Kurdistan, 26 November 1997.
[578] Turkish official, interview.
[579] Letter dated 22 January 1997 by Jalal Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK, to Onur Öymen, the Undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

in January 1997, Iran invited Talabani to Tehran to hold talks with Syrian Vice President Abdulhalim Khaddam to remedy the relative detachment of PUK relations with Syria.[580] Following the meeting with Khaddam, Talabani told Turkish officials that the Syrian regime, frustrated at PUK cooperation with Turkey and the US in the Ankara Process, would continue to play the PKK card against Turkey.[581] The situation was becoming ever more complex: the KDP demonstrated that it could be drawn closer to the Iraqi regime in its rivalry with the PUK while Talabani's disdain for Saddam forced the PUK closer to Iran, and Tehran wielded enough influence to punish the PUK if Talabani moved closer to a Turkey-US sponsored agreement with the KDP.[582] It also seemed to Ankara that Baghdad would stay out of any KDP-PUK conflict as long as there was no considerable increase in Iranian involvement and unless the PUK gained major advantages against the KDP.

In early 1997, Turkey's relations with Talabani improved substantially since he publicly recognised the PKK as a terrorist group and assured Ankara that the PKK would not be permitted to freely function in PUK-controlled areas. A Turkish military liaison team now began to operate in Köysancak/Sulaymaniyah where the PUK had its headquarters.[583]

5.4. Changing Political Landscape in Turkey and Growing Turkey-Israel Ties

From early 1997, Turkish domestic politics entered a phase of civil-military tension. The TSK traditionally perceived themselves as the custodians of secularism and the republic, and now organised considerable opposition to the RP-DYP coalition that had come to power in June 1996. Opposition to the Erbakan-led government reached its climax during an MGK meeting on 28 February 1997, where he was forced to sign a directive pledging strict measures claimed to safeguard the secular structure of the republic. Henceforth, the military establishment dominated and shaped Turkey's domestic and foreign policy agenda, including its measures against the PKK. During this period, calls on General Çevik Bir, the Deputy Chief and the strongman of the TGS, became usual practice for high-level dignitaries visiting Ankara. A new strategy now emerged of establishing strong ties with Israel as a regional partner to counter Iran and

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[580] Interview with Talabani, 'We Don't Need Mediation for Direct Talks with Baghdad,' *Al-Rayah*, 16 August 1997.
[581] Turkish official, interview.
[582] Interview with Talabani, 'US Not a Trustworthy Mediator in Inter-Kurdish Conflict', *Tehran Times,* 15 January 1997; Interview with Talabani, 'World Will Soon Witness Collapse of Saddam's Tyrannical Regime', *Tehran Times,* 16 March 1997.
[583] Hüseyin Avni Botsalı, interviewed by author, Kars-Ankara Flight, 9 January 2011.

Syria and obtain high-tech Israeli military equipment. The fast-developing Turkey-Israel relations in the political and security realms were also regarded as an instrument to strengthen ties with the US administration by enlisting the support of the powerful Israel lobby in the US. The initial Turkey-Israel military exercises expanded into joint Turkey-Israel-US exercises, implying the emergence of a new power bloc in the Middle East.[584] Despite the resignation of the Erbakan government and the formation of a new ANAP-DSP coalition government by Mesut Yılmaz in June 1997, the influence of the military establishment on Turkey's foreign and security policies continued to increase.

During the same period, a debate erupted in Washington about whether US policy on Iraq had drifted.[585] On 26 March 1997, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright delivered a speech to reaffirm the fundamentals of the US policy. Albright announced that the US would maintain the containment policy to keep Saddam 'trapped within a strategic box.'[586] The US would ensure that Iraq never again attacked its neighbours. It would retain in the region the military capability required to deter Iraqi aggression, enforce the NFZs, maintain the UN sanctions, and continue trying to ease the suffering of Iraqi people. Washington would also maintain its policy of promoting a coherent and united Iraqi opposition based on Iraq's ethnic and confessional diversity, and helping the people of Northern Iraq to resolve internal tensions within the framework of Iraq's territorial integrity.[587]

On 3-4 April 1997, an American delegation visited Northern Iraq, accompanied by Turkish officials. The purpose was to prepare for the next high-level meeting in Ankara and the implementation of UNSCR 986 in the region.[588] The American delegation assured the Iraqi Kurdish leaders the US was determined to protect the region from Saddam's potential aggression.[589] While revenue sharing remained the key unsolved problem of the new drive for reconciliation, the US also pushed for beginning the implementation of UNSCR 986 in Northern Iraq without Bagdad's interference.

During this period, the PKK gradually turned to a strategy of declaring large border areas of Northern Iraq out-of-bounds to the Iraqi-Kurdish administration, establishing

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[584] For the details of Turkey-Israel relations on the Middle East, see Joshua Walker, 'Turkey and Israel's Relationship in the Middle East', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 17:4 (2006), pp.60-90.
[585] Hoagland, 'Diplomacy in Denial'.
[586] Secretary Albright's policy speech on Iraq at Georgetown University, 26 March 1997, http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1997/03/bmd970327b.htm
[587] Ibid.
[588] KDP Europe, Press Release, Acting US Assistant Secretary of State Visits Iraqi Kurdistan, 3 April 1997.
[589] US State Department, Daily Press Briefing, 4 April 1997, http://secretary.state.gov/www/briefings/9704/970404.html

military zones, and intervening in the administrative functions of the region. In order to prevent PKK dominance, the KDP launched an attack against the PKK and requested Turkey's assistance. From 14 May 1997, Turkey waged a month-long cross-border military operation against the PKK in Northern Iraq involving 50,000 troops.[590] The purpose of the operation was to provide logistical and fire support to KDP forces, and Turkish forces would only intervene in the KDP-PKK clashes as necessary.[591] Ankara also issued warnings to the PUK through clandestine channels. First, the PUK had to act in accordance with the common understanding that the PKK was also the enemy of all groups in Northern Iraq and posed a threat to the stability of the region. Second, the PUK had to fulfil its pledge to fight the PKK and not allow any terrorists to flee southwards into PUK areas, or permit any action in PUK-controlled areas that may be of assistance to the PKK. Third, to address the PUK concern that Turkey's support for the KDP would provide Barzani with the edge to supress the PUK, Turkey underlined that its cooperation with Barzani's Peshmerga forces was limited to wiping out PKK encampments along the KDP-controlled border regions. Fourth, Turkey warned the PUK of the serious consequences of any action that could undermine the stability of the ceasefire achieved through the Ankara Process.[592] The US reiterated its support for Turkey's military operation and that Turkey had a right to defend itself from the PKK.[593]

In addition to Iraq's protests, Iran, Syria, and many Arab countries reacted strongly to the Turkish military operation.[594] This was largely connected to Turkey's enhanced military cooperation and improved political relations with Israel. Ankara's assurances that its relationship with Israel was mutually defensive rather than offensive did little to mitigate the reaction. Ankara perceived Syria to be the driving force and instigator of the Arab reaction. Damascus publicly suggested that the US had promoted Turkey-Israel military cooperation against Syria and the Arab nations. Syria pursued coordination with Iran and sought to improve its ties with Iraq in line with its efforts to strengthen Arab solidarity to balance Turkey's enhanced cooperation with Israel. The

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[590] 'A Clarification on Turkish Army Incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan against PKK Elements', 14 May 1997.
[591] KDP Politburo, Statement of the Spokesperson of the Turkish MFA, 14 May 1997.
[592] Anonymous source
[593] US State Department, Daily Press Briefing, 14 May 1997, http://secretary.state.gov/www/briefings/9705/970514.html
[594] Letter dated 25 May 1997 by Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, to the President of the UNSC, S/1997/393, 28 May 1997; İlnur Cevik, 'Tehran to Ankara: Don't Enter Iranian Territory', *Turkish Daily News*, 23 May 1997; 'Turkish Troops Should Be out of Iraq', *Kayhan International*, 27 May 1997.

ultimate purpose of Damascus was to counterbalance a perceived a strategic threat to Syrian interests.[595]

To counteract the Syrian propaganda, President Demirel sent a letter to his Arab counterparts to address the concerns of the Arab countries about Turkey-Israel military cooperation. It explained that Turkey's cross-border military operation in Northern Iraq was solely a fight against the PKK, reiterating that Turkey respected Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity:

> The purpose of the cross border military operation in Northern Iraq is to eradicate the terrorist threat against Turkey. It is unfair that some Arab countries totally ignore Turkey's legitimate security concerns in fighting terrorism. It is also impossible to comprehend the position that tries to confuse and establish a link between Turkey's relations with Israel and the cross border military operation . . . Turkey's relationship with Israel has to be considered on its own merits . . . I would like to draw attention to the hostile attitude of Syria, which we believe is behind the anti-Turkish campaign. The hostile policies of Damascus are the reasons for the current state of affairs between Turkey and Syria. Syria supports PKK terrorism, provides shelter for its leaders in its country, and thereby conducts a proxy war against Turkey. It is impossible to expect normalisation of Turkey-Syria relations so long as this support continues. Turkey has exerted every effort to solve its problems with Syria through dialogue, unfortunately with no success. Syria continues to use terrorism as an instrument in its foreign policy towards Turkey. It is legitimate for Turkey to expect its Arab friends to comprehend this reality . . . and not sacrifice the future of Turkish-Arab relations to the manipulation of Syria.[596]

5.5. Revitalising the Ankara Process

Following the conclusion of Turkey's cross-border military operation, Turkey and the US launched a new diplomatic effort to reinvigorate the Kurdish reconciliation process.[597] They agreed to design and implement a more neutral mechanism that would ensure equitable use of local revenues. Yet again, in early July, Washington proposed to the Kurdish leaders a two-stage process to strengthen the ceasefire and finally resolve the question of revenue sharing. The PUK accepted the US proposals while the KDP was reluctant and blamed the PUK for violating the ceasefire in collaboration with the

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[595] David Gardner, 'Syria Opens Up toward Old Foe Iraq', *Financial Times,* 5 June 1997.
[596] Letter dated 20 June 1997 by Süleyman Demirel, the President of the Republic of Turkey, to the leaders of members of the Arab League. Translated by author.
[597] President's Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions, 9 July 1997, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-1997-book2/pdf/PPP-1997-book2-doc-pg934-2.pdf

PKK.[598] Talabani said the situation was explosive due to increased tension and the dire economic situation in PUK-controlled territory consequent on the non-implementation of UNSCR 986 under pressure from Baghdad. He claimed the Turkey-KDP alliance sought to change the balance in Northern Iraq to the detriment of the PUK by alleging PUK support for the PKK. He even argued that a new Turkey-Israel axis was in confrontation with the Syria-Iran axis,[599] implying that Barzani had served Israeli interests by cooperating with Turkey. Barzani stated the KDP was not part of any axis and that countering the Turkey-Israel axis was the concern of the Arab countries, not the Kurds.[600]

Despite the Turkey-US engagement, the PUK expressed a loss of trust in the Ankara Process since Turkish support had emboldened Barzani in his intransigence. The US was concerned that Talabani could launch an attack against the KDP to change the status quo, possibly prompting Saddam's interference in the north. The establishment of a KDP-PUK balance was essential to constrain the involvement of Iran and Syria. Yet Turkey remained wary of the signs of a new initiative for reconciliation outside the Ankara Process. According to the then Undersecretary of the MFA Onur Öymen, Ankara received intelligence reports of contacts between the US, UK and Iraqi Kurdish parties to initiate a process bypassing Turkey.[601] At the end of July, the KDP informed the Turkish, US, and UK governments that tensions along the demarcated ceasefire line had grown due to systematic attacks against KDP forces by the PUK-PKK. For Barzani, progress on other issues, including revenue sharing, was contingent upon the PUK upholding its ceasefire obligations and disengaging from PKK activities in the region.[602]

In view of the failure to bring the KDP-PUK leaders to a meeting, and the risk that Talabani's growing frustration created, the three co-sponsor countries devised a new strategy. The US administration invited Talabani to Washington in late July. New Foreign Minister İsmail Cem extended a similar invitation to Talabani to visit Ankara after the meetings with US officials. During the Washington meetings, US officials told Talabani that the shared interests of the US and the Iraqi Kurds would be best served by

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[598] KDP USA Press Release, PUK/PKK Joint Wide Offensive Action Against KDP Positions, 17 July 1997.
[599] Interview with Talabani, 'Calling the Turkish Army Is Treason: Why Baghdad Did Not Declare Its Position vis-a-vis the Invasion?' *As-Safir*, 12 July 1997.
[600] Interview with Barzani, 'There Is No Israeli Presence Here. Like the Arabs We also Refuse the Security Zone and the Tel Aviv-Ankara Axis', *As-Safir*, 11 July 1997.
[601] Öymen, interview.
[602] Letter dated 21 July 1997 by Masoud Barzani, the leader of KDP, to Ambassador Onur Öymen, Undersecretary of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

moving the Ankara Process forward.[603] Washington's messages to Talabani were manifold: First, the PUK had to avoid the mistakes of the past, especially in terms of cooperating with the PKK, Baghdad or Tehran. Any PUK cooperation with those parties would make it nearly impossible for the US to maintain its relationship with the PUK. Second, Turkey and the UK agreed with the US on the need to accelerate the reconciliation process, particularly on revenue sharing. Third, the US would provide relief funds to projects in PUK-controlled areas to overcome the immediate problems in implementing UNSCR 986. Fourth, Turkish security concerns had to be addressed, while Turkey acknowledged that more had to be done for everyone in Northern Iraq. Fifth, the US needed Turkey's cooperation to continue its efforts with the Iraqi Kurdish factions. The US believed that it was impossible for the PUK to turn its back on Turkey without turning its back on the entire peace process.[604]

Following the meetings in Washington, Talabani visited Ankara on 14 August 1997. He assured Turkish officials that the PUK sought better relations with Turkey, and denied reports that the PUK had assisted the PKK. He emphasised his understanding that a KDP-PUK peace leading to the establishment of a united regional government was the only workable method to secure Turkey's borders against PKK infiltration and resolve the key problem of revenue sharing.[605] The response that Talabani received was confirmation of Turkey's position. First, the chief Turkish objective was to achieve stability without damaging Iraq's territorial integrity and to prevent the PKK staging terrorist activities against Turkey from the region. Second, the PKK's presence and activities in the PUK-controlled region posed a direct threat to the ceasefire in Northern Iraq and to the Ankara Process as a whole. Preventing PKK activities and attacks along the ceasefire line was crucial for the security and effectiveness of the PMF, and thus for maintaining the ceasefire and advancing the reconciliation process. Third, Turkey was determined to reinvigorate the Ankara Process, and urged both sides to be forthcoming on revenue sharing and safe passage from the PUK area to Turkey via the KDP area. These proposals would be implemented at a high-level meeting in Washington. Turkey also advised the KDP to attend a proposed meeting in Washington to design and

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[603] President's Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions, 23 September 1997, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-1997-book2/pdf/PPP-1997-book2-doc-pg1215-2.pdf

[604] Uğur Akıncı, 'Despite Talabani's Forward Position, US Aims a Holding Operation', *Turkish Daily News*, 7 August 1997.

[605] İlnur Cevik, 'Talabani Says PUK Seeks Better Ties with Ankara', *Turkish Daily News*, 16 August 1997.

implement a neutral mechanism to pay civil servant salaries in PUK areas.[606]

5.6. Renewed PUK-PKK vs. KDP Hostilities

Despite all efforts, the KDP-PUK rift continued to grow due to ongoing ceasefire violations, substantially increasing the threat of a renewed outbreak of full hostilities. The situation was critical, and Washington urged Talabani to restore the ceasefire and pressed Barzani for progress on reconciliation. The US requested that Turkey make a determined effort to secure Barzani's full commitment to the reconciliation process. Turkey encouraged both Kurdish factions to swiftly accept recent US proposals for a meeting, but Barzani rejected them on the grounds that Washington had undermined the regional balance by extending direct support to Talabani. Barzani further accused the US of not condemning the ceasefire violations and PUK-PKK cooperation.[607]

Following an unsuccessful meeting between the KDP-PUK and the three co-sponsor countries in London on 6-7 October 1997,[608] PUK forces, in alliance with the PKK, crossed the ceasefire line and launched an offensive against the KDP on 12 October.[609] The co-sponsors called upon both factions to immediately restore the ceasefire and withdraw to their 12 October positions. They also urged both parties to clearly renew their commitment to Turkey's legitimate security concerns and to re-engage with the Ankara Process.[610] Talabani informed Turkey that four conditions had to be met for the continuation of the Ankara Process: the unification of the regional government, normalisation of the status of Erbil as an open city, return of all custom revenues to the treasury of the regional government, and new and free elections. While Talabani recognised Turkey's right to defend the security of its borders, he claimed the joint Turkey-KDP fight against the PKK was not the appropriate method. Border security could only be assured through reconciliation and the formation of a broad-based regional authority, after which the PUK would participate in protection of Turkish borders. Talabani also requested Turkey remain neutral, said the PUK desired Turkey's

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[606] Letter dated 13 August 1997 by Ambassador Onur Öymen, the Undersecretary of Turkish MFA, to Thomas Pickering, the US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs.

[607].Letter dated 27 August 1997 by Onur Öymen, the Undersecretary of Turkish MFA, to Jalal Talabani, Secretary General of the PUK.

[608] KDP Europe Press Release, PUK Inflexibility Hamper Kurdish Peace Talks in London, 9 October 1997.

[609] KDP Europe Press Release, Internal Kurdish Conflict in Iraqi Kurdistan, 26 November 1997.

[610] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 14 October 1997,
http://secretary.state.gov/www/briefings/9710/971014db.html

friendship, and hoped it would not be forced into the camp of Turkey's enemies.[611] Turkish officials categorically rejected the claim that Turkey had sided with the KDP against the PUK. Turkey's major interest was to terminate the PKK, which had been involved in the recent outbreak of KDP-PUK hostilities, and its cooperation with the KDP was directed solely against the PKK threat. Secondly, Turkey could only remain neutral between the KDP and PUK so long as the PUK cut its ties with the PKK. There was conclusive evidence that PKK elements in the PUK-controlled region had actively violated the ceasefire and undermined the stability of the region, which Turkey could not allow. Third, it was the PUK's responsibility to cease hostilities without preconditions, withdraw its forces to their previous positions and restore the ceasefire line. Turkey was committed to the Ankara Process to restore stability and ensure that the region was free from terrorism.[612] Following Turkey-US joint pressure, the KDP and PUK agreed to a ceasefire on 17 October and to hold a meeting between Barzani and Talabani in Ankara. Washington had communicated to Ankara the US commitment to the Ankara Process as the best means of achieving stability in Northern Iraq and ensuring Turkey's security. Ankara asserted that the PUK had violated the ceasefire in collaboration with the PKK and had to immediately and unconditionally withdraw its forces to their previous positions and end its cooperation with the PKK. Only then would it be possible to further the resolution of KDP-PUK problems within the Ankara Process. In short, for Turkey, the future of the Ankara Process was primarily contingent upon the PUK's stance towards the PKK.[613]

The first element of the US position was agreement with Turkey on the need to press for PUK withdrawal. Second, the US encouraged Turkey to accept Talabani's offer to dispatch a PUK delegation to Ankara, which could serve as an instrument to press the PUK on both troop withdrawal and its connections with the PKK. Third, supporting Turkey's efforts to get substantive guarantees from the PUK to reduce or cease cooperation with the PKK, the US warned Talabani about the danger of ties to the PKK, Tehran and Baghdad. Fourth, the US respected Turkey's legitimate security concern about the PKK threat and supported its right to use military force to respond to it. Fifth, the US was concerned that Baghdad could seize this moment of discord as an excuse for

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[611] Letter dated 13 October 1997 by Jalal Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK, to İsmail Cem, the Turkish MFA.

[612] Letter dated 27 August 1997 by Ambassador Onur Öymen, the Undersecretary of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to Masoud Barzani, the President of the KDP.

[613] Letter dated 20 October 1997 by İsmail Cem, the Turkish MFA, to M. Albright, the US Secretary of State.

a military operation in the north. In response, Ankara temporarily suspended air operations to allow the US and UK to compel the PUK to withdraw and to restore the ceasefire. For Turkey, only unconditional withdrawal of PUK forces to the ceasefire line and termination of its cooperation with the PKK would put the Ankara Process back on track.

However, Talabani refused to withdraw PUK forces behind the demarcation line and heavy fighting resumed. According to him, PUK forces had simply liberated regions invaded by the KDP with Saddam's help back in 1996. Talabani accused Turkey of intervening militarily on Barzani's behalf by conducting artillery and air operations against the PUK. For Talabani, what he called Turkey's 'unequivocal bias in favour of Barzani' had encouraged the KDP leader in his utter intransigence, and forfeited Turkey's role and credibility as a neutral arbiter and co-sponsor of peace and reconciliation. Nevertheless, Talabani said the PUK still had a sincere desire to normalise and improve relations with Turkey and he renewed his proposal to send a delegation to Ankara.[614] PUK officials also publicly admitted that they had limited contact with the PKK without provision of direct assistance. The PUK also permitted 'PKK sympathisers' to live in PUK-controlled territory, though purely for humanitarian reasons.[615] The KDP, on the other hand, stated that the PUK had grossly exaggerated Turkish air attacks that had primarily targeted PKK elements in open alliance with the PUK.[616] According to Barzani, Talabani was seeking military assistance from Saddam and had called for Baghdad to mediate between the PUK and KDP to counterbalance Turkey-KDP cooperation. A KDP delegation visited Baghdad to assure Saddam's regime that Turkey was only interested in eliminating the PKK, remained neutral in the KDP-PUK fight, and respected Iraq's territorial integrity. Baghdad put no pressure on the KDP over its relations with Turkey.[617] The KDP launched a counter offensive and regained the territories lost to the PUK-PKK, and PUK forces duly retreated to the demarcated ceasefire line. On 24 November 1997, the KDP declared a ceasefire conditional upon the PUK preventing PKK terrorists from attacking KDP positions,[618] which the PUK accepted.

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[614] Letter dated 3 November 1997 by Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK, to Çiller, the former Turkish Prime Minister and Chairperson of the True Path Party.
[615] Orya Sultan Halisdemir, 'PUK's Rashid Urges Turkey to Back Political Solution in Northern Iraq', *Turkish Daily News*, 17 November 1997.
[616] KDP Europe Press Release, PUK Forces and PKK Terrorists Defeated and Expelled from a Large Territory after Two Days of KDP Counter Offensive, 10 November 1997.
[617] Letter dated 31 October 1997 by Barzani, the Chairman of the KDP, to the Turkish MFA.
[618] KDP Press Release, KDP Declares a Ceasefire after Defeating the PUK-PKK Forces, 24 November 1997.

With the restoration of the ceasefire, the US and UK informed Turkey of their intention to hold a KDP-PUK meeting in London. Turkey was invited to participate, yet only on the second day of the meetings since the PUK viewed Turkey as a combatant in Northern Iraq. Ankara expressed alarm at the new US-UK initiative to substitute the Ankara Process and their new inclination towards appeasing Talabani.[619] It felt Talabani, who bore responsibility for the PUK-PKK violation of the ceasefire, had to be obliged to return to the Ankara Process instead of being given undue concessions which would make the situation more difficult to manage. Turkey advised the US and UK that it would neither support nor attend the proposed London meeting. The KDP also refused to participate, claiming that a meeting without Turkey would produce no results.[620]

US officials, however, met with the KDP and PUK, and received their renewed commitment to the ceasefire and efforts to stabilise the situation. Both factions assured the US that no other parties would be permitted to mount attacks across the ceasefire line in areas under their control. Neither group would take any actions that would risk the ceasefire or the prospects for the resumption of political negotiations.[621] Talabani said that the PUK was ready to participate in a viable plan to assure Turkey's legitimate security concerns and help end the PKK military presence in the region by all means, peaceful or otherwise. However, he felt Turkey had to help the PUK by instituting a constructive Turkish policy to restore peace and support the revival of a unified local administration in Northern Iraq. Such an administration could fill the power vacuum and take on the task of securing the Iraqi side of the border with Turkey. Talabani contended that this plan was a more viable way to end the PKK presence in the region than Turkey's reliance on 'mercenaries' and military incursions, 'the futility of which had been proven time and again.' He argued his plan offered a viable framework to restore peace and stability, deny Baghdad further opportunities in the region, and assure Turkey of its legitimate security concerns.[622]

5.7. Towards the Washington Agreement

By the end of 1997, it appeared that the Ankara Process was on the verge of collapse.

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[619] The strength of Ankara's reaction reflected the fact that Talabani had been invited to Washington to hold separate talks with US officials, including National Security Advisor Sandy Berger.
[620] Turkish official, interview.
[621] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 3 December 1997,
http://secretary.state.gov/www/briefings/9712/971203db.html
[622] Turkish official, interview.

As well as the questions around Turkey's role, Barzani was very sceptical of the US administration's Iraq policy, saying he was unaware whether it even had a policy on Northern Iraq. He said the KDP would not agree to the Iraqi opposition being used against Baghdad unless Washington clearly presented its vision for Iraq's future. According to Barzani, the only way to break the KDP-PUK impasse was to hold elections in Northern Iraq.[623]

While the three co-sponsor countries disagreed on how to proceed with Kurdish reconciliation, a new and direct KDP-PUK dialogue started through an exchange of letters between Barzani and Talabani in early 1998. The letters called for ideas to initiate a peace plan to end the conflict in Northern Iraq.[624] The KDP's proposal was a three-phase plan to be carried out within the Ankara Process. The first phase would entail CBMs, to include the end of the armed PKK presence and 'intrusion in the affairs' of Northern Iraq. The second phase would address normalisation through the establishment of a provisional joint KDP-PUK government based on the results of the 1992 elections. In the third stage, free general elections would be held with international supervision and monitoring.[625] In response to Talabani's points about Turkey's role and the PKK issue, Barzani took a firm stance against the PKK:

> The KDP does not believe in settling differences with any group through the use of force. Over the past five years, the PKK has initiated three wars against the people of Iraqi Kurdistan. The PKK has continuously attempted to impose its will through violence and intimidation. The KDP is not alone in demanding an end to the PKK's military presence in Iraqi Kurdistan. The Kurdistan Front, the Joint Regional Government, other Kurdish political parties in the Parliament, and the people of Kurdistan at large, have all made similar demands . . . In fact, the PUK was the first among all parties to agree with Turkey in putting an end to the PKK's unjust intervention in Iraqi Kurdistan's internal affairs. We maintain our position that the PKK should be prohibited from exerting its military presence in Iraqi Kurdistan. Although we prefer to achieve that end through peaceful means, there are no indications that the option is available. Because the PKK's military presence in Iraqi Kurdistan only causes further instability and tension, we hope that you will take a more serious willingness on this issue.[626]

In January 1998, a new crisis erupted between the US and Iraq due to Baghdad's denial

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[623] İlnur Çevik, 'Exclusive Interview with Masoud Barzani: In the End Our Problem Will Be Solved in Baghdad', *Turkish Daily News*, 12 December 1997.
[624] KDP USA Press Release, Barzani's Calls for Steps to Enhance Peace Process, 6 January 1998.
[625] Letter dated 14 January 1998 by Barzani, the Chairman of the KDP, to Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK; KDP Europe Press Release, KDP Leader Masoud Barzani Offers PUK Leader Talabani a Peace Plan to End Internal Fighting, 17 January 1998.
[626] KDP Press Release, Masoud Barzani's 3 February 1998 Letter to Jalal Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK, 3 February 1998.

of unconditional and unrestricted access to United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspectors in their search for Iraq's WMD. In order to avert the crisis and prevent an armed conflict, Turkey launched a diplomatic effort called the 'Good Neighbourly Initiative.' On 5 February 1998, Foreign Minister Cem visited Baghdad to hold talks with Saddam. The purpose of the initiative was to urge Baghdad to immediately comply with all relevant UNSCRs to peacefully resolve the crisis, and explore ways to avert similar problems in the future. A second goal was to establish a regional arrangement for security and cooperation to prevent a recurrence of the events of 1990-91. If this was achieved, an additional initiative to establish a zone free of WMD and their delivery systems in the Middle East would follow. The lifting of sanctions in a reasonable timeframe would be followed by a plan to ensure the security of the entire Iraqi population and enable Iraq to exercise its sovereignty over all its territory. Saddam welcomed the Turkish initiative, but denied that Iraq had any WMD, and said the US maintained the unjust sanctions to topple his regime, and therefore, even if the recent crisis were resolved, future crises would be inevitable.[627] In fact, Ankara recognised that no long-term political solution to the Iraqi problem would emerge as long as Saddam stayed in power. The initiative was designed not to accommodate Saddam, but to demonstrate that the situation could not conceivably continue indefinitely with same parameters. In the end, the crisis ended with an agreement brokered by the UN Secretary General in February and March 1998.[628]

On 12 February 1998, the KDP and PUK commenced direct talks. In parallel to the KDP-PUK negotiations, Talabani sought to normalise PUK relations with Turkey. A PUK delegation visited Ankara followed by Talabani's letter to Cem on 27 February 1998. Talabani wrote that the PUK desired to strengthen relations with Turkey 'based on firm foundations that will take into consideration the achievement of the security of Turkish borders and our legitimate interests together.'[629] Talabani reiterated that Turkey had the right to expect the Kurdish administration to prevent 'military operations' being staged from areas adjacent to Turkey, secure the border and deter all terrorist activities.[630] Yet he again insisted that this would be contingent upon the unification of a Kurdish administration that could take charge of ensuring security and stability in the region. Talabani also expected that Ankara would act impartially in its dealings with the

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[627] Oğuz Demiralp, interviewed by author, Kars-Ankara Flight, 9 January 2011.
[628] Ibid.
[629] Letter dated 27 February 1998 by Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK, to İsmail Cem, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs.
[630] It is noteworthy that Talabani's letter made no direct reference to the PKK.

KDP and PUK.[631]

After several rounds of talks, the Kurdish factions achieved substantial progress in maintaining the ceasefire and the implementation of UNSCR 986 in the region. However, disputes over formation of a unified administration, revenue sharing, and new elections remained unresolved. The PUK pursued the opportunity to improve relations with Turkey and adopted a more constructive policy towards Turkey's demands regarding the PKK. In June 1998, Talabani informed Ankara that the PKK had been removed from PUK-controlled regions and requested a Turkish military liaison team visit Sulaymaniyah to confirm the situation on the ground. Henceforth, relative tranquillity prevailed in Northern Iraq owing to the benefits of the implementation of UNSCR 986, which enabled some economic improvement in the region. The flow of 13 percent of the proceeds from oil sales under UNSCR 986 to the Kurdish region, followed by the implementation of UNSCR 1153,[632] reduced the economic dependency of Kurdish groups on the customs revenue from Habur. On 17-20 July, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Welch visited Northern Iraq and extended an invitation to both Kurdish leaders to a meeting in Washington.[633] The US motive was to build on the progress that the KDP and PUK had made in direct talks towards a permanent reconciliation.[634] Barzani reportedly accepted the invitation since it was the first time a US official had expressed open support for the Kurds and gave assurances about US guarantees for the security of Northern Iraq.[635]

In early September, en route to the US, Barzani visited Turkey for discussions with senior Turkish politicians. A high-level PUK delegation followed suit. During the talks, Ankara advised both delegations of the Turkish position. First, Turkey was committed to supporting Kurdish reconciliation through the Ankara Process without undermining Iraq's territorial integrity and political unity. Second, Ankara recognised the need to hold elections to form a government that would administer the region until circumstances would allow the Kurdish groups to resolve their differences with Baghdad over the status of the region. Until then, Ankara opposed the concept of a predetermined federation for Northern Iraq. Third, the PKK and the wellbeing of the

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[631] Ibid.

[632] Gunter, *Kurdish Predicament,* pp.98-99.

[633] James Risen, 'US Welcomes Kurdish Leader Who Betrayed C.I.A. in Iraq', *New York Times*, 25 July 1998.

[634] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 8 September 1998, http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/briefings/9809/980908db.html

[635] David Welch, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs: US Brokered Northern Iraq Accord and US-Iraq Relations, Worldnet, 15 October 1998.

Turkomen community would remain the pivotal issues in Turkey's relations with the Kurdish factions. During the discussions, Barzani assured Turkish officials of KDP commitment to Iraq's territorial integrity, anti-PKK stance, and cooperation with the Turkomen. Barzani also mentioned that Talabani had refused his proposal to visit Turkey together, and that Barzani would not accept any alternative to the Ankara Process during the talks in Washington.

The US hosted Barzani on 9-11 September and Talabani on 14-16 September. Following senior-level meetings with US officials, Albright had separate meetings with Barzani and Talabani. She assured both leaders of continued US engagement with the Kurdish factions and commitment to the security and economic wellbeing of the Iraqi Kurds. She advised the Kurdish leaders that KDP-PUK reconciliation was an important objective for the US.[636] They were also informed that US protection depended upon such reconciliation; if they remained unified, the US would not tolerate any renewed aggression by Baghdad or any repetition of the events of the late 1980s and early 1990s in Northern Iraq.[637]

Following intensive discussions at the State Department on 16-17 September and a meeting under Secretary Albright's auspices, after four years of conflict, Barzani and Talabani signed the Washington Agreement on 17 September 1998.[638] Albright, who was instrumental in brokering the agreement and its power-sharing arrangement, observed in interview that continued intra-Kurdish fighting hindered US policy towards Iraq, and the US was finally able to stop the fighting after getting Barzani and Talabani together in her office.[639]

The Washington Agreement set out a nine-month timeline to unify the regional administration, share revenue, resolve the status of Erbil, and hold elections in June 1999. Under the agreement, both parties condemned internal fighting, pledged to refrain from violence in settling their differences, and resolved to eliminate terrorism by establishing stronger safeguards for Iraq's borders. The agreement underlined respect for Iraq's unity and territorial integrity, yet called for a federal system within a united,

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[636] US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 14 September 1998, http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/briefings/9809/980914db.html
[637] Welch, 'US Brokered Northern Iraq'.
[638] President's Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions, 5 November 1998, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-1998-book2/pdf/PPP-1998-book2-doc-pg1986-2.pdf
[639] Albright, interview.

democratic and pluralistic Iraq.[640]

The end of the Kurdish infighting and restoration of stability in Northern Iraq, the elimination of the terrorist threat from the region, and the prevention of interference of Iran and Syria were all congruent with Turkish interests. However, the Washington Agreement caused frustration and uneasiness in Ankara. The primary objection was that the US had launched a new process between the Kurdish factions without properly consulting Turkey, and Albright and other senior US officials made references to the Ankara Process to deflect Turkey's reaction. The Washington Agreement called for a dual-track reconciliation process whereby political issues would be handled by talks in London, while security issues would be addressed at meetings in Ankara. Turkey believed this approach would practically mark the end of the Ankara Process. Washington suggested the next step in the reconciliation process be a Talabani-Barzani meeting in Ankara focusing on security at the beginning of November,[641] but without consulting Turkey. In terms of the substance, Ankara noted with satisfaction the agreement's references to the preservation of the territorial integrity and sovereign unity of Iraq, and the statements by the US to this end.[642] Turkey's chief concerns were with the provisions on federalism, general elections, unification of the government, and Peshmerga forces, as it felt these would eventually break the region from the rest of Iraq. On the other hand, Ankara acknowledged that the commitment of the Kurdish factions to terminate PKK terrorism in the region would mitigate Turkey's problems. Equally importantly, this provision would also help lessen the need for Ankara to carry out large-scale cross-border military operations and reduce the prospects of outside interference in the balance between the PKK and Kurdish parties. Washington reaffirmed US support for Turkey's right to defend itself from PKK terrorism, and undertook to diligently monitor the agreement's assurances for the security of Turkey's borders.[643] Nevertheless, as a reaction to the Washington Agreement, Turkey upgraded its diplomatic representation in Baghdad to the ambassadorial level—a decision that caused resentment in the US.[644] The new Turkey-US divisions reflected a substantial

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[640] For an analysis of the Washington Agreement from the Kurdish perspective, see Mahmoud Osman, 'The Washington Agreement, the Negotiations, the Implementation and Its Prospects', 1 May 2001, http://kurdmedia.com/article.aspx?id=8013

[641] Welch, 'US Brokered Northern Iraq'.

[642] Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Jalal Talabani of the PUK, and Masoud Barzani of the KDP, Press remarks following their meeting, Washington, DC, 17 September 1998, Released by the Office of the Spokesman, US Department of State, http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/news/1998/09/98091707_nlt.html

[643] Welch, 'US Brokered Northern Iraq'.

[644] Ibid.

divergence of their respective positions on Northern Iraq. Ankara focused on constraining any KDP-PUK achievement that increased the prospects of an independent Kurdish state, including a unified administration and federalism, and explicitly expressed its preference for a centralised Iraq. The US, in contrast, sought a unified Kurdish administration and supported the KDP-PUK cause for a decentralised, federal Iraq.

5.8. Öcalan's Capture

In summer 1998, Turkish leaders and senior military officials started to directly accuse Syria of supporting and harbouring the PKK as leverage against Turkey. They alleged that PKK leader Öcalan resided in Syria and that the PKK had terrorist training camps in the country, blaming Syria for being part of an undeclared war on Turkey. The Syrian denials were unpersuasive.[645] During a speech before the TBMM, President Demirel said that Turkey had reached the limits of its patience, and that Syria would soon face the consequences of supporting PKK terror.[646] Ankara gave Syria two conditions; return or expel Öcalan and close down all PKK training camps. Turkish frustration escalated to the brink of war in October 1998 when Syria finally realised that Turkey was serious in its threat to use force. According to Demirel, the resolve of the Turkish officials during this process was instrumental in convincing Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak of Turkey's determination to undertake military action if its conditions were not met. Following his visit to Ankara, Mubarak changed his route to visit Damascus and persuaded Syria to expel Öcalan and shut down the PKK camps.[647] After Öcalan's departure from Damascus, Turkey agreed to improve relations with Syria and signed the Adana Accord, which satisfied Turkish concerns by establishing mechanisms to deal with terrorism and enhance security. The then Ambassador to Syria, Uğur Ziyal, underlines that the removal of the PKK from the Turkey-Syria agenda was the key to normalising relations with Damascus, opening the way to improving Turkey's relations with the Arab world in general.[648]

In February 1999, the capture of Öcalan with the direct assistance of the US was a new turning point in Turkey-US relations. Öcalan was captured leaving the residence of the

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[645] In interview, Süleyman Demirel stated that he had raised Öcalan's presence in Damascus during a state visit with President H. Assad, who denied the claim. Demirel claimed that Assad reddened when he gave him the file with Öcalan's pictures and address in Damascus. Demirel, interview; Altunışık and Tür, 'Distant Neighbours', pp.229-248.
[646] In fact, Demirel instructed Feridun Sinirlioğlu, his chief foreign policy advisor, to give a bold message to Syria for harbouring Öcalan. Feridun Sinirlioğlu, interviewed by author, Ankara, 9 May 2012.
[647] Demirel, interview; Ziyal, interview.
[648] Ziyal, interview.

Greek Ambassador in Nairobi, and Öcalan was handed to Turkish officials.[649] Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit did not mention the US role in the operation and refrained from commenting on the details at the time. However, Turkish authorities later praised the US assistance. President Demirel maintains that it was the US that ensured Öcalan was given to Turkey.[650]

Öcalan's capture created favourable conditions for Turkey's struggle against the PKK, both at home and in Northern Iraq. Domestically, it created a positive psychological atmosphere and a sense of superiority over the PKK.[651] The PKK declared a ceasefire and announced that its militants would leave Turkey and withdraw to Iraq. Syria would no longer serve as a safe haven for the terrorist organisation. After the initial shock, the public feeling was that the PKK would go into meltdown. The PKK announced its renunciation of terrorist attacks on Turkish soil and withdrew its approximately 5,000 cadres to Northern Iraq, concentrated in the Kandil Mountains.[652]

The US now encouraged Ankara to separate the PKK issue from the case for democratic reform of the Kurdish problem, particularly on widening the democratic and cultural rights of Kurdish people in Turkey.[653] The sense of superiority in the struggle against the PKK paved the way for the Turkish authorities to tolerate Kurdish publications and broadcasts at the local level. It seemed that the PKK would not recover sufficiently to militarily challenge Turkey. The perception that the PKK posed an existential threat to Turkey's security in terms of separation, autonomy, or federation gradually abated. The Kurdish problem became conceived as a matter of cultural and language rights rather than in the context of PKK terrorism.[654]

The PKK's decision to remain inactive after Öcalan's capture was also a great relief for the KDP and PUK despite the large presence of terrorists in the Kandil Mountains. Ankara initially pressed the KDP and PUK to prevent PKK terrorists withdrawing from Syria into Northern Iraq. However, the PKK presence in the region gradually fell off Ankara's radar, becoming a less pressing security concern as long as the PKK seemed

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[649] Michael M. Gunter, 'The US-Turkish Alliance in Disarray', *World Affairs*, 167:3 (2005), pp.113-123; Tim Weiner, 'US Played Key Role in Capture of Kurd Rebel, Officials Say', *New York Times*, 20 February 1999.

[650] Demirel, interview. For a detailed account of Öcalan's capture, see Tuncay Özkan, *Abdullah Öcalan Neden Verildi? Nasıl Yakalandı? Ne Olacak?* (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2005), p.182.

[651] Bill Park, *Turkey's Policy towards Northern Iraq*, pp.18-19.

[652] Stephen J. Flanagan and Sam Brannen, 'Turkey's Military Options for Dealing with the PKK: A Preliminary Assessment', *CSIS International Security Program*, 31 October 2007.

[653] Alan Makovsky, 'The Öcalan Affair: What is Next?', *Policy Watch*, 369, 24 February 1999.

[654] Ibid.

to be contained and remained inactive. This would gradually lead to a downsizing of Ankara's diplomatic engagement with the Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq. According to Fuad Hüseyin, as Turkey saw the Kurdish issue mainly as a security question, Öcalan's capture had removed Ankara's primary motivation for dealing with the Kurdish groups in the region.[655] Henceforth, the Turkish interest in Northern Iraq focused on restraining the Iraqi Kurdish groups' drive for federalism and independence. The PKK's strong foothold in Northern Iraq remained a residual issue so long as the organisation did not engage in terrorist activities.

5.9. Conclusion

From 1996 to 2001, Ankara and Washington remained in no agreement about their perception of threat from Saddam's regime. For Ankara, Saddam was no longer a threat at all. For Washington, however, Saddam's regime remained a vital regional threat to US interests. The US maintained its strategy to deal with that threat, namely the policy of containment, NFZs, and the adopted policy of regime change. Despite a lack of agreement with the US on independent variable one, the nature of the strategic threat, Turkey continued to unwillingly cooperate with the US on independent variable two, the strategy to deal with the perceived threat, as detailed in table 6 overleaf. Turkey's behaviour was largely due to factors related to alliance management, cost versus benefit, relative gains, and the need to accommodate conflicting and common interests. Nevertheless, over this period, Ankara steadily elevated its diplomatic representation in Baghdad to ambassadorial level, in the face of US objections.

During this period, Saddam remained in firm control of Iraq, except the Kurdish region. Containment seemed to work to 'keep Saddam in a box,'[656] but international support for the sanctions, one of the pillars of the containment strategy, gradually faded away.[657] The policy of regime change proved ineffective due to the bitter failures of US-backed attempted coups by opposition groups in 1995 and the liquidation of the INC infrastructure after the takeover of Erbil by Saddam's forces in August 1996. Saddam's opponents simply lacked the means to even threaten his regime. In February 1997, Washington decided to cut CIA ties and funding to the INC on the grounds that it had

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[655] Fuad Hüseyin, interviewived by author, İstanbul, 31 May 2011.
[656] Remarks by Samuel R. Berger, Assistant to the President For National Security Affairs, National Press Club, 23 December 1998,
http://clinton4.nara.gov/WH/EOP/NSC/html/speeches/19981223.html
[657] In essence, as of December 1998, the US estimate was that sanctions had cost Saddam more than $120 billion. President Clinton's Address, 16 December 1998,
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/july-dec98/clinton_12-16.html

Table 6: Integrative model of Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq, 1996-2001

Independent Variable 1: Agreement on significant/strategic common threat	Independent Variable 2: Agreement on strategy to deal with perceived strategic threat	Dependent Variable / Result

I. The US:
 	
Saddam and his regime remained a threat to vital US interests
	I. Elements of US strategy:
	
	1. Regime change (-)
	2. Containment (+)
	  i. Maintaining sanctions (+/-)
	  ii. NFZs via OPC-II/ONW (+)
	3. Protect Northern Iraq as base for opposition to Saddam (-)
	4. Prevent KDP-PUK clashes (+)
	5. KDP-PUK reconciliation (+/-)
	6. Establish unified Kurdish administration to maintain Northern Iraq as an element of the containment strategy (-)
		I. Unwilling cooperation on overall Iraq strategy
		
		1. No alternative strategy
		2. US ability to define Iraq strategy
		3. Alliance security dilemma / entrapment:
		  i. No concurrence of interests
		  ii. Turkey supports US strategy of containment despite repercussions on Turkish national interests.
		  iii. Asymmetrical Turkish dependence on the US means preserving alliance outweighs risks and costs of cooperation on Iraq
		4. Turkey's need for US support in fight against the PKK in Northern Iraq, including cross-border military operations and preventing Kurdish independence
		5. US reliance on Turkish cooperation on the containment strategy, including mandate for OPC-II and access to Northern Iraq

II. Turkey: Saddam's regime was no longer a threat	**II. Elements of Turkish strategy:** 1. Fight against PKK in Northern Iraq (+) 2. Check Iraqi Kurdish aspirations for self-rule/federation (-) 3. Prevent possible Iraqi Kurdish independence (+) 4. Address Turkey's economic losses (-) 5. Protect the interests of the Turkomen people (-) 6. Preference for Iraq's central government to reinstitute control over Northern Iraq (-) 7. Establish direct contact / diplomatic ties with Bagdad. (-)	**II. Unwilling cooperation on Northern Iraq strategy** 1. US need to cooperate with Turkey to stop KDP-PUK clashes to prevent collapse of containment policy. 2. Turkish need to cooperate with the US to stop KDP-PUK clashes to prevent PKK exploiting / changing intra-Kurdish balance to dominate region 3. Agreement on importance of establishing KDP-PUK balance 4. Agreement on need to prevent Iranian and Syrian interference in the region.

lost credibility as an umbrella opposition organisation and as an arbiter between the Kurdish factions.[658] For Deutsch, Washington saw containment as a transitory strategy and expected that over time it could create sufficient opposition and resistance to overthrow Saddam.[659] Despite the adoption of the ILA in October 1998, as Haass

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[658] Report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on the Use by the Intelligence Community of Information Provided by the INC together with Additional Views, 8 September 2006, 109th Congress, 2nd Session, p.24.

[659] Deutsch, interview.

argues, 'regime change appeared to be more wish than strategy.'[660] Moreover, from December 1999 onwards, the international inspections regime had effectively ended.[661]

Between 1996 and 2001, Iraq remained an issue of significant US-Turkish strategic convergence,[662] though there were also contentions. For Washington, preventing Baghdad from reasserting its control in Northern Iraq was imperative for the containment strategy, and Turkey's cooperation was essential. Ankara, in contrast, championed the re-establishment of Baghdad's authority in the region.[663] However, as Park underlines, being unable to avoid cooperating on the US containment strategy, Ankara increasingly viewed involvement in Northern Iraq as a satisfactory alternative.[664]

For Ankara, the containment strategy created severe economic implications in the loss of the lucrative trade with Iraq. More importantly, it posed security liabilities due to de facto Kurdish self-rule and the increased PKK activity in the region exacerbated by KDP-PUK clashes. Consequently, Ankara had to carry out repeated cross-border incursions into Northern Iraq and establish permanent contingents in the region to fight PKK terrorists. By the late 1990s, the result was, as Parris argues, 'a stable modus vivendi in which the basic requirements of America, the Turks, and even the Iraqi Kurds were being met.'[665] However, this modus vivendi failed to establish harmony in the US and Turkey's respective strategies on Iraq. Ankara tolerated the situation because it could freely intervene against the PKK and retained certain influence over the KDP and PUK, despite its resentment at emerging Kurdish autonomy.[666] Turkey had to walk the tight rope of aligning with the US while tackling the unintended consequences of its strategy. Also, it had to contain Iraqi Kurdish aspirations for an independent state while brokering deals with the US to stop the intra-Kurdish clashes and preventing Washington from accommodating increased Kurdish self-rule. At the same time, Ankara had to ensure that the PKK did not emerge as a player wielding influence in Northern Iraq. Collaboration with the KDP and PUK against the PKK, if not garnering their direct assistance, became imperative in that objective. Hüseyin states that the PKK was 'arrogant in pursuing a strategy to introduce itself as the leading Kurdish movement

[660] Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.166-167.
[661] Ibid., p.166.
[662] Parris, 'Starting Over', pp.1-9.
[663] Park, 'Turkey's Kurdish Complex'.
[664] Ibid.
[665] Parris, 'Starting Over', pp.1-9.
[666] Park, 'Turkey's Kurdish Complex'.

representing and talking on behalf of all Kurds everywhere, including Iraqi Kurdistan,' and sought to dominate Northern Iraq through links to 'neighbouring countries' that posed a threat to the KDP and PUK.[667] Demirel underlined the threat that the PKK posed to Iraqi Kurds as the key factor for their cooperation with Turkey in the fight against the PKK.[668]

The Ankara Process, therefore, was key in accommodating Turkey's interests and striking a balance between its conflicting objectives. However, the difficulty of squaring every dilemma at once led to the failure of the Ankara Process, and the Kurdish region remained in turmoil until the US decisively brokered the Washington Agreement in September 1998. However, the key objective of that agreement—to establish a unified regional authority to be formed after elections—never materialised, and the region remained effectively divided under two separate governments led by the PUK and KDP.

For Ankara, the capture and detention of Öcalan was the most significant development during this period. In addition to its impact on domestic and foreign policy in general, it changed the parameters of Turkey's policy towards Syria, Northern Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdish groups. To this day, there is debate in Turkey over the motives of the US in ensuring the capture of and surrendering Öcalan to Turkey. As Aras argues, one motive appears to be that the Clinton administration intended to eliminate the destabilising impact of the PKK in Northern Iraq, especially on its efforts to reconcile the KDP and PUK as one front against Saddam's regime. Aras' second plausible explanation is that, as the PKK was a major factor in Turkey's involvement in Northern Iraq, the removal of Öcalan and reduction of the PKK threat would lead to the exclusion of Ankara from intra-Iraqi Kurdish affairs in the region.[669] Likewise, Davutoğlu argues that, by handing Öcalan to Turkey, the US ensured that the PKK would turn into a domestic political issue for Ankara, consequently leading to a limited Turkish interest in the affairs of Northern Iraq.[670] Ecevit, on the other hand, stated later that he never truly comprehended the reason behind the American decision to hand Öcalan to Turkey. Nevertheless, Washington's continued recognition of the PKK as a terrorist group and endorsement of Turkey's right to pursue the PKK in cross-border military operations was instrumental in Turkey's fight with the PKK during the 1990s. The US assistance in the capture of Öcalan was consistent with Washington's support for Ankara in its anti-

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[667] Hüseyin, interview.
[668] Demirel, interview.
[669] Aras, 'Threat as a Peace-Maker'.
[670] Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p.445.

terrorism campaign. However, it also appears that there was an implicit link between the Washington Agreement and the US strategy leading up to Öcalan's capture. The US first concluded KDP-PUK reconciliation in September 1998, then endorsed Turkey's coercive diplomacy against Syria in October, and then provided assistance for Öcalan's arrest in February 1999. This argument seems plausible since the PKK subsequently became a purely domestic issue for Ankara, which then gradually lost interest in active involvement in KDP-PUK relations and the affairs of Northern Iraq.[671] The curtailment of PKK terrorism and the downscaling of Northern Iraq to a secondary national security issue for Turkey meant the strain on Turkey-US relations was diminished, although the unintended economic consequences of the containment of Iraq continued.

Against this backdrop, it can be argued that Turkey's cooperative behaviour with the US on Iraq strategy represents offers a case study of Schweller's balance-of-interests proposition, as well as alliance management and the alliance security dilemma. Given Turkey's high level of dependence, and thus its asymmetrical dependence on its alliance relationship with the US, Ankara sought to preserve and maintain the benefits of, and advance its interests within, that alliance relationship. Ankara's influence remained insufficient to change the US strategy on Iraq while Washington could obtain Turkey's cooperation via Ankara's calculation that the potential political, economic, and military costs of non-cooperation outweighed the risks of cooperation. However, the requirement to support the US containment policy in the absence of identical interests and the need to deal with the implications of that strategy on its political, economic and security interests posed a significant dilemma for Ankara. At the same time, Turkey and the US wielded certain leverage over each other's policies and they pursued both common interests (in preserving the alliance against Iraq) and competitive interests (in maintaining the benefits of the alliance through intra-alliance bargaining).

Turkey's dilemma and the damage to its national interests notwithstanding, the continued Turkish support to US on Iraq strategy became an essential component in the US-Turkish strategic relationship. Nevertheless, the resultant frustration and resentment in Turkey would constitute the context of the major challenges to Turkey-US cooperation once the election of a new US administration brought about a paradigm shift in the US approach to Iraq, which is addressed in the next chapter.

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[671] Aras, 'Threat as a Peace-Maker'.

CHAPTER 6: THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND THE IRAQ WAR

When it came to power in January 2001, the Bush administration inherited the previous government's Iraq strategies of containment and regime change. Iraq did not emerge as a pressing foreign policy issue during the early days of the new administration. However, there was a concern that the containment strategy was crumbling largely due to the erosion of the sanctions regime.[672] The administration launched an 'Iraq policy review', which focused on tightening the sanctions regime.[673]

While the new administration agreed that Saddam posed a threat to US interests, it was divided on policy options of 'containment versus regime change' and whether regime change should be defined as a coup against Saddam or the removal of the entire Baathist government.[674] The State Department argued for fortifying the sanctions regime. In contrast, the 'neo-cons'—an influential group of senior officials in the administration,[675] mainly composed of civilians in the Department of Defense (DOD) and Vice President Richard Cheney's office—favoured a policy of regime change through direct assistance to and involvement with the opposition, thereby making Iraq a central focus in foreign policy.[676] Divisions over Iraq gradually became a central issue within the administration. Even in the early months, neo-cons in the administration repeatedly argued that Iraq posed a direct threat to US interests that had expanded since 1991. They claimed that Saddam had continued to obtain WMD and the means to deliver them. From their perspective, the containment strategy had been proved ineffective as the sanctions regime had nearly collapsed, the international coalition against Saddam was a shambles, and no UN inspections had taken place since 1998. The argument followed that, for the US to secure its own and its allies' interests, it had to consider removing Saddam from power and working with the INC for regime change.[677] As John Hannah, Cheney's national security advisor notes:

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[672] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.228; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, p.419; Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.174-186.

[673] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.228.

[674] Feith, *War and Decision*, p.52 and 199-205.

[675] These were the same people who had published an open letter on 26 January 1998 to President Clinton announcing that removing Saddam and his regime was the best long-term Iraq strategy. Project for the New American Century, 'An Open letter to President Clinton: Remove Saddam Hussein From Power', in Sifry and Cerf (eds.), *Iraq War Reader*, pp.199-201.

[676] Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.174-186.

[677] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, pp.422-423; Feith, *War and Decision*, p.52,193-198,200-210; Prepared Statement of Richard Perle, *US Policy toward Iraq, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Near*

> The neo-cons believed for a long time that, after 1991, the Iraqi problem should have been taken care of because, with Saddam in power, the US would almost certainly face another Iraq War at some point in the future, and on terms that would be much more costly and dangerous for the US.[678]

Secretary of State Colin Powell and his deputy Richard Armitage, on the other hand, promoted a new strategy of 'smart sanctions'; a tightened sanctions regime blocking Iraqi imports of military equipment while easing restrictions on non-military items and essential civilian needs.[679] Thus, by late-summer 2001, US Iraq policy remained largely inherited from the Clinton administration with a comprehensive review of policy options and military plans underway.[680]

The terrorist attacks on the US of 11 September 2001 transformed how Americans viewed the world. The Bush administration argued that the world 'changed dramatically' giving birth to a 'new reality' of terrorists potentially armed with WMD; a threat that became an overriding US security concern.[681] The attacks would henceforth determine US foreign and security policy priorities, redefining Bush's presidency. The 'War on Terror' became the new top priority for the administration, which adopted a new doctrine that any nation that harboured terrorists would be held responsible for their acts without distinction.[682] As Freedman has noted; 'foreign policy became national security.'[683]

The attacks also had serious implications on how the US perceived the threat from Saddam, and Iraq became a more 'grave and urgent' problem.[684] According to Bush, in the post-9/11 world, the US could no longer afford to tolerate or contain Saddam as 'a sworn enemy of the US.' He felt Saddam's Iraq combined all sorts of threats to US interests, and decided to confront the threat directly.[685] Despite divisions within the administration about when to act, the 11 September attacks raised Washington's level of

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Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, 107th Congress, 1 March 2001, 71–541 DTP (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2001).

[678] John Hannah, interviewed by author, Ankara, 24 July 2012.

[679] Feith, *War and Decision*, p. 205; *US Policy toward Iraq*; Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.174-186.

[680] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, pp.420-421; Feith, *War and Decision*, p.210.

[681] Statement of Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, *Next Steps in Iraq, Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations*, US Senate 107th Congress, 25-26 September 2002.

[682] Bush, *Decision Points,* p.134,137,151.

[683] Freedman, *Choice of Enemies*, p.379.

[684] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, p.149; Feith, *War and Decision*, p.xiii.

[685] Bush, *Decision Points,* pp.228-229.

concern about Iraq's pursuit of WMD and the possibility that he might share them with terrorists to indirectly attack the US. [686]

Just days after 9/11, Bush ordered the US intelligence community to inquire if Saddam had any connection with the attacks.[687] They found no credible proof of Iraq's complicity or assistance in the attacks.[688] Bush then decided to seek a diplomatic solution to the problems Saddam posed unless conclusive evidence linking him to the 11 September attacks emerged.[689] The neo-cons advised that, irrespective of whether Iraq was linked to the attack, the War on Terror had to include a 'determined effort to remove Saddam.'[690] However, the administration's foremost concern remained preventing another large-scale terrorist attack on US soil.[691] On 7 October 2001, the US launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) against al Qaeda camps and Taliban military installations in Afghanistan.[692] Afghanistan became the 'ultimate nation building mission' in the War on Terror,[693] and Bush deferred military action against Iraq.[694]

Turkey swiftly responded to the 11 September attacks with strong public statements of condemnation and extended sympathy and support to the US. The Turkish government obtained the TBMM's approval to send Turkish troops abroad and allow foreign troops to be deployed in Turkey in support of OEF. It permitted the use of İncirlik Air Base for OEF-related operations and for the transit of Taliban and al Qaeda detainees from Afghanistan to Guantanamo.[695]

With OEF underway, from late 2001 onwards, Iraq again became an urgent and key focus for Washington, which favoured changing Saddam's regime, if necessary by large-scale US military action. As the US devised its Iraq plans, Turkey's role in a possible use of force became a crucial consideration in Washington's overall strategy. This chapter addresses the evolution of US strategy on Iraq and the course of Turkey-

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[686] Ibid., pp.189-190; Haass, *War of Necessity*, p.192; Cheney, *In My Time*, pp.369-371.

[687] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, p.179; Feith, *War and Decision*, p.14.

[688] Report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

[689] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.191.

[690] Project for the New American Century, 'Open Letter to President Bush: Lead the World to Victory', in Sifry and Cerf (eds.), *The Iraq War Reader*, pp.222-224.

[691] Prepared Statement of Hon. Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, *Hearings Before the Committee on Armed Services US Senate* on the *US Policy on Iraq*, 107th Congress, 19,23,25 September 2002, 84-837 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2003); Feith, *War and Decision*, p.59.

[692] Cheney, *In My Time*, p.340.

[693] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.205.

[694] Feith, *War and Decision*, p.52.

[695] Cable 02Ankara8305 dated 15 November 2002, 'Turkey: 2002 Annual Terrorism Report', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/11/02ANKARA8305.html

US discussions from late 2001 to the decision of the TBMM on 1 March 2003 not to allow US troop deployment for war with Iraq, beginning a new phase in Turkey-US relations.

6.1. The US Administration's Focus on Iraq and Initial Turkey-US Contacts

From late November to the end of 2001, the US administration reviewed war plans for possible action against Iraq and had its first briefing on a military option on 28 December 2001. Simultaneously, it launched a dual-track policy of working with the UN for sanctions and inspections while also pursuing regime change, if necessary through military action.[696] For Bush, the success of diplomacy was contingent upon convincing Saddam of the seriousness of the US plan to remove his regime unless he complied with all UNSCRs. The 'coercive diplomacy' against Iraq had two parallel tracks; rallying support for a coalition of nations that would pressure Saddam to comply with his international obligations and developing a 'credible military option' if he continued to defy them.[697] Discussions then took place within the Bush administration over whether its Iraq policy should emphasise increasing international pressure to force Saddam to give up his WMD or using force to achieve regime change.[698] The then DOD Undersecretary Douglas J. Feith has noted that debate centred on whether regime change was the only means to disarm Iraq and deal with the threat that Saddam posed. By his account, the administration then began to weigh the case for military intervention. Yet, the administration remained divided about both a military course for regime change and the role of the Iraqi opposition, especially the INC and its leader Ahmad Chalabi, who was favoured by the neo-cons.[699]

The debate in the US about a possible military intervention against Iraq increased Turkey's wariness about the future course of US policy. In early January, Washington officially requested Ankara's permission to send a CIA team into Northern Iraq. According to US officials, Bush had made no decision on Iraq, and would engage in prior and full consultations with Turkey on Iraq-related issues. They said that the CIA mission was only a fact-finding visit to evaluate the political and military situation of the KDP and PUK, since the CIA had had no presence in Northern Iraq since 1996. The US would also extend financial support to Kurdish groups to facilitate intelligence activities.

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[696] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, pp.427-428; Cheney, *In My Time*, pp.369-371.
[697] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.230.
[698] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, p.171.
[699] Feith, *War and Decision*, pp.237-246.

To Ankara, it was clear that Iraq would soon become a central issue, and it was a key topic of Prime Minister Ecevit's visit to Washington on 14-15 January 2002. Turkey sought information on US intentions, primarily on Washington's assessment of the threat from Iraq and whether it would consider using force to achieve regime change. Ankara hoped for in-depth discussions about the implications and consequences of a military operation to oust Saddam. However, during Ecevit's discussions with Bush and other senior officials, the economic situation in Turkey and Afghanistan dominated and Iraq remained secondary.[700] Bush advised Ecevit that no decision had yet been made and assured him that the US would consult with Turkey 'every step of the way on Iraq.'[701] The Washington talks convinced Ecevit and his delegation that the Bush administration was resolved to address the Iraq issue, but left them relieved that a military option was not imminent.

In view of his impressions from the visit to Washington, and Bush's bellicose State of the Union address designating Iraq as part of the 'axis of evil', Ecevit sent a letter to Saddam on 1 February 2002. The letter warned the Iraqi leader of the dangers of not complying with the UNSCRs and called for immediate Iraqi agreement to unimpeded UN inspections:

> Iraq now faces a new threat … The elimination of this threat hinges upon swift steps from Iraq, particularly in removing all obstacles for UN weapons inspections. Had the situation not been so serious, I would not have felt compelled to recall your attention to this matter … Turkey will also suffer from the consequences of your non-cooperation with the UN inspections regime, and we are, therefore, very sensitive about this issue.[702]

In late January, Washington informed Ankara of its intention to hold a KDP-PUK mediation meeting with Turkey's participation in March. The message first reassured Turkey of US opposition to Kurdish independence. Second, the US would refrain from inviting the leadership of either party without properly consulting Turkey. Third, the purpose was to reach a final agreement to settle all outstanding issues, form a unified Parliament, and hold elections to form a single regional government. Alternatively, the meeting could be limited to a partial resolution of KDP-PUK disagreements, especially on income distribution, while postponing final agreement to a later stage. Ankara

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[700] Matthew Bryza, interviewed by author, Washington, DC, 8 December 2009.
[701] Cable 02Ankara8110 dated 8 November 2002, 'Turkey: Scenesetter for Codels Bereuter, Hastert', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/11/02ANKARA8110.html
[702] Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit's 1 February 2002 Letter to Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq.

resisted the US proposal, arguing that relative stability had been established in the region as both parties were reconciled to coexistence under two separate administrations. Turkey's reluctance reflected the recent deterioration of its relationship with the KDP. Ankara had developed a deep mistrust of the KDP, stemming from the latter's ambitions to control Kirkuk, its mistreatment of the Turkomen people, its quasi-independent activities, and its improved relationship with the PKK. For Ankara, a new Turkey-US attempt to resolve the KDP-PUK differences would send the wrong signal, especially to Barzani. Ankara proposed an initial Turkey-US bilateral meeting to agree on the parameters of the enlarged meeting with the KDP and PUK. Washington agreed, but the proposed process reflected divergent Turkey-US views on Northern Iraq and Ankara's scepticism of US intentions.

Ankara allowed the CIA team to pass into Northern Iraq through Turkey on the condition that a member of Turkish Special Forces (TSF) would accompany it during contacts in the region. The team visited the region on 12-26 February, and briefed Turkish officials upon conclusion of its mission. From the Turkish perspective, the CIA activities were evidence of Washington's inclination towards and preparations for a military option against Iraq. In fact, Bush signed a top-secret intelligence order for regime change on 16 February, ordering the CIA 'to support the US military in overthrowing Saddam Hussein.'[703]

As of late March, reports of division in Washington on US Iraq policy appeared more frequently, and Ankara focused on a comprehensive analysis of the situation. First, the US administration seemed determined to overthrow Saddam by force. US deliberations had concentrated on the political implications of a military option for regime change in the region rather than whether the nature and the urgency of threat from Iraq really necessitated the use of force. It thus appeared essentially a matter of timing. Second, US strategy involved a tactical move to amend the UN sanctions regime and compel Iraq to agree to unfettered UN-sponsored weapons inspections. However, Baghdad would likely oppose the return of UN inspectors or fail to comply fully, either course strengthening the US case for war. Third, Ankara believed it unlikely that smart sanctions or the return of UN inspectors would divert the US policy course from its steady march towards the military option.

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[703] Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2004), p.108.

The prospects of US military intervention against Iraq posed a complicated challenge for Turkey. While no war plans were submitted to Ankara, Turkish strategy had to take into account the possibility of a military option. It would be impossible to remain aloof from military action since the US would most likely request to use Turkish military bases and/or open a northern front through Turkey. The northern front would be essential for US troops to protect Northern Iraq from any retribution by Saddam. Turkey's non-cooperation on a northern front would be unlikely to discourage US strategic planning to overthrow Saddam, and no country, including Turkey, would have power of veto over the US action.

Turkish concerns about a US military operation for regime change in Iraq related to a range of factors. The first was Ankara's decade-long grievances over its significant losses as a result of the Gulf War. Second, the experiences of the 1990s had created a trust gap for Ankara regarding US policy on Iraq. The US approach in Northern Iraq, and the resultant status quo in the region, had practically invalidated the repeated US assurances that Iraq's territorial integrity should be maintained. Third, there was the risk that the US would make trade-offs to achieve its objectives at Turkey's expense.[704]

For Ankara, in advance of a US military operation for regime change, the priority was to learn the US vision for 'the day after.' The fundamental question was how, in the post-Saddam era, the US intended to ensure Iraq's territorial integrity and unity against the possibility of fragmentation and the Kurds's potential to opt for independence. Turkey had vital interests in preventing the disintegration of Iraq and constraining the Iraqi Kurds' quest for independence or 'its functional equivalent.'[705] Second, Ankara was sceptical of the US strategy of unifying the Iraqi opposition as an alternative for Iraq's future. A third and larger issue were the potential risks to the stability of the Middle East and regional balance of power. In a post-Saddam Iraq, the real problem would be how to control and manage the consequences of regime change. The potential for Iraq to emerge as a Shiite-controlled state aligned with Iran would provide Tehran further influence in the region, and the resulting implications on the regional balance of power would pose real challenges for both Turkey and the US. Fourth, a military operation would have severe repercussions on the Turkish economy, which had recently experienced one of its worst economic crises.[706]

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[704] Prepared Statement of Parris, in *Hearings to Examine*.
[705] Ibid.
[706] Ibid.

This analysis was the backbone of Turkish strategic calculations about a possible US military course in Iraq. Ankara's primary objective was to have careful, deliberate, substantive and in-depth discussions with Washington before subscribing to any new US policy. Ankara would seek concrete and specific assurances from the US administration that its primary concerns were factored into US policy on Iraq and that Turkey would be involved in the creation and execution of any plan for the post-Saddam era. Ankara also took a dim view of Bush's January commitment to consult with Turkey 'every step of the way' and the official US line about consultations on Iraq. Senior US officials assured Ankara that the president had no war plans on his desk, that the review of US Iraq policy was still underway, and that they would consult with Turkey once the president had made a decision. Ankara, however, sought to enter consultations in advance of, or at least simultaneous with, the US policy review to give Turkey a chance to shape the policy rather than simply to discuss how to execute it once it had been determined.

In March 2002, Vice President Cheney started a tour of twelve countries, reportedly for discussions on the next phase in the War on Terror, which for Washington also involved the threat posed by Saddam. Cheney exchanged information with US allies, saying that Bush had made no decision on military action against Iraq, but that the US would consult widely as the process unfolded. If necessary, the US would topple Saddam, and 'finish the job.'[707] During discussions with senior Turkish officials in Ankara, Cheney repeated that no decision on military action against Iraq had been made, but that the US would have to deal with the Iraqi problem at some point, and would properly consult Turkey along the way. President Ahmet Necdet Sezer stated that, if the diplomatic track proved unsuccessful and it came to military action, then the US would have to obtain international legitimacy through a UNSCR.[708] This emphasis on international legitimacy would become a fixture of future Turkey-US discussions on Iraq.

6.2. Turkey's Concerns over US Iraq Policy

To lay out the fundamentals of US Iraq policy, Assistant Secretary of State Ryan Crocker visited Northern Iraq on 1–4 April 2002. For Ankara, a bilateral Turkey-US understanding on how to revive the Ankara Process had been a precondition of involving Iraqi Kurdish groups in multilateral talks. Crocker, however, invited Barzani and Talabani to Washington. The US also declared its intention to have a public

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[707] Cheney, *In My Time,* pp.372-373.
[708] Tacan İldem, interviewed by author, Ankara, 22 July 2012.

conference to unify the opposition groups in a European venue in the summer. In preparation for the conference, the CIA intended to meet the leadership of the KDP and PUK separately—and secretly—in the US to discuss expectations of their role in the future of Iraq. The key messages to the Iraqi Kurdish leadership would be that the US fully supported maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity, that the Kurds should refrain from seeking independence, and that they had to integrate into a broad-based coalition and stop any support for terrorism. In addition, following the CIA team's visit to Northern Iraq in February, the CIA wanted to re-establish a covert presence in the region to increase its intelligence and counter-intelligence capabilities. The CIA would also give clandestine training to KDP and PUK paramilitary personnel in the US.

Washington requested Ankara's cooperation in facilitating the clandestine and secure transit of CIA personnel, who would regularly liaise with Turkish officials in Northern Iraq. Ankara, however, was wary of the intensifying contacts between the US and Iraqi Kurdish groups, and especially of CIA involvement. First, Ankara saw that the overall US strategy on Northern Iraq had evolved into full implementation of the Washington Agreement to unify the region's two separate administrations. The KDP and PUK appeared cautious of any US military operation without solid guarantees of the removal of Saddam. They benefited from the status quo and had established a quasi-independent Kurdish entity under the security umbrella of the NFZ and using 13 percent of the revenue from the Oil-for-Food Programme. Given their bitter history with Washington, including the US betrayal and Iraqi slaughter following the Algiers Agreement in 1975,[709] the Kurds looked for assurances of protection and a guarantee that regime change would not set their accomplishments back. The KDP and PUK recognised that the prospects for full independence remained low; they wanted a system that would guarantee Kurdish self-government without intervention from Baghdad, possibly integrating Kirkuk. For Iraqi Kurds, federalism and decentralisation, combining elements of geography and ethnicity, was the only solution for a post-Saddam Iraq, which Washington seemed to favour. Secondly, for Ankara, the prospects of a US military operation and the need for their cooperation would put the Iraqi Kurds in a powerful negotiating position with Washington.[710] The Kurds could attempt to seize Kirkuk in return for their cooperation. Thirdly, Ankara's relations with the KDP were strained due to Barzani's nationalist statements, the KDP's mistreatment of the

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[709] Douglas Little, 'The United States and the Kurds: A Cold War Story', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 12:4 (2010), pp.63-98.
[710] Prepared Statement of Parris, in *Hearings to Examine*.

Turkomen people, and its relationship with the PKK. Ankara believed the KDP's increased contacts with the US could encourage it to advance its anti-Turkish course. The major US concern was thus not the state of KDP-PUK relations, but the deteriorated relationship between the KDP and Turkey.

At the strategic level, US officials continually reiterated the public US line to their Turkish counterparts. This ran that the president had no plan on his desk and that Turkey's concerns would be considered while shaping US policy on Iraq. The officials further declared that the US remained committed to maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity, checking the aspirations of the Iraqi Kurds, and prioritising the security of the Turkomen people. The US assured Ankara that it would in no way permit a unilateral declaration of independence by the Iraqi Kurds in the event of a military operation. Washington also delivered a warning to the Iraqi Kurds that if the Turkish army entered and controlled Northern Iraq, the US would certainly stand by its strategic ally, Turkey. For Ankara, these assurances were unsatisfactory policy statements short on details of eventual US objectives in Iraq. Ankara felt frustrated by the absence of an open dialogue with the US on strategic issues related to Iraq's future while receiving 'piecemeal' requests. For Ankara, a thorough dialogue on where the overall Iraq strategy was headed was a prerequisite of acceding to US requests. Ankara felt the CIA presence in Northern Iraq would simply make it appear an accomplice of subversive US activities. Ankara again looked for clarification on US strategy. The primary issue was whether Washington was resolved to undertake military action. Despite the official line that the president had not decided on war plans, Bush had publicly stated that he had made up his mind that Saddam had to go.[711] The second issue was about the nature of broader strategic US thinking on the future of Iraq, as well as the degree of US engagement after a regime change. Consequently, in early May, Ankara's frustration at the absence of a detailed discussion was sufficient for it to reject Washington's request for CIA deployment in Northern Iraq through Turkey. Turkey thus signalled that it would approve no US request without being treated as a full strategic partner.

Turkey's trust gap on US strategy further expanded when reports leaked out of a secret meeting in April between the CIA, senior American officials, and Barzani and Talabani. The meeting had reportedly been about improving the military and intelligence capabilities of the Kurdish groups, and Barzani and Talabani had also insisted on

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[711] Bush made this statement during an interview with ITV Television Network in April 2002. See, Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, pp.119-120.

American guarantees of protection.[712] In addition, Ankara was concerned about the split within the Bush administration over Iraq's future.[713] There were signs that the State Department would deal with the INA, SCIRI, KDP and PUK as a 'Group of Four' representing the Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds respectively, but excluding the ITF, to the annoyance of Ankara. Moreover, the KDP had presented a draft constitution as a basis for negotiations within the opposition.

6.3. Road to Turkey-US Consultations on Iraq Policy

For Washington, Ankara's rejection of the transit of CIA teams to Northern Iraq was a reminder that the US had to assuage Turkey's concerns about the American strategy and particularly its uneasiness about US contacts with the KDP and PUK. Consequently, in mid-June, Washington briefed Ankara about CIA contacts with Kurdish groups to demonstrate US determination to have open dialogue and coordination with Turkey. In addition, KDP Deputy Chairman Nechirvan Barzani visited Ankara on 4–7 July to restore relations with Turkey. His key message was that the KDP's relationship with Turkey took precedence over that with the US. The second US move was to schedule a senior-level delegation to Ankara in July, co-chaired by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Grossman, by then undersecretary of state for political affairs, with a detailed briefing on US policy on Iraq.

In early July, Turkey's domestic politics plunged into a chaos following the dissolution of Ecevit's DSP, the leading partner in the three-party coalition government. Speculations about Ecevit's health led to the involvement of the Turkish military in redesigning the political system. Ecevit dismissed calls for his resignation, and many leading figures of his party and influential members of the cabinet resigned in response. Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), insisted that the three-party coalition government needed a renewed mandate. As a result, the government announced that early elections would be held on 3 November 2002.[714] Henceforth, the fragile three-party coalition remained a lame-duck government. According to Ecevit, the reasons for the collapse of his party were directly linked to US involvement. He claimed Washington had executed a plan to dispose of his government after he resisted and delayed US plans to invade Iraq. Washington, according to Ecevit,

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[712] Alan Sipress, 'Bush Officials, Iraqis Meet to Explore Hussein's Ouster', *Washington Post*, 13 May 2002.

[713] Report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

[714] Murat Yetkin, *Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Öyküsü* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2004), pp.51-64; Fikret Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*.

sought a new government more open to granting US requests.[715] However, the then NSC Europe and Eurasia Director Matthew Bryza rejects Ecevit's claim outright as 'completely ridiculous.'[716] Ziyal, by then Undersecretary of the MFA, observes that he saw no resistance from Ecevit and that the coalition government was already engaged in discussions with the US on Iraq and seemed inclined to meet all US requests.[717]

Finally, Cyprus remained an important topic in Turkey's relations with the US during this period. UN-sponsored negotiations between Turkish and Greek Cypriots were underway with a June target date for an agreement on the island. However, the negotiations were not proceeding with sufficient urgency to reach a comprehensive settlement before the EU's upcoming decision on enlargement at the Copenhagen Council on 12 December; a date with critical importance for both for Turkey's EU bid and Greek Cypriot accession to the EU.

6.4. First Detailed Turkey-US Consultations on Iraq, July 2002

The first in-depth Turkey-US political consultations on Iraq took place during Wolfowitz's visit to Ankara on 17 July 2002. His key message was that Saddam continued to pose a threat to the international community and defy UNSCRs on Iraq's disarmament. Secondly, if President Bush decided on a military option, the US would ensure the fall of Saddam's regime. Thirdly, Iraq would have a democratic future, in which the rights of all groups, including the Turkomen, would be respected. Fourth, the US would not permit the establishment of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. It would conclude no agreements with the Kurds on that matter, and it would also oppose any Kurdish move to integrate Kirkuk and Mosul into their region. US contacts with the KDP and PUK were therefore in conformity with the policy of maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity. Fifth, the military operation would be planned to prevent a possible refugee flow to Turkey. Sixth, Washington acknowledged and would seek compensation for the ramifications of a possible military action on Turkey's economy. The US would ensure that Turkey would become one of the main beneficiaries of regime change in Iraq. Lastly, the US would exchange information on Iraq's WMD capabilities and would deploy Patriot missile defence systems to protect Turkey from Iraq's missile attacks.[718] Wolfowitz neither presented a war plan nor made any requests

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[715] Fikret Bila, interviewed by author, Ankara, 26 July 2012,
[716] Bryza, interview.
[717] Ziyal, interviews (2010 and 2012).
[718] For the Confidential Memo of the 17 July 2002 Meeting between Ziyal and Wolfowitz, see Annex 1 in Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*, pp.252-254.

related to a possible US military action. He said that the US wanted to create a future Iraq with Turkey, whose support would accelerate and minimise the risks of military action and help ensure early success and regime collapse. However, Turkish cooperation would not affect the US decision to conduct military action. During the talks, senior Turkish officials underlined that all diplomatic means had to be exhausted before any military action, and that international legitimacy was imperative for use of force in Iraq. The decision by the Ecevit government to open up bilateral, dual-track consultations on political and military issues on Iraq was the most significant outcome of Wolfowitz's visit. Ankara cautioned Washington that the opening of negotiations did not imply its commitment to US policy on Iraq.[719]

Turkey then gave permission for the transit of the CIA's Northern Iraq Liaison Element (NILE) to the region. The NILE teams, accompanied by a TSF team, entered Northern Iraq on 21 July 2002. Ankara agreed to extend the stay of the NILE teams despite its uneasiness with some of their activities and tensions with the TSF teams on the ground. Ecevit remarked in a meeting with senior Turkish officials that the Bush administration was determined to wage war on Iraq, which would put the US, Turkey and the region into serious jeopardy.[720] A further trust gap on the US Iraq strategy emerged when the US decided to convene a meeting of the steering committee with six major Iraqi dissident groups on 9 August,[721] excluding the ITF despite Ankara's repeated calls for Turkomen representation. Following a tough Turkish reaction, Washington assured Ankara that the ITF would henceforth take part in all US-supported Iraqi opposition activities.[722]

By mid-summer, despite its still divergent views on whether to go to war,[723] the Bush administration began to formulate its goals and strategy on Iraq. The State Department, the NSC, and other agencies devised strategies that highlighted different versions of success and what was meant by regime change in Iraq. In the end, the administration approved a modified NSC plan of 14 August entitled 'Iraq: Goals, Objectives, Strategy' to ensure consistency within the US government.[724] In line with Bush's dual-track

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[719] Tahsin Burcuoğlu, interviewed by author, Paris, 1 September 2011. The NILE team departed from Northern Iraq on 25 August 2002.
[720] Burcuoğlu, interview.
[721] Feith, *War and Decision,* pp.280-281.
[722] Cable 02Ankara7980 dated 7 November 2002, 'Iraqi Opposition: Ensuring Turkomen Front Inclusion in Opposition Activities and USG Statements to Get Turkish Support for Regime Change', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/11/02ANKARA7980.html
[723] Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.222-223.
[724] Feith, *War and Decision*, pp.277-289; Woodward, *Plan of Attack,* pp.154-155.

approach, Central Command (CENTCOM), assured of basing rights from Gulf countries, presented an updated war plan to the president on 5 August. The use of Turkish territory and ensuring Turkey's consent to open up a northern front were essential to US military planning.[725]

As the US Iraq strategy evolved, Turkey devised an action plan formulated in a memorandum on 14 August titled 'The Scenarios about Iraq and Turkey's Position.'[726] The report argued that regional countries would have problems with the emergence of a democratic Iraq because of their domestic political structures. A large-scale and long-term US deployment in the region would potentially upset the domestic Saudi balance, while Syria, benefiting from the status quo in Iraq, would object to US intervention. More importantly, Iran would prefer a Shiite-led Iraq with a decentralised power structure as providing it more influence in the region. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict remained an important problem which created a negative perception of the US as Israel's partner. The paper proposed four possible scenarios for Iraq's future: The first was the continuation of a unitary, centralised Iraq—with or without Saddam—which would only be possible through a non-military settlement. This was also the most unlikely scenario since the US clearly sought regime change, and the Iraqi Kurds vehemently objected to any centralised system. The second and third scenarios were the emergence of a decentralised political structure short of federalism or federalism itself. In both scenarios, US military action would lead to a post-Saddam system with Kurdish groups controlling Northern Iraq, the Turkomen community becoming a minority in that region, and separate Sunni and Shiite structures in central and southern Iraq. Given Kurdish aspirations to incorporate Kirkuk, it was crucial to convey to Washington that Turkey had a vital interest in preventing such incorporation and in protecting the rights of the Turkomen. The fourth scenario was Iraq's disintegration, which could only occur if the Kurds played a decisive role in a US military effort, the Shiites decided to establish their own independent state, the US agreed with the unintended consequences of its military action, and Turkey did not intervene. The memorandum concluded that Turkey had clear redlines with regard to developments in Iraq: territorial dismemberment of Iraq; establishment of an independent Kurdish state; Kurdish control over Kirkuk; formation of decentralised structures where the Turkomen would become a minority group; and continued PKK presence in Northern Iraq.

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[725] Bush, *Decision Points,* pp.235-239.
[726] Confidential MFA Memo of 14 August 2002 titled 'The Scenarios about Iraq and Turkey's Position.' See Annex 3 in Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları.*

In terms of recommendations, the memo noted that Turkey should refrain from taking part in any military action that lacked international legitimacy, and had to take into account the position of the major Arab countries in the region. Turkey should assume no role in any military intervention without seeing and agreeing the full picture of US objectives in advance with Washington. It speculated that, in the event of military action, US plans would, at minimum, involve the use of Turkish territory, airspace, ports, military bases and facilities. The US would also potentially ask for Turkey's direct military involvement. For Turkey, there were two options: The first was to seek a non-military solution to the Iraqi question. Iraq remained unresponsive to Turkey's warnings and the US appeared committed to regime change even if it required military intervention. The second option was passive involvement in a military action by granting permission for US deployment through Turkey without troop contribution, provided that the use of force had international legitimacy. A US military action would have serious political, military, and economic repercussions on Turkey and on Iraq's territorial integrity and the regional balance of power. Turkey would also struggle to retain influence in Northern Iraq if the Kurdish groups had a larger role through assisting the US military effort. Additional challenges would be preventing Iranian and Syrian intervention in the region and refugee flow to Turkish borders. Ankara, therefore, had to enlarge the Turkish military presence in Northern Iraq in advance of US military action and deploy massive numbers of troops during the hostilities. This strategy would enable the destruction of the PKK presence in the region, direct contacts with the Turkomen people, and control of the corridor linking the KDP region with Syria. Lastly, the report advised the launch of direct contacts with Iraqi opposition groups.

6.5. The US Shares Military Plans with Turkey

Bilateral Turkey-US discussions on Iraq expanded with Ziyal's visit to Washington on 26–29 August 2002, on which the Bush administration placed special importance. Ecevit's governing coalition had nearly dissolved and the early elections in November would most likely produce a fundamental change in the Turkish political landscape. According to the polls, the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AK Party) expected a clear victory. Washington viewed Ziyal as a key actor in the decision-making process in the upcoming months in the event of a governmental change.[727] Consequently, Ziyal had an unprecedented reception in Washington,

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[727] Ziyal, interview (2012).

including teleconferences with Cheney and Rumsfeld, and visits with Powell and other senior US officials. He was given a detailed briefing on plans for military action—the first time the US shared its thinking on the Iraq War with Turkey. Nevertheless, US officials reiterated that the president had still made no decision on the military option. The plans involved the 'Northern Option', the use of Turkish territory, air space, and military installations for air and ground capabilities. According to US officials, the Northern Option was

> critical to accelerate the operation and minimise the risks, deter any Iraqi attack on Kurds and Turcoman, hold Iraqi forces in place, provide opportunities for Iraqi forces to switch sides, exploit early success and early regime collapse, assist in post-conflict operations, keep Kirkuk/Mosul under national control, [and] provide humanitarian assistance and refugee control. It is the key for controlling the post-Saddam Hussein situation, including territorial integrity and key infrastructure.[728]

The force concept for the Northern Option included land forces of up to one army corps, the use of combat and support aircraft, and special operation forces. Turkey's support for this plan would be crucial in generating international support for regime change, preparing the battlefield, and accelerating the operations. It would also be essential for fixing Iraqi forces in the north, controlling the post-Saddam situation, and reducing risk and vulnerability for major ethnic groups. According to US military officials, the ground forces would be composed of troops from members of the coalition and any Turkish contribution would be at Ankara's discretion. Ziyal was assured of the US administration's commitment to continue close and fully transparent consultations on Iraq and to address Turkish concerns as plans continued to unfold. The US would also ensure that military action would respect Turkey's redlines. Ziyal then advised his counterparts of the major contours of the Turkish position. First, it was not yet possible for Turkey to commit to support US plans for Iraq as it had to address three important issues in the coming months. Ankara's first priority was to get a definite and unconditional date at the EU's 12 December 2002 Copenhagen summit to begin EU accession negotiations. Its second priority was the on-going direct negotiations between Turkish and Greek Cypriots towards a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus, on the basis of which the EU was expected to make a crucial decision on the island's accession. Turkey was also facing these problems on the eve of parliamentary elections that were expected to introduce landmark changes in the Turkish political scene. For Ankara, Iraq

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[728] Ibid.

remained secondary to these pressing issues. Second, in terms of Iraq strategy, a military action would create long-lasting consequences for regional stability, and Ankara stressed the need to reflect on all possible implications. Third, according to the Turkish Constitution, any Turkish support for a military action that involved foreign troop deployments in Turkey, or the sending of Turkish troops abroad, had to be approved by the TBMM, for which international legitimacy in the form of a UNSCR would be required. Deployment of any foreign troops other than that of the US, including British and French, was inadmissible given the historical baggage, a reference to Turkish resentment about the British and French role in the region during World War I and its aftermath. More importantly, any multinational force presence in Turkey would potentially create the impression of being an occupation force. Fourth, granting permission for the US requests on the NILE was contingent upon reaching an agreement on the modalities of conduct between the teams and the TSK. Following the meetings in the White House, Rice asked Ziyal what would induce Turkey to support US military action in Iraq. Ziyal responded, 'international legitimacy and consensus, nothing less'; an answer that apparently upset Rice. Ziyal's visit to Washington removed any remaining doubts in Ankara about whether the US was on course for military action.[729]

In August, the US administration debated the need to seek a UNSCR. Following intense deliberations within the administration and a meeting with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, Bush decided to seek a UNSCR. The UN track became an essential component of coercive diplomacy in addition to building up US forces in the region.[730] Henceforth, the challenge for the US would be convincing the international community that the US would avoid war if Iraq fully complied with its disarmament obligations while simultaneously pursuing regime change.[731] Bush also applied to Congress for a mandate for use of force against Iraq.

In his speech before the UN General Assembly on 12 September, Bush laid out the US case against Saddam and described his regime as a 'grave and gathering danger.' Bush first articulated why the Iraqi regime could not be allowed to acquire WMD. Secondly, the speech suggested that the outcome of the UN process would in no way deter the US

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[729] Ziyal, interview (2012); Yetkin, *Tezkere*, pp.74-75.
[730] Bush, *Decision Points,* pp.235-239; Cheney, *In My Time*, p.391; Rice, *No Higher Honor*, pp.179-181; Colin Powell, *It Worked for Me: In Life and Leadership* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012), pp.209-211; Feith, *War and Decision*, p.298; Alastair Campbell and Richard Stott, *The Blair Years: Extracts from the Alastair Campbell Diaries* (London: Arrow Books, 2008), pp.634-636; Woodward, *Plan of Attack,* pp.177-178; Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.214-216.
[731] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, p.183; Feith, *War and Decision*, p.305.

from addressing the perceived threat from Saddam.[732] On the same day, Washington approached Ankara, stating that certain actions were to be carried out following Ziyal's visit. The first was a request for immediate Turkey-US military-to-military consultations in developing US military plans. Second, the US sought to secure agreement for the prompt deployment of two semi-permanent NILE teams to Sulaymaniyah and Salahaddin in Northern Iraq. The US proposal was to establish a local liaison between the NILE teams and Turkish officials through a Joint Operation Centre either in Silopi or in Northern Iraq. Turkey would be a full partner and involved in collecting intelligence in Northern Iraq. Third, the US requested immediate and discreet pre-deployment site visits to bases, military installations and airports in İncirlik, Diyarbakır, Afyon, Antalya, Mersin, İskenderun, Batman and Silopi. Fourth, the US requested Turkish consent for U-2 overflights. Lastly, the US reiterated its commitment to coordinating with Turkey any significant development regarding its policy towards Iraq.

Ankara had thus reached the point where it had to make a political decision on the US requests. On 16 September, Ziyal briefed Ecevit and underscored that agreement with these requests would signal willingness to cooperate with the US on Iraq strategy. Ankara had to remain noncommittal to US requests to defer the perception that Turkey would subscribe to the US strategy of military action. Second, the scope of cooperation had to be commensurate with the US response to Turkish concerns and demands. Third, international legitimacy was imperative for Turkish support for and contribution to US military action. Fourth, it was vital to get definite US assurances on Turkey's redlines. Fifth, US military action would create serious complications for the fragile Turkish economy and the economic reform programme underway. Therefore, the potential economic impact had to be examined, and a request made for early and substantial financial support from the US. In fact, there were signs that the Bush administration had already made preparations for an 'Assistance Strategy for Turkey'. Sixth, Turkey's priorities were the EU and Cyprus, and potential involvement with the US in Iraq could not take precedence over these issues. Turkey was faced with a dilemma as the Greek Cypriot part of the island might accede to the EU before a comprehensive settlement was reached, and before Turkey received a date for accession negotiations. This would have severe repercussions for the future of the island, and Turkey's relations with both Greece and the EU. Ankara, therefore, had to seek Washington's support for the EU

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[732] Feith, *War and Decision*, pp.302-309.

Copenhagen summit and Cyprus negotiations.[733] Ecevit's solution was to defer the decision on the US requests until after Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Şükrü Gürel's visit to Washington on 17-18 September. Washington increased pressure for a swift decision on the Ecevit Government, which decided to table the issue in the MGK meeting on 30 September.

Following KDP-PUK agreement on the revised version of the KDP's draft constitution,[734] the unified Kurdish Parliament met in full session in Erbil in early October; its first meeting in many years. It also approved the constitution, which set out a loose federal structure for Iraq's future, in which the Kurdish-controlled region would incorporate Kirkuk as its capital and retain the Peshmerga as its armed forces.[735] Ankara believed that the Kurdish move reflected their desire for an independent Kurdistan. Consequently, as Park observed:

> Ankara intensified its warnings to Washington that war could raise the risk of an enlarged, oil-rich, and more autonomous if not fully independent Kurdish self-governing entity emerging in Northern Iraqi territory—whether by design, default, or through opportunistic exploitation of chaos and uncertainty.[736]

Ankara noted the US policy to maintain Iraq's territorial integrity as well as statements of Powell and Rumsfeld that the US would not support an independent Kurdish state.[737] Yet, from Turkey's perspective, the message that Powell relayed to the Kurdish Parliament was another sign of the US accommodating the Kurdish drive for federalism in order to enlist their support for military action. Barzani's statements about defining KDP's relationship with the PKK as one of a mutual respect compounded Turkish wariness.

6.6. Turkey-US Military-to-Military Talks

On 7 October 2002, following the deliberations of the MGK,[738] Ankara responded to the US requests for cooperation on military planning on Iraq. The key condition was that exhausting all the political and diplomatic solutions to the Iraq question had to

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[733] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[734] Carol Migdalovitz, 'Iraq: The Turkish Factor', *CRS Report for Congress*, 31 October 2002.
[735] Chris Kutschera, 'Iraqi Kurds Agree to Agree – for Now', *The Middle East,* 329 (2002), pp.25-27; Chris Kutschera, 'Federalism First', *The Middle East,* 335 (2003), pp.20-21, cited in Bill Park, 'Iraq's Kurds and Turkey', *Parameters* (2004), pp.18-30.
[736] Park, 'Iraq's Kurds and Turkey', p.22
[737] Statement by Secretary of State Colin Powell in *Next Steps in Iraq*; Statement by Rumsfeld in *US Policy on Iraq*.
[738] The Confidential MFA Memo of 26 September 2002 titled, 'Preparation for Political Decision' became the basis of MGK deliberations. The memo is published as Annex 4 in Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*.

precede military action. Second, if military action became unavoidable, it had to have international legitimacy. Third, Turkey agreed to start military-to-military consultations to enable the US to soundly assess its options for military preparations, but emphasised that this did not represent commitment to cooperate in potential military action. Fourth, Turkey would allow U-2 flights over Turkish airspace subject to the presence of Turkish personnel at the ground liaison unit in Diyarbakır and intelligence sharing. Fifth, the NILE teams could transit into Northern Iraq through Turkey. However, the teams' modus operandi had to be agreed with the TGS prior to the commencement of any activities, Turkish participation was a precondition to ensure substantive intelligence sharing and information, and smooth cooperation would depend upon the ability of American officials to check the ambitions of the Kurdish groups. Sixth, to deflect any public attention from the proposed site surveys, Ankara would directly provide the US with information on Turkish bases, military installations and facilities. Seventh, the transfer of opposition elements from Northern Iraq to the US via Turkey for military training would only be allowed if Turkish personnel took full part in the screening and interview processes. Turkey's additional consent would be needed for those persons who were to be sent back to Northern Iraq.

The positive response to some of the American requests was a significant step forward in the Turkish position on possible US military action in Iraq. During previous discussions with the US, Ankara had questioned the virtue and urgency of a military course, and its primary concern had been to get US assurances about Turkey's redlines. The US position, however, had dealt in broad principles and fell short on details of the plans for Iraq's future. For Ankara, the new Turkey-US discussions had to focus particularly on 'the day after.' In any case, the TBMM's approval was necessary for US requests to expand ONW, use Turkish territory, military installations, and ports during a military action, and deploy US troops in Turkey. The scope of Turkish cooperation would depend upon agreement on political and military issues, including US plans for a post-Saddam Iraq, and especially the future status of Northern Iraq. Another crucial factor would be the US approach to compensation for Turkey's potential economic losses from military action. The Turkish finance ministry launched a study of possible economic impacts as a basis for economic talks to define US assistance to Turkey. However, any US assistance package would be subject to congressional approval, and Turkey had often had difficulty with Congress' Greek and Armenian lobbies. For Ankara, despite US assurances, a gap remained to any definite understanding with

Washington on Iraq. From the Turkish perspective, official US discourse notwithstanding, the US still did not perceive Turkey as a strategic partner on a par with Israel. The consultations on Iraq would be a test case for the future course of Turkey-US relations. Ankara would continue to emphasise the need to exhaust all diplomatic options and to highlight the likely repercussions of a military course. However, Ziyal again reminded the government that entering the talks would mean Turkey would be involved in the planning for the Iraq War, and reversing that course could prove impossible.[739]

In October, US momentum toward military action became evident. On 11 October, the Bush administration secured overwhelming congressional endorsement for use of force against Iraq.[740] Also in October, the US forwarded additional military planning requests to Turkey through its European Command (EUCOM). The government, and particularly TSK Chief of Staff General Özkök, were stunned by the scale of the requests to deploy 80,000 US and coalition troops, 250 combat and support aircraft in six airports and the use of eight others, and the use of three major ports to attack Iraq through Turkey.[741] The US military plans gave the Northern and Southern Option equal importance in a military attack. For Ankara, the US wanted Turkey to write it a blank cheque; inconceivable for any Turkish political party. Moreover, the US had yet to share its thinking and designs for a post-Saddam Iraq and regional order. Many scenarios had been debated in Washington, including the dismemberment of Iraq, the establishment of US military rule, grand regional schemes such as unifying Iraq with Jordan,[742] and the premise that any solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict depended on regime change in Iraq. A confidential MFA memo of 15 October, titled 'New US Requests', stated:

> These US requests are so momentous … The challenge we face is whether to grant permission for deployment of a number of foreign troops in our country unprecedented in Republican history. Agreement with US requests … will definitely provoke public reaction … Our economy will be swiftly affected … It is most likely that the preparations for such a deployment will need to start before our condition for international legitimacy in the form of a UNSC resolution is obtained.[743]

The memo conceded that the political, economic, and military consequences of such a deployment would be the same as actual military action, even if the US decided not to

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[739] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[740] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.240; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, pp.435-436.
[741] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[742] For the confidential MFA memo of 15 October 2002 titled 'New US Requests', see Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*, Annex 5.
[743] Ibid. Translated by author.

wage war at the last minute. The memo further underlined that Turkey would be on par with other regional countries that would host US forces that would occupy Iraq for a period of at least four to five years. This would create serious implications in Turkey, in the region, and beyond, provoking reactions from religious fundamentalists and some regional countries:

> The increased US presence in Turkey might evolve into a permanent one, integral to US designs to reshape the Middle East. Turkey's ability to master its distinctive policies and regional weight will be diminished. Our already complex set of regional relations will be further compounded … In the end, it will not be exclusively the scope of Turkish support for the US military operation that will define whether an independent Kurdish state is established in Northern Iraq. It is also highly likely that Turkey will face violence and terrorism from domestic and external groups, including the PKK, leftist, and religiously motivated terrorist organisations. Turkey cannot shoulder the regional moral responsibility or financial burden of this intervention … As a result of US military action, an Iraqi state will emerge with a collapsed central authority, human capacity and economic structure, which will require restructuring efforts under conditions of severe instability.[744]

As a result, the memo recommended that the government seek clarification from the US on a range of issues: whether the US requests reflected a definite decision in favour of military action or were just part of operational planning for the Northern Option; whether the US had sought a similar level of support from other regional countries and what responses it had received; the nature of US designs for Iraq and the region; the precise timeframe for military action and its aftermath; guarantees for the rights and the security of the Turkomen; the role of the Iraqi Kurds; the nature of US assurances for any Kurdish fait accompli; and how any Iraqi retaliation against Turkey would be prevented. Additional policy parameters were that Turkey would not grant permission for the forces of the other members of the coalition, including those from Britain and Australia, to enter Northern Iraq through Turkish territory. Turkey would deploy forces in the region, and would expect US cooperation and assistance to that end. More importantly, Ankara had to have a say in the shaping and rebuilding of a post-Saddam Iraq. US compensation to ease the burden on the Turkish economy was essential, and the Bush administration had to assure Ankara of congressional approval for the package. Lastly, NATO involvement had to be secured to guarantee Turkey's national security.[745]

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[744] Ibid.
[745] Ibid.

After Turkish agreement on their modus operandi, the NILE teams entered Northern Iraq on 17 October, and the first group of Iraqi opposition members to be trained in the US transited through Turkey on 21 October 2002. Simultaneously, General Ralston of SACEUR and General Franks of CENTCOM visited Ankara to lobby for Turkish support. Bush called Sezer on 23 October and told him that the US was committed to working on the Iraqi question with Turkey as its strategic partner, and took Turkish concerns fully into account. Bush said he had taken no decision on military action, but looked for full Turkish support if it came down to the use of force. His administration was working on a substantial financial package to lessen the economic impact of a military action on Turkey provided that it fully cooperated with the US. The continuation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme by the new government following the 3 November elections would be crucial for congressional approval of the assistance package. Bush also encouraged progress in the Cyprus talks and described his efforts to lobby EU leaders over a date for accession talks at the Copenhagen summit. In response, Sezer once more emphasised the need for international legitimacy and consensus if Turkey were to support US military action.[746] In separate discussions with the Turkish Ambassador in Washington, US officials requested that Turkey make its decision on the northern front by the NATO summit in Prague on 20 November. This was the first of many deadlines that the US administration would set in future discussions with Turkey.[747]

Washington believed General Özkök would be equally as important as Ziyal with regard to the decision-making process in Turkey on whether to support US military action in Iraq. Özkök had replaced General Kıvrıkoğlu in August 2002 and seemed to Washington to be 'more democratically oriented and Atlanticist than his predecessors.'[748] Given the expectation of an AK Party victory in the upcoming elections and the sour relationship of the TGS with the forefathers of the movement from which it had evolved, Özkök was seen as a key figure who would have great impact on the new Turkish political scene. General Myers invited Özkök to visit Washington on 4–9 November 2003, and his visit began the first day after the landslide AK Party victory in the 3 November election. Like Ziyal, Özkök had an extraordinary reception in Washington. He had discussions with a wide-range of senior US officials,

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[746] İldem, interview.
[747] Author's personal account.
[748] Cable 03Ankara2521 dated 18 April 2003, 'The Turkish General Staff: A Fractious and Sullen Political Coalition', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/04/03ANKARA2521.html

including Rice, Powell, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, General Myers, and a teleconference with Cheney, receiving detailed briefings on US war plans. Özkök advised US officials of the importance of respecting Turkey's redlines, the need for international legitimacy, and the necessity of substantial compensation for economic losses,[749] which he viewed as key elements of any case to the Turkish public that cooperation with the US would be less harmful to Turkey's interests than non-cooperation.[750] Özkök stated that the TSK accepted the AK Party's victory and would work with the new government.[751] He also said that it was up to the new government to have the final say on whether Turkey would support and contribute to US military action, reaffirming his position in previous meetings with his American counterparts in Ankara in October.[752]

6.7. Entry of the AK Party onto the Turkish Political Scene, November 2002

The AK Party, established in 2001 under the charismatic leadership of former İstanbul mayor Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, entered Turkish politics calling for clean politics, a liberal economic policy, development, prosperity, and traditional values; messages which resonated deeply with the Turkish public. Its progressive and liberal messages on democracy, human rights, and the EU attracted broad-based support from a large swathe of the Turkish population. However, the Turkish establishment, mainly the TSK, remained wary of Erdoğan, and had already planned to isolate him from political life. In 1998, while still mayor of İstanbul, Erdoğan had been convicted under Article 312 of the Penal Code for 'inciting religious hatred' for reciting a poem in a 1997 speech. As part of attempts to undermine his political status, the High Court of Appeals confirmed Erdoğan's conviction in an exceptionally expeditious manner. This conviction had led the Supreme Election Board to decide that Erdoğan was ineligible to stand in the 1999 elections according to the constitution, which banned anyone convicted under Article 312.

It was in this context that the AK Party won a landslide victory securing 362 seats in the TBMM with 34.3 percent of the vote. The Republican Peoples' Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP) finished second with 19.4 percent of the votes and 177 parliamentary seats. All three parties in the previous coalition failed to cross the 10 percent electoral

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[749] Author's personal account.

[750] Cable 03Ankara404 dated 16 January 2003, 'Scenesetter for General Richard Myers, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Visit to Turkey: Domestic and Regional Political Issues, Economic Situation, and Security Assistance', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA404.html

[751] Cable 02Ankara8165, Can AK Party Remove Obstacles to Party Leader Erdogan's Becoming P.M. http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/11/02ANKARA8165.html.

[752] Yetkin, *Tezkere,* p.85.

threshold. Consequently, only the AK Party and the CHP were represented in the TBMM and Turkey had its first majority government since 1991.[753] Robins observed that the AK Party's 'formation of a single party government promised greater coherence in office.'[754] Nevertheless, the AK Party faced several immediate political challenges. First, Erdoğan was ineligible to become prime minister, and the restoration of his political rights required a constitutional amendment. Therefore, another leading AK Party figure had to be presented to President Sezer for the premiership, an anomaly that made the political process more complicated. The second challenge was managing relations with Sezer, who remained suspicious of the AK Party agenda. The third challenge was the cool relationship with the Turkish military, which seemed to have accepted the AK Party's victory, though unwillingly. Abdullah Gül, the second architect of the AK Party, received Sezer's mandate to form the government on 16 November. Two days later, under Gül's premiership, the AK Party government assumed office, marking the beginning of an era of transformative change in Turkish politics.

The new government also inherited enormous domestic political and economic challenges. Its chief political objective was to amend the constitution to restore Erdoğan's political rights, clearing the way for him to be elected to the TBMM and eventually become prime minister. However, this required overcoming resistance from Sezer and establishment circles, as well as securing CHP support in the two-thirds parliamentary majority required to change the constitution. The most pressing challenge, though, was the economic situation, fragile despite putative signs of upturn that autumn. The new government inherited an economic reform programme backed by the IMF which it had to abide by and urgently adapt to avoid another financial crisis.[755] The AK Party had developed an urgent action plan to address the economic challenges even before the election. When it assumed office, the economy was underperforming to such an extent that IMF officials sounded out the possibility of default—a suggestion that Minister of State in Charge of Economy Ali Babacan rejected outright.[756] The AK

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[753] For a detailed analysis of the AK Party's election victory, see Soli Özel, 'After the Tsunami,' *Journal of Democracy*, 14:2 (2003), pp.80-94.

[754] Philip Robins, 'The 2005 Brismes Lecture, A Double Gravity State: Turkish Foreign Policy Reconsidered', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 33:2 (2006), p.208

[755] Cable 02Ankara8111 dated 8 November 2002, 'Problems Meeting the 2002 Primary Surplus Target', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/11/02ANKARA8111.html; Cable 02Ankara8064 dated 8 November 2002, 'The New Government's Economic Challenges, and Some Benchmarks', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/11/02ANKARA8064.html

[756] Ali Babacan, interviewed by author, Ankara, 20 July 2012.

Party designed a detailed and staggered 'Emergency Action Plan', which Erdoğan announced on 16 November, as Gül received the mandate to form a new government.[757]

Finally, the three most urgent foreign policy challenges facing the government were the UN-sponsored negotiations for a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus, the question of whether Turkey could secure a date for starting accession negotiations at the Copenhagen summit, and the Iraq file. The AK Party had declared its top foreign policy priority to be Turkey's accession to the EU. The leadership also viewed EU membership as a vehicle to reform democracy by removing the tutelage of the military over the political system.[758] The EU Council in Copenhagen on 12–13 December would be crucial in Turkey's drive to get a date to begin accession talks. For some observers, the AK Party's pro-EU stance and commitment to the democratic reform process helped it gain political legitimacy 'in the eyes of Turkey's secular state tradition' as well as the support of 'Turkey's pragmatic middle class, business community, and liberal intellectuals.'[759] In fact, the Ecevit government had already introduced three extensive reforms packages in February, March and August to meet the political conditions for EU membership under the Copenhagen Criteria. The European Commission's praise of Turkey's reforms notwithstanding, it still remained for the EU to set a 'conditional date' pending further reforms.[760] On 23 November, a week after assuming power, the AK Party government introduced a substantial democratic reform package to fully align Turkey with the EU's political criteria and enhance the prospects of a date for accession talks.[761] At the same time, Erdoğan started a tour of fourteen European capitals, as promised during the election campaign.[762]

The second pressing foreign policy priority for the new government was the Cyprus settlement talks, which were continuing under UN auspices. In fact, the AK Party found on its desk UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's comprehensive settlement proposal— the 'Annan Plan'—as submitted to the Turkish and Greek Cypriots on 11 November. However, the prospects for a lasting settlement on the island before the Copenhagen summit, also expected to decide on the accession of 'Cyprus' to the EU, remained low. Turkey faced the dilemma that the EU could make a decision to admit Cyprus before a

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[757] President Abdullah Gül, interviewed by author, Ankara, 12 July 2012.
[758] Çelik, interview.
[759] Philip Gordon and Ömer Taşpınar, 'Turkey on the Brink', *Washington Quarterly*, 29:3 (2006), pp.57-70.
[760] Cable 02Ankara8110 dated 8 November 2002, 'Turkey: Scenesetter for Codels Bereuter, Hastert, Issa, Smith', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/11/02ANKARA8110.html
[761] Gül, interview.
[762] Çelik, interview.

settlement was reached and before Turkey had received a date for accession talks. Despite Ankara's efforts to delink the settlement of the Cyprus question and Turkey's EU accession, it was evident that it remained a tacit condition. The challenge for the government was to reach a settlement and thereby neutralise the Cyprus question 'as an obstacle to Turkey's EU process.'[763] Erdoğan and the AK Party government adopted a bold and pragmatic approach underlining the need for compromise from both sides for a settlement. The government accepted the draft Annan Plan as a basis for solution, and Gül convinced an unwilling Rauf Denktaş, president of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, to start negotiating the draft plan.[764]

In addition to the EU and Cyprus, the Iraq crisis posed a real challenge for the AK Party leadership. The government had to figure out the dynamics of the Iraqi situation from scratch. They had no detailed information on the Turkey-US discussions to date or the scope of US requests.[765] Meanwhile, on 8 November 2002, the unanimously adopted UNSCR 1441 found Iraq in further 'material breach' of its international obligations and offered it 'a final opportunity to comply or face serious consequences.'[766] Iraq was given until 7 December to 'make a full and accurate declaration of the state of its weapons program and to receive international inspectors to begin the process of verifying the declaration's claims.'[767] As the international road to war opened, the AK Party struggled to reconcile its conflicting feelings on the issue, as Ömer Çelik, a leading figure in the party, explained:

> As a political cadre that witnessed Halabja massacre, we were opposed
> to the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein and believed that he had to be
> removed from power. Yet, we also fundamentally disagreed with the US
> plans for a military operation to achieve regime change since we
> believed that foreign intervention would have severe repercussions in
> Iraq and the region. Iraq, therefore, was one of the most debated topics
> during the formulation of the AK Party's programme.[768]

On 19 November 2002, only a day before a scheduled meeting between Bush and Sezer in Prague, Washington submitted the US thinking on Iraq and an additional list of requests for the Northern Option to the new AK Party government. At the meeting, American officials explained the dynamics of US position. First, President Bush clearly and forcefully laid out his concerns about the Iraqi regime. Iraq's refusal to

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[763] Robins, 'Double Gravity State', pp.199-211.
[764] Gül, interview.
[765] Ibid.
[766] http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/2002.shtml
[767] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, p.185.
[768] Çelik, interview.

unconditionally comply with the UNSCRs constituted a unique and growing threat to international peace and security. The US had worked diligently in the UNSC to resolve the matter peacefully with a view to offering Iraq a final opportunity to disarm peacefully through cooperation with UN weapons inspectors. Second, the US administration was resolved to lead a coalition to disarm Iraq if it continued to defy UN weapons inspections and hold onto its WMD. The best chance of successfully and peacefully resolving the problem now was a credible threat of use of force and a collective display of commitment to act militarily to disarm Iraq. The US, therefore, had made plans for potential military action to increase pressure on Iraq, and was seeking the broadest international support. Third, Washington forwarded an extensive list of requests to Turkey to assist or participate in the US military effort, most of which required TBMM approval, including: permission for the US and other coalition partners to have full access, basing and overflight rights; the deployment of air, ground and special operations forces, including 275 aircraft at military installations in İncirlik, Afyon, Diyarbakır, Batman and Çorlu; the establishment of a forward operating base at Silopi and theatre logistics at Mardin, with approximately 40,000 US personnel on Turkish territory, and an equivalent number of troops to be deployed in Northern Iraq through Turkey; seaport debarkation operations at Mersin, İskenderun and Taşucu to enhance force protection for US and coalition personnel and equipment at bases within Turkey; and the availability of equipment and supplies.[769] Moreover, the US demanded permission for coordination cells to be established and to commence work no later than 1 December on preparatory tasks at the approved sites, stating that it would provide substantial funds for construction at these bases. In addition, the US wanted to discuss the types of Turkish transportation and air combat capabilities that could be factored into planning for military operations. Washington viewed Turkish support as critical to the success of the military effort, which would both increase the chances of success by diplomatic means, and ensure a successful military outcome should the use of force become necessary. It also proposed a joint visit by Wolfowitz and Grossman in December for further consultations on Iraq.

During the Bush-Sezer meeting in Prague the following day, the major topic of discussion was Iraq, though Cyprus and Turkey's bid for EU membership also figured. Bush said that his administration looked for a swift Turkish response to the US requests for the Northern Option. He claimed the US was working on a substantial economic

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[769] Deniz Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası*, pp.28-29.

assistance package, and would ensure the preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity. Sezer responded that Turkey shared US concerns about Iraq's WMD, but again insisted on the need for military action to have international legitimacy and consensus, and said that Turkey would follow the progress of weapons inspections in line with UNSCR 1441. According to Sezer, if Iraq did not comply with its obligations, there had to be a second UNSCR explicitly mandating the use of force in order for Turkey to support the US requests, an obligation he said was dictated by the Turkish constitution. Bush was apparently irritated by Sezer's categorical approach to international legitimacy.[770]

6.8. Expansion of Turkey-US Talks: Wolfowitz and Grossman in Ankara, 3 December 2002

Washington steadily mounted pressure for a Turkish decision in late November. During contacts with their Turkish counterparts, senior US officials insisted that time was running out for the Northern Option. The new AK Party government began to receive interagency briefings on Iraq and US requests. Secretary Rumsfeld also ordered a selective deployment of US troops to the Gulf region.[771]

Wolfowitz and Grossman visited Ankara on 3 December for detailed talks on Turkey's potential contribution to preparations for possible military action against Iraq and to convince Ankara of the 'urgency for clarity' on that matter.[772] They met with Gül and the interagency group chaired by Ziyal, as well as Deputy Chief of Defence General Yaşar Büyükanıt. At the strategic level, Wolfowitz reiterated the US line that 'President Bush had made no decision on whether to go to war with Iraq.' He claimed the US sought to resolve the question peacefully, but that Iraq was to be disarmed of its WMD 'voluntarily if possible, but, if necessary, by force.' Washington believed that only a show of force stood a chance of getting a positive result, and hence military preparations underpinned its diplomatic efforts. Wolfowitz said Washington primarily required Turkey's involvement in planning and preparation for the use of force against Iraq. The US sought Turkey's decision on the Northern Option by 6 December, while fully acknowledging that the AK Party government had only recently arrived in power. The specific US requests were:

> Resumption of military-to-military planning talks; permission to conduct
> site surveys and begin site preparation of specified Turkish military

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[770] İldem, interview.

[771] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, pp.439-440.

[772] Cable 02Ankara9058 dated 20 December 2002, 'Wolfowitz and Grossman Press Turks for Support on Iraq', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/12/02ANKARA9058.html

facilities; Turkish participation in the development of the Northern Option; acceptance of proposed troop lists; removal of constraints on ONW; approval of overflight rights; and, support, if necessary, against terrorists in Northern Iraq.[773]

It was most urgent that Turkey agree to resume planning talks on when to initiate site surveys, to be followed by site preparations. It was critical for the US in deciding whether to have a 'Northern and Southern Option' or switching war plans to solely pursue a Southern Option without Turkey's assistance. According to Wolfowitz, Turkey's agreement to a Northern Option would make the war 'less risky, shorter in duration, and less economically damaging to Turkey's and the region's economies.' It would limit the prospects of a power vacuum in Northern Iraq and would make post-Saddam Iraq much easier to manage. Turkey's non-cooperation, in contrast, could make the war 'longer, costlier and less certain about events in Northern Iraq.' On its strategic vision for Iraq's future in the aftermath of regime change, Wolfowitz assured Turkish officials that the US totally concurred with Turkey's redlines. The US administration also recognised Turkey's concerns about the economic repercussions of military action and 'President Bush was prepared to provide a substantial assistance package for Turkey.' If Turkey fully cooperated with US requests for the Northern Option, the package would include:

> $2 billion/yr. for two years of some mix of FMF [Foreign Military Financing] and ESF [Economic Support Fund], the latter being synchronised with World Bank and IMF disbursements; $1 billion in oil to be donated by other nations; and, up to $500 million in local procurement by US Defense forces.[774]

In the event war was avoided, the package would consist of $250 million in assistance in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year to be augmented by another $105 million. Additional benefits would be 'closer cooperation on missile defence, greater access to excess defence articles, and improvements to facilities at İncirlik and Konya military bases.'[775]

Nevertheless, there remained five areas where Turkey-US approaches diverged.[776] First, the imposition of a deadline for a final decision on the US requests was a fundamental problem for the new AK Party government, which had not had the chance to examine the Iraq issue as closely as the situation warranted. The government was in no position

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[773] Ibid.
[774] Ibid.
[775] Ibid.
[776] Ziyal, interview (2012).

to make an informed decision and needed more time to consider US requests for Turkey's possible contribution to the Northern Option, which also required parliamentary approval. However, resumption of military-to-military talks and permission to conduct site surveys of Turkish military facilities would be possible. The second was the US insistence on Turkey's commitment before it had itself made a final decision on whether to wage war. Third, there was no convergence in Turkish and US foreign policy priorities since the Gül government faced more pressing issues than Iraq. For Turkey, the top priority was to obtain a date for accession negotiations at the EU Copenhagen Summit on 12 December 2002. An associated priority was the comprehensive settlement negotiations on Cyprus. The results of these two tracks would have a defining impact on Turkey's ability to cooperate with the US on Iraq. From the US perspective, Bush would continue to exert every effort to endorse an EU decision to grant Turkey a date for accession negotiations at the Copenhagen Summit. A clear 'commitment to the UN Secretary General's plan as a basis for settlement' and ensuing progress in the Cypriot negotiations would also have a positive impact on getting a date from the EU for starting accession negotiations.[777]

The fourth area of divergence was the proposed economic assistance package, which fell short of meeting Turkey's expectations. Any US military action against Iraq would potentially damage the fragile Turkish economy and the on-going economic reform programme. Ankara believed the financial package on offer was no match for the risks and costs that Turkey would incur in the event of war. The Turkish counter proposal was the creation of a $20 billion stand-by arrangement for early and substantial US financial support to Turkey, bypassing IMF conditionality. This would allow Turkey to use the funds only to the degree of need and lessen the negative impacts on the economy. However, the US rebuffed Turkish criticism of the economic package and claimed the proposed numbers were too large for Washington. It was agreed to launch a third track of negotiations on economic and financial matters in addition to the political and military talks underway.

The fifth area of divergence arose over site preparations. The US would spend $200–300 million for site preparations, involving up to 6,000 engineers and logisticians. While these teams could not actually start work before mid-January, the US did want to know in advance 'that Turkey would indeed allow US and possibly other coalition

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[777] Ibid.

troops to come to Turkey.'[778] However, Turkish officials insisted that even the site preparation teams involved deployment of foreign troops in Turkey and so required authorisation from the TBMM, whose decision the Turkish government could not pre-empt. Ziyal emphasised that Turkey's agreement to work on contingency planning with the US should not be misinterpreted since he doubted any Turkish government or politician could secure TBMM permission for the deployment of tens of thousands of foreign troops. He also said that Ankara would not permit deployment of any foreign troops other than that of US, including British, given the historical baggage.[779] The Turkish side also raised the question of US activities related to the Iraqi opposition, underscoring that they 'had become too powerful, to the exclusion of the Turcoman.'[780] For Ankara, it was profoundly important that the Turkomen, the third largest component of the Iraqi population, take part in the core group. Lastly, in the event of war, Turkey was prepared to deploy forces to Northern Iraq and sought US assistance to assure the Iraqi Kurdish groups that the troops would not be there 'as an occupying force.'[781]

The concrete results of the Wolfowitz-Grossman mission to Ankara were the decision to resume military-to-military discussions, Turkish permission for site surveys, and the launch of economic talks. However, the US still had no proper understanding of internal Turkish political dynamics and foreign policy priorities. This could only widen the mutual expectations gap over cooperation on military action against Iraq. President Sezer's insistence on a second UNSCR also diverged from the US position, which was that a new resolution was unnecessary and action could be undertaken by a 'coalition of the willing.' It also appeared that, while the US had not publicly opposed the deployment of Turkish troops into Northern Iraq, it preferred a single US operational command of all forces on the ground.

6.9. Erdoğan in Washington, 10 December 2002

By early December, Ankara was convinced that that the US was resolved to use force to change the Iraqi regime and that a political settlement to the Iraq question was most unlikely. Also, it understood that Turkey's decision on the US requests for full and complete support would not be decisive in changing the Bush administration's determination to wage war. From the US perspective, its commitments to respect

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[778] Cable 02Ankara9058, 20 December 2002, 'Wolfowitz and Grossman'.
[779] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[780] Cable 02Ankara9058, 20 December 2002, 'Wolfowitz and Grossman'
[781] Ibid.

Turkey's redlines and a compensation package to lessen the economic impact of war meant it was now time for Ankara to stop delaying its decision.

It was in this context that Bush invited Erdoğan to visit Washington. Washington viewed Erdoğan as the central figure in Turkish politics, holding the key to whether and to what extent the new AK Party government would cooperate with the US on Iraq. For Washington, Erdoğan's visit would be an excellent opportunity and would yield many dividends for US interests. Firstly, treating Erdoğan as if he were already the head of government would demonstrate that the US respected the outcome of the election and supported the AK Party's resolve for democratisation. Secondly, it would help establish US influence with the AK Party leadership. Finally, convincing Erdoğan would be crucial for Turkey 'to make the right decisions on Iraq, Cyprus, and domestic political and economic reform.' It would also demonstrate to the EU that the US strongly favoured a decision at the Copenhagen summit to set a date for Turkish accession talks.[782]

On 10 December, Erdoğan received a warm reception from Bush, Cheney, Powell and other senior US officials. The vital issue for the Bush administration was to convince Erdoğan to support US military action, and Iraq was the main topic during the meetings. Bush spoke highly of Erdoğan's leadership and of the AK Party's electoral victory.[783] He acknowledged that Erdoğan had a difficult decision to make on whether and to what extent Turkey would support the US preparations for a possible military operation. The US, however, sought Turkey's full and complete cooperation, and looked for a prompt response since time was short. In return, the administration would ensure Turkey's redlines were observed, and do whatever it would take to secure congressional approval for the assistance package. The essence of the message was that 'the lack of a yes from Turkey on Iraq would, for all intents and purposes, be a no.'[784] Erdoğan presented his 'vision of Turkey as a prosperous, democratic, Muslim model.'[785] He underscored that he shared US concerns about Saddam, opposed all oppressive regimes in principle, and favoured democratic change in Iraq. Erdoğan said that rallying the support of leading

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[782] Cable 02Ankara8852 dated 4 December 2003, 'Scenesetter for Dec. 9-10 Washington Visit of AK Party Chairman R. Tayyip Erdoğan', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/12/02ANKARA8852.html

[783] John B. Taylor, *Global Financial Warriors: The Untold Story of International Finance in the Post-9/11 World* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007), p.177.

[784] Cable 02Ankara8996 dated 17 December 2002, 'Defmin Hopes for Decision on Iraq within Days', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2002/12/02ANKARA8996.html

[785] Cable 03Ankara476 dated 21 January 2003, 'Ambassador's Meeting with AK Party Leader Erdogan: Concerns about Got Economic Policy and Reforms', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA476.html

Arab nations for the US strategy was essential since Turkey did not want to be the only Muslim nation endorsing US action. He also argued that the best possible outcome would be a solution similar to Nawaz Sharif's forced departure from Pakistan.[786]

Erdoğan was also briefed in the Pentagon on the US analysis of the Iraqi threat, US military plans, and the composition of the coalition of the willing. However, Erdoğan remained unconvinced of the US case against Saddam since it was short on concrete evidence and current information about Iraq's WMD stocks and capacity. Erdoğan was also disturbed by Bush's restrained response to his question about how the US would defend Turkey if it was attacked by Saddam.[787] During the talks, Erdoğan repeated that the final decision was a parliamentary prerogative. He remained totally noncommittal on extending Turkish support for US military action.[788]

6.10. Turkey-US Divergence on Financial Assistance and Turkish Deployment in Northern Iraq

The next morning, on 11 December, the Turkey-US talks on the US economic assistance package began in Washington, DC. The Turkish delegation headed by Babacan met with a US delegation led by John B. Taylor, undersecretary of the US Treasury. Taylor presented the US proposal for the financial package, explaining that it had flexibility in the form of trade-offs between grants and loans, and that $1 billion in grants would be equivalent to an $8 billion loan. The Turkish delegation, in return, made a presentation showing different scenarios to explain the cost of the war to the Turkish economy. Under the most optimistic scenario, the estimated cost would be $92.2 billion over a five-year period (2002-2007), whereas the pessimistic scenario envisaged a cost of $138.1 billion. The short-term cost for 2003 was expected to be $21.6 billion. The US economics team challenged the figures by arguing that there was a huge bid-ask gap and that it was hard to objectively estimate the impact of the war on the Turkish economy.[789] The widely differing Turkish and US estimates of Turkey's potential economic losses led to the US assistance package falling far short of Turkey's expectations.

The second point of division in Turkey-US negotiations was the Turkish plans for a military deployment to Northern Iraq during the military action. US officials argued that

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[786] Çelik, interview.
[787] Viewing cable 03Ankara626 dated 24 January 2003, 'Iraq: Follow-Up Readout on AK Party Chairman Erdogan's Views', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA626.html
[788] Çelik, interview; Cüneyt Zapsu, interviewed by author, Ankara, 22 July 2012.
[789] Taylor, *Global Financial Warriors,* pp.179-180.

they were worried about a unilateral Turkish intervention and preferred Turkish troops to act with coalition forces under a single US command. US thinking was expressed in a confidential State Department memo of 26 September 2002:

> Turkey could move to occupy Northern Iraq to ensure that Kurdish nationalism there does not spill over and fuel irredentist tendencies amongst its own large Kurdish minority. Iran, attacked by Baghdad in the past, will likely seek to expand its influence in Iraq through contacts with Iraqi Shiite Muslim and through longstanding relationships with Kurdish parties in the North. Iran could also unilaterally seek to rectify some of its outstanding territorial disputes with Iraq, particularly if Turkey moved into Northern Iraq … We should begin bilateral consultations to lay down clear redlines to prevent such meddling.[790]

On 12-13 December, the EU summit in Copenhagen decided to review Turkey's accession process in December 2004 without setting a date to start accession negotiations and to admit 'Cyprus' to the EU before a settlement was reached on the island. This fell short of Turkey's expectations of a clear date for accession talks. The accession of the Greek part of the island to the EU before a settlement further complicated the negotiations between Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

By mid-December, Ankara had weighed its options in supporting the US. On 16 December, the Gül government gave permission for US site surveys at the requested military installations, airports, and ports. However, Turkey advised that consent for site surveys was for planning purposes and did not represent commitment to support military action, which remained subject to due political and legal process. Nevertheless, the US insisted on 15 January 2003 as a start date for site preparations, expected to cost $250-300 million.

In the meantime, US requests continued to flow to Turkey. The CIA asked for permission for overland transport from Ankara to provide military aid to the KDP, PUK, and Turkomen opposition groups in Northern Iraq that would be used to assist US efforts against Saddam. Transport through Turkey was the most efficient and secure means of delivering this material to Northern Iraq. The proposal was that the Turkish side would take physical possession during the transfer through Turkey to verify the quantity and quality of the material. Furthermore, the CIA sought to send 600 Special Forces troops into Northern Iraq and increase the number of NILE teams. Ankara,

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[790] The released confidential State Department Information Memo of 26 September 2002 on Reconstruction in Iraq, as published in appendix in Haass, *War of Necessity*, pp.279-293.

however, became intensely concerned about US intentions to improve the military capability of the Peshmerga forces and the increased CIA contacts with the Iraqi Kurds.

By late December, President Bush had concluded that 'Iraq was in material breach of UN Resolution 1441,'[791] and the US pressure on Ankara began to mount almost daily. US Ambassador to Turkey Robert Pearson relayed Bush's messages in a meeting with Gül on 21 December. He said that, for the US, it was now a 'defining moment' for the future course of the Turkey-US strategic relationship.[792] The US administration was determined to make its plans for Iraq with Turkey, and accordingly expected an immediate response on the proposed arrival of 150 US military personnel to start conducting site surveys on 24 December and the stationing of 3,500 US military personnel to start site preparations from 7 January 2003. In addition, the US requested a temporary deployment of approximately 40,000 US ground combat forces in Turkey and transit rights for another 40,000 troops through Turkish territory, an increase in the numbers of combat and support aircraft stationed at military airbases and installations, and the deployment of US Special Forces. Washington also expected a response on whether Turkish troops would participate in coalition military action in Northern Iraq, and on the CIA request for the transfer of military assistance to Iraqi Kurdish groups through Turkey. The US acknowledged that the Turkish government required parliamentary approval in a very short timeframe, but expected a Turkish response by 24 December. Gül responded that, while he appreciated the pressure on the US to finalise its military plans, his government had to take into account Turkish public opinion, 95 percent of which opposed war with Iraq:

> Turkey might be part of the Middle East, yet our position totally differs from the rest of the region. We are a democratic nation. There is even opposition to war within my own party. We ought not to rush the democratic process and be mistaken by wrong calculations which will lead us to a detrimental situation, the outcome of which will eventually undermine our relations.[793]

6.11. Turkey's Action Plan on Iraq Strategy, December 2002

In late December, a political process over whether and to what extent to meet US requests for full and complete support for military action began to take shape. At the strategic level, it was a matter of striking a balance between contradictory objectives. The Turkish public and the political parties, including a large portion of the AK Party,

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[791] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, p.442.
[792] Gül, interview.
[793] Ibid.

overwhelmingly opposed the war. Ankara recognised the need for Iraq's disarmament, yet did not share Washington's perception of the urgency of the threat from Saddam's regime. For many in Turkey, the course to war was less an attempt to ensure Iraq's disarmament that the initial step in a grand strategy to redesign the Middle East by the neo-cons in the US administration. The most pressing questions were whether Turkey could do anything to prevent a war, such as convincing Iraq to fully comply with its disarmament obligations, or whether such compliance would indeed persuade the US to alter its course. Turkey had no power of veto over US military action, irrespective of whether it extended full, limited or no support. Should the US opt for military action, Turkey would see serious negative consequences on its economy, on the regional balance of power and stability, and in Northern Iraq, potentially including a large refugee inflow, increased PKK activities, a Kurdish drive for independence, or a Kurdish takeover of Kirkuk. In the event of military hostilities, cooperation with the US seemed the only way to address these negative consequences, and make Turkey a player on the ground, participating in shaping Iraq's future. Furthermore, Ankara recognised that Washington viewed the accommodation of US requests as a test of the strategic relationship. The dilemma was how to maintain the strategic partnership with the US when 95 percent of the public opposed war.[794] The real challenge would centre on convincing the TBMM and the public of the necessity of supporting the US war on Iraq. This predicament, as Park has observed, was a 'duality in Turkish policy.'[795] However, cooperation with the US still appeared to be the least costly and most rational choice under the circumstances.

The challenge of making a political decision on the conditions and scope of Turkey's cooperation was discussed at the December MGK meeting. First, it was a constitutional requirement that, for Turkey to support US military action, that action had to have international legitimacy established by a second UNSCR explicitly mandating the use of force. Second, the government had to follow the democratic process, taking into account the views of the TBMM, the AK Party, the CHP, and public opinion. Third, as the war would have significant consequences for the regional balance of power, Gül would visit regional countries for consultations on Iraq. Fourth, the government would seek, at an appropriate time, TBMM approval for a course of action that would not deprive the US, its strategic ally, of the Northern Option, but would also limit Turkish support subject to

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[794] Ahmet Davutoğlu, interviewed by author, Ankara, 19 January 2013; Ziyal, interviews (2010 and 2012); Deniz Bölükbaşı, interviewed by author, Ankara, 13 August 2012; Burcuoğlu, interview.
[795] Park, *Turkey's Kurdish Complex*, p.24.

certain conditions. Ankara would grant permission for US air operations and the deployment of its Special Forces, based on a bilateral agreement between military authorities that would define the magnitude and duration. Turkey could not allow 40,000 US ground troops to be deployed inside its borders or another 40,000 troops to transit the country, and these figures were too large to accommodate even if a second UNSCR were secured. Fifth, Turkey would give immediate permission for the commencement of site surveys by signing a modus operandi, but site preparations required TBMM approval.[796] Sixth, Turkey planned on a separate deployment of Turkish troops to Northern Iraq and would not join the coalition forces. These troops would remain a non-combatant force in Iraq, and would closely coordinate with coalition forces. Their mission would be to secure Turkey's national interests, including fighting the PKK and controlling the situation in Northern Iraq. The transfer of military supplies to Iraqi Kurdish groups would only be possible if managed by Turkish military forces in the region. The Turkomen community also had to be a full partner in all opposition activities. Seventh, consultations with the US had to concentrate on the shape of post-war Iraq. Eighth, all measures had to be put in place to provide for Turkey's security against possible Iraqi WMD retaliation. To this end, consultations under Article 4 of the NATO Treaty had to start immediately. For Ankara, it was extremely difficult to cope with a crisis over Cyprus while totally pre-occupied with the Iraq problem. Ankara, therefore, would seek US support for certain revisions to the Annan Plan. A settlement of the Cypriot issue by 28 February to ensure its incorporation into the Cyprus EU accession treaty was of paramount importance. Lastly, the US assistance package had to mitigate the implications for the Turkish economy to the largest extent possible, the attachment of any conditions was unacceptable, and economic talks had to run concurrently with military and political negotiations. The military talks, to also cover the deployment of Turkish troops to Northern Iraq, could start in a week.[797]

Taylor and Grossman visited Ankara on 27–28 December to finalise the economic assistance package and receive an indication of the Turkish government's decision in order to meet the timelines for war preparations. They emphasised that the US recognised the complexities of the matter given the overwhelming disapproval for war among the Turkish public and opposition party. The US respected the democratic process, but expected a prompt decision from the government while appreciating the

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[796] Bölükbaşı, 1 *Mart Vakası*, p.29.
[797] Ziyal, interviews (2010 and 2012).

Turkish commitment to the Northern Option.[798] Taylor explained the US assistance package, which totalled $4 billion, consisting of $2 billion from the ESF and $2 billion in FMF. The FMF was strictly for military purposes, and the whole package was tied to Turkey's full and complete cooperation. Taylor also underlined the need for the Turkish government to implement the existing IMF-backed economic reform programme. He explained that the $2 billion ESF grant could be converted into $20 billion in loans. The whole package would be amended if Turkey did not allow the deployment of US ground troops. However, Babacan declared the US offer unacceptable.[799]

The US did not believe that a second UNSCR was necessary. Taylor and Grossman asked for Turkish flexibility on international legitimacy, arguing that the same concept also applied to the existing plans for increased Turkish military presence and NILE team activities in Northern Iraq. The US would support NATO consultations to ensure Turkish security, and would work on improving relations between Ankara and the KDP. Furthermore, the US was ready to discuss post-Saddam Iraq with Turkey, and concurred with the Turkish proposal for parallel military, political, and economic talks.[800] The US believed Turkey viewed the American assistance package as an instrument to cover economic and budget shortfalls.[801] The Turkish side responded that Ankara would agree to the Northern Option if the TBMM approved, but could not allow the deployment of 80,000 troops. Ankara would agree to site surveys and looked favourably on site preparations.[802] Ultimately, Taylor and Grossman returned to Washington without obtaining any commitment from Ankara.

6.12. Application of Turkish Strategy on Iraq

From January 2003 onwards, the Turkish government applied a multi-layered strategic framework to address the Iraq problem devised by the then Ambassador and Chief Adviser to Gül, Ahmet Davutoğlu.[803] The first was to try to prevent war by forcing Saddam to comply in full with all UNSCRs, including his disarmament obligations. Gül believed it was worth a last ditch attempt to warn Saddam. He sent Kürşat Tüzmen, the state minister in charge of trade, as his special envoy to personally deliver his letter to the Iraqi leader. The 9 January 2003 letter read:

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[798] Cable 03Ankara33 dated 2 January 2003, 'U/S Taylor's Discussions with GOT on Economic Reform and Economic Outlook, December 27-28', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA33.html
[799] Taylor, *Global Financial Warriors*, pp.184-186.
[800] Cable 03Ankara33, 2 January 2003, 'U/S Taylor's Discussions'.
[801] Cable 03Ankara160 dated 7 January 2003, 'Turkey's Economy: Growing Concerns over AK Economic Policies', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA160.html
[802] Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası*, p.29.
[803] Davutoğlu, interview.

> I feel strongly compelled to bring certain issues to your attention as an obligation of our friendship with Iraq. Iraq is on the brink of a war on an unprecedented scale that could take an enormous humanitarian and material toll.… We, and the nations of our region, are saddened and concerned by this possibility. A war on such scale is destined to achieve results… As a statesman who often makes reference to the history of the region, you must be cognizant of the mass-scale devastation that our region has been plunged into as a result of intervention by other parties. Today, it is all the more imperative that Iraq abide by its international obligations to prevent such catastrophe… It is absolutely not the time to set preconditions, apply short-term tactics or resort to rhetoric.[804]

However, still relying on rhetoric, Saddam claimed that Turkey had to work to convince the US to change its policy rather than advising Iraq to comply with the UNSCRs.

The second dimension of the strategy was to put together a regional platform. The initiative was called 'peace diplomacy', and was intended to create a regional dynamic for a peaceful solution to the Iraq problem. It had multiple purposes. The US moved in the direction of a military action with a coalition of the willing, which in essence was a US-UK led effort. Some regional countries opposed war, and it seemed that the US paid no due attention to the regional dynamics, raising the prospect of regional polarisation. Turkey did not want to be isolated for supporting the US and preferred regional coordination.[805] Domestically, the initiative would demonstrate to the Turkish public, and especially to the AK Party's electoral base, that all measures to prevent a war had been exhausted. Based on this conclusion, Gül made a tour of five regional countries—Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia—all of which had real concerns about the post-Saddam period. Following the tour, Turkey hosted a peace conference of the foreign ministers of Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iran on 23 January 2003. The conference produced a statement urging Saddam to abide by all his obligations under the UNSCRs.[806]

The third component of the strategy related to Turkey's security concerns stemming from the risks associated with possible Turkish support for US military action. Ankara initiated Article 4 discussions in NATO in mid-January to prepare an allied response to any Iraqi contingency. NATO discussions were also a way to obtain international legitimacy and ease the Turkish public's anxiety over a military operation in Iraq.[807]

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[804] Gül, interview.
[805] Davutoğlu, interview.
[806] Gül, interview.
[807] Cable 03Ankara467 dated 17 January 2003, 'Scenesetter for Codel Warner', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA467.html; Cable 03Ankara331 dated 14 January 2003,

The fourth part of the strategy was to intensify talks with other Iraqi opposition groups in addition to the KDP, PUK and ITF. The purpose was to restore relations with the KDP, as relations with the PUK were on a relatively good footing. For Ankara, the main challenge remained controlling Kurdish aspirations for independence. On 7–9 January, Ankara hosted Barzani, who had meetings with Gül and other senior MFA, military and intelligence officials.[808] Barzani later reported to the US Embassy in Ankara that Turkish officials had demonstrated a significant positive change of tone, setting the stage 'for the KDP to once again be Turkey's good friend and ally.'[809] Barzani, in return, had underlined the KDP's intention to reciprocate by acknowledging Turkey's importance in Northern Iraq. He also assured Turkish officials that 'the KDP did not seek an independent Kurdish entity' and would maintain good relations with the Turkomen community. Nevertheless, Barzani told the Americans he was adamantly opposed to any Turkish military intervention in Iraq 'even it was part of a US-led coalition.' He argued that Turkey would exploit the prevention of a refugee flow as a pretext for intervention, while the main objective would be to suppress Kurdish aspirations. Turkish military presence could also lead to a potential Iranian intervention in the region. In short, the KDP would consider and treat Turkish forces 'as invaders whether alone or part of a coalition' since they would not leave, viewing this as a 'matter of survival.' In the event of Turkish troop deployment, the KDP would withdraw its cooperation with the US, which had 'repeatedly assured him that there would be no Turkish forces entering Northern Iraq.'[810]

The last aspect of the Turkish strategy was to expand the political, military, and economic talks with the US on a non-committal basis to establish the principles and modalities for Turkey's support of US military action.

6.13. Intensified Turkey-US Talks, January–March 2003

On 3 January, Turkey and the US resumed military-to-military talks to address US requests short of ground force deployment or transit through Turkey and Turkish plans for power projection into Northern Iraq. An agreement on a modus operandi for the site surveys was reached a week later, and the teams commenced their operations. On 13

'NATO/Iraq: Turkey Patient for Now but Looking For NATO Cover',
http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA331.html
[808] Ziyal, interview.
[809] Cable 03Ankara278 dated 1 October 2002, 'Northern Iraq: Masoud Barzani in Ankara: Despite Improvement in ''Tone'' of Relations W/GOT, Turkish Military Presence in N. Iraq Unacceptable', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA278.html
[810] Ibid.

January, military talks continued with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Richard Myers' visit to Ankara. EUCOM submitted a draft MOU to the TGS setting out the principles that would govern US activities related to a possible operation in Iraq.[811] For Ankara, the conclusion of a military MOU was a precondition for seeking a parliamentary mandate for site preparations and the inflow of US forces. During the initial military talks, two key problems emerged; the US government's opposition to Turkish plans for unilateral deployment in Northern Iraq and Turkey's rejection of US ground troop deployment in and transit through Turkey. From Washington's perspective, the unilateral deployment of Turkish troops could pose substantial difficulties for US military operations. Khalilzad, then presidential special envoy on Iraq, notes that the US objected to a unilateral Turkish deployment in Northern Iraq since it would create potential for a Turkish-Kurdish conflict—'a war within a war'—a situation that the US sought to avoid. According to Khalilzad, Washington simply did not want to be distracted by a Turkish deployment.[812] This line of thinking also held that any Turkish intervention could potentially provoke interventions from Iran and Syria, as well as clashes between Turkish and Peshmerga forces. Washington wanted to discuss ways to take joint action that would secure the interests of both countries in the region. The overriding US message was that Turkish forces had to stay out of the region, not act unilaterally, and recognise only one command and one fight. In fact, the draft US MOU on military cooperation on Iraq did not even make reference to the possible Turkish deployment to Northern Iraq.[813] For the Iraqi Kurds, the objective of the Turkish deployment was to control Northern Iraq and to disarm the Peshmerga.[814] Khalilzad points out that, during his deliberations with the KDP and PUK, both parties 'vehemently opposed' Turkish intervention, even jointly with the US, out of fear that the Turks sought to dismantle their achievements towards self-rule over the last decade.[815] It was apparent to Ankara that the US opposition to unilateral military action was an extension of the KDP's categorical rejection of Turkish deployment in Northern Iraq.[816] As a result, Washington began to explore alternative ways to address and meet the Turkish concerns behind Ankara's plans for deployment in Northern Iraq.[817]

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[811] Cable 03Ankara548 dated 23 January 2002, 'Scenesetter for SACEUR General Jones's January 24 Visit to Ankara', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA548.html
[812] Zalmay Khalilzad, interviewed by author, Ankara, 24 July 2012.
[813] Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası*, pp.24-26.
[814] Hüseyin, interview.
[815] Khalilzad, interview (2012).
[816] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[817] Khalilzad, interview (2012).

On the other hand, Washington insisted that ground operation capability and the deployment of ground forces were vital for the Northern Option. Ankara moderated its approach and agreed to discuss preplanning for land force operations with two US brigades.[818] However, Turkey would not allow access to the forces of any coalition country other than the US, including the UK, which had also applied for overflight permission.[819] Turkey also submitted a long list of questions regarding Phase 4 operations, mainly on the administration of Iraq in the post-Saddam era.[820] As Bryza notes, the questions were intended 'to say "we are warning you about what will happen after the military phase if you just go to war without clear objectives."' [821]

At the end of January, at Blair's insistence, Bush grudgingly agreed to seek another UNSCR explicitly mandating the use of force despite objections from his national security team.[822] However, it seemed that the French and the Russians would block such a resolution.[823] Ankara now decided to take a sequential approach to the US requests: First, in early February, the government would submit a motion to the TBMM to allow military site preparations at certain Turkish ports and military installations. If successful, the government would then, in the second half of February, seek authorisation for a military operation, to include the deployment of a logistical force of 37,742 US troops in Turkey and the transit of 23,784 combat troops through the country.[824] Nevertheless, this approach would be contingent upon reaching written agreements with the US on related military, political and economic issues. Turkey would also continue its simultaneous diplomatic efforts for a peaceful outcome to the crisis.

However, divergences between Turkey and the US over Iraq strategy became more evident during this period. Washington expressed fervent opposition to a unilateral Turkish deployment in Northern Iraq. Turkey became increasingly concerned over CIA plans to arm the KDP and PUK. The CIA had revised its previous proposal to send arms to Northern Iraq via Turkish territory, avoiding Turkish control of weapons, and

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[818] Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası*, pp.24-26.
[819] Cable 03Ankara404 dated 16 January 2003, 'Scenesetter for General Richard Myers', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA404.html
[820] Cable 03Ankara649 dated, 'Iraq: TGS Requests Answers to Phase IV Questions by Jan 30 Mil Talks', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA649.html
[821] Bryza, interview.
[822] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.244; Cheney, *In My Time,* pp.397-398; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, p.442; Rice, *No Higher Honor*, p.201.
[823] Sean D. Murphy, 'Contemporary Practice of the United States Relating to International Law: Use of Military Force to Disarm Iraq', *The American Journal of International Law*, 97:2 (2003), pp.419-432.
[824] Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası*, pp.31-32.

requested overflight permission for the action. It seemed that the CIA wanted to avoid any Turkish control, which Ankara strongly opposed, denying any need to arm the Iraqi Kurdish groups. As one Turkish official explained, 'We simply do not want another Afghanistan in our neighbourhood, nor do we want these arms turned against us at some point.'[825] For the government, the arming of Kurdish groups would create an additional political risk in obtaining a TBMM mandate to support US military action. The third area of discord was about Turkey's seeking authorisation from the TBMM in the third week of February. The Turkish timeline did not match US planning since vessels carrying the US Fourth Infantry Division and loaded with weapons would reach the eastern Mediterranean by 10 February. US officials claimed that 'a late Turkish decision was no decision'[826] since Bush had to decide whether to redirect the vessels to the Gulf region for the Southern Option by 12 February. The Turkish response was that, given tremendous public opposition and strong resistance to war within the ruling AK Party itself, there had to be a transparent and democratic process in making the case for Turkish support. This required time, and any rushing of the TBMM debate would most likely result in failure.[827]

As Turkey-US talks progressed, Gül made a last diplomatic effort for a peaceful outcome, asking Saddam to secretly send one of his most trusted officials to Ankara. Hussein sent Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan as his special envoy.[828] Gül observes:

> The Iraqis lost touch with basic realities and were ignorant of the seriousness of the situation to such an extent that Ramadan asked for the Iraqi Minister of Trade to accompany him. I said, if he definitely wants company, he ought to have the foreign minister with him.[829]

Ramadan was flown to Ankara in an MİT plane, to keep the meeting confidential. In the meeting on 3 February, Gül openly warned Ramadan:

> You are on the verge of a point of no return. War is knocking on your door. You have to take all steps to come clean once and for all to comply with your disarmament obligations. Otherwise, war is inevitable. There will be no one to help you once the war starts, and rest assured that your army will not fight.[830]

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[825] Author's personal account.
[826] Ibid.
[827] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[828] Yetkin, *Tezkere*, pp.143-144.
[829] Gül, interview.
[830] Ibid.

Ramadan's non-conciliatory response showed that the Iraqi regime still did not understand its predicament. At that point, it seemed that the only non-military options left were either exile for Saddam or his dignified surrender.[831]

Despite disagreements with the US on some fundamental issues, Gül mandated the start of military, political and economic negotiations with a view to finalising the MOUs so the government could seek parliamentary authorisation. Gül informed Cheney in early February that, provided all three documents were agreed, the government could seek the TBMM's approval on 18 February.[832] The military talks began in early February, chaired by Ambassadors Deniz Bölükbaşı and Marisa Lino, and Turkey submitted a revised MOU to the US. On 5 February, Turkey-US political talks began with the objective of reaching an agreement on a vision for Iraq's future. From the Turkish perspective, agreement on a legally binding political MOU was crucial to ensure that Turkey's redlines were respected and to safeguard Ankara's role in shaping post-conflict Iraq. The agreement could then be used to help Gül 'convince AK Party, Turkish public and the Parliament that the political concerns of Turkey have been met, and the US and Turkey were in agreement.'[833] Washington, however, rejected any legally binding document that had to go through a ratification process in the Senate. It was also politically risky since it could lead to the misperception that Turkey and US had agreed on a blueprint for Iraq and the region reminiscent of the Sykes-Picot Agreement.[834] The US preference was for a non-binding joint statement of 'political principles.' Khalilzad's discussions in Ankara were the first occasion that the Bush administration shared with Turkey its detailed vision for Iraq's future. It was decided to continue political talks on the proposed Turkish text.[835]

On 5 February, Secretary Powell made the US case against Iraq at the UNSC.[836] On 6 February, the Turkish government obtained authorisation from the TBMM to allow US site preparations at some Turkish ports and military installations, but only after a difficult and heated debate during which the CHP strongly opposed the government's motion. Also, despite Gül's and Erdoğan's considerable efforts at persuasion, fifty eight AK Party members voted against or abstained. Ankara advised Washington that the

[831] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[832] Yetkin, *Tezkere*, p.147.
[833] Cable 03Ankara947 dated 6 February 2003, 'Iraq and Turkey: ''Agreed Minute'' vs. Joint Statement on Political Future of Iraq', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/02/03ANKARA947.html
[834] Cable 03Ankara945 dated 6 February 2003, 'Iraq: Turkish MFA U/S Ziyal and Ambassador Pearson Discuss Military and Political MOU's', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/02/03ANKARA945.html
[835] Cable 03Ankara947, 6 February 2003, 'Iraq and Turkey: ''Agreed Minute'' vs. Joint Statement'
[836] For Powell's account of the briefing, see Powell, *It Worked for Me*, pp.217-224.

result showed that any TBMM vote on the Northern Option would risk failure unless a convincing case was made to representatives. It seemed that the only credible bargaining chip would be the US economic support package and the finalisation of the MOUs on military and political matters.

Following intense negotiations, the 'MOU on the Establishment and Implementation of Basic Policy, Principles, Procedures and to Determine the Status of the Site Preparation Personnel of the US in Turkey for the Purposes of Site Preparation Activities' was signed in Ankara on 8 February. The first group of US officers arrived three days later. The remaining issue was to begin the negotiations on a military MOU to address the governance and status of the presence and activities of US forces to be provisionally deployed in Turkey, as well as the legal and military framework for the conduct of military operations. Turkey submitted its draft MOU to the US on 12 February, with a view to reaching an agreement by 17 February. The progress on the military MOU also depended on reaching an understanding in political and economic talks.[837]

The economic talks on the US assistance package were held on 6-7 February headed by Taylor and Babacan. One area of disagreement was the conditionality that the US sought to attach to the package, which had not figured in the talks in December. Any economic assistance was now predicated upon Turkey's completion of its Fourth Review under the IMF Stand-By Arrangement, expected to take place in April 2003, and upon its full cooperation with the US military operation in Iraq. The Turkish team rejected the concept of conditionality, arguing that the US package was to offset the damage of the Iraq War on the Turkish economy. However, the real problem was the magnitude of the package, which fell far short of meeting Turkish expectations that it be instrumental in persuading the public and the TBMM.[838] Turkish officials underlined that Ankara preferred to sign an economic MOU to complement the military and political MOUs. The Turkish expectation for the economic package was $92 billion, a figure that the US delegation found unacceptable. In addition, Babacan opposed having full and complete military cooperation 'either as a condition precedent or a cause for termination' of the assistance package.[839]

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[837] Cable 03Ankara1005 dated 8 February 2003, 'Iraq: USG-GOT Sign MOU on Site Preparations', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/02/03ANKARA1005.html
[838] Cable 03Ankara819 dated 31 January 2003, 'Minister Babacan Tells Ambassador Economic Reform Conditionality Is ''Clear''', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/01/03ANKARA819.html
[839] Cable 03Ankara1007 dated 9 February 2003, 'U/S Taylor's Talks on The Grant/Loan Facility, February 6-7 in Ankara', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/02/03ANKARA1007.html

Despite Gül's plans to take the motion to allow US troops into Turkey to the TBMM on 18 February, it proved difficult to overcome the divergent views on the crucial issues during negotiations, making a vote in the TBMM risky. As a result, Gül sent a letter to Bush to convey his concerns about the lack of satisfactory progress on the economic assistance package, the political document and the military MOU. Securing authorisation from the TBMM, said Gül, would be no easy task given the pressure from the public, the opposition party, and even his own party. Gül hoped to be in a position to tell the TBMM that Turkey and the US concurred on every issue, and that Ankara had received full and concrete assurances from the Bush administration. Gül proposed sending a delegation to Washington composed of Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış and Babacan to resolve the problems with the military MOU and the political document about Iraq's future and finalise both.

Yakış and Babacan visited Washington on 13-14 February for extensive discussions with Bush, Cheney, Powell, Rice, and Rumsfeld. During the talks, administration officials stated that the US had decided to go to war, identified a commencement date, and stated that the UN process no longer appealed to Washington. The US needed and sought Turkey's cooperation, especially to shorten the war and reduce casualties and other costs. The administration viewed Turkey as a strategic partner and ally, recognised the Turkish government's political difficulties, and respected the democratic process. However, a vote in the TBMM no later than 18 February was critical since the US had shifted its timelines for military action to correspond to this date and American vessels had already reached the eastern Mediterranean.[840] The US expected a prompt 'positive outcome' in the TBMM, and any failure of the vote would damage Turkey-US relations. Bush made it clear that, with or without Turkey's partnership, he was determined to overthrow Saddam's regime. The Turkish delegation's message centred primarily on three issues: First, Turkey was determined to stand by the US at this critical moment. Secondly, 18 February was too soon for a vote in the TBMM and the prospects of failure seemed high since the representatives and Turkish public were unconvinced of the case for war. Instead of pushing for an early vote, it would be more prudent to postpone it to achieve a successful outcome. Thirdly, the lack of progress on the political document and the military MOU increased the risk of failure. Completing these documents and finalising a satisfactory US assistance package were prerequisites for winning support for the government's motion in the TBMM. Turkey expected a figure

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[840] One US official told, 'One day late, forever too late.'

that corresponded to its estimates on the costs of war to the Turkish economy submitted in December, namely $92 billion over a five-year period. The figure reflected Turkey's bitter experience of the unintended consequences of the Gulf War, which had cost, according to Turkish economists, approximately $100 billion over the last decade. This time, Ankara was being cautious not to repeat the same mistake and safeguard its economic interests. At the same time, Babacan was concerned about the lag between the start of war and the Congress vote to approve the financial assistance package. Washington insisted this figure was impossible, yet decided to increase the package by 50 percent, and suggested a short-term bridge loan for immediate Turkish needs. The draft economic MOU sought to address Turkish concerns about congressional approval while retaining full cooperation as the key condition of the package.[841]

6.14. Towards the 1 March Vote

As negotiations on the three documents continued without clear agreement, on 20 February, Ziyal informed Pearson of Turkey's decision to seek the parliamentary approval for US requests in relation to the Iraq War. Ziyal said that the government would send the motion to the TBMM on the 24 February, but that the outcome looked bleak:

> As of today, it is impossible to be hopeful of the outcome in the Parliament. As well as the difficulty of a sceptical AK Party group in the Parliament, the government itself is divided on the policy. The finalisation of the political, economic and military documents is vitally important to secure a positive decision.[842]

On 24 February, the government sent a formal request to the TBMM for the deployment of US troops in and through Turkey as well as for the deployment of Turkish troops abroad for operations in Northern Iraq.[843] The government was divided, and some members of the cabinet unwillingly signed but continued to oppose the motion.[844] Deputy Prime Minister Abdüllatif Şener stated publicly that a significant number of ministers 'did not find it convincing.'[845] In addition, TBMM Speaker Bülent Arınç openly opposed the passage of the motion.[846] On the same day, Bush sent a letter to Gül with two crucial messages: First, Turkey and the US stood at a strategic crossroads; the

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[841] For full details of the Turkey-US economic talks in this period, see Taylor, *Global Financial Warriors*, pp.177-191.
[842] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[843] For the text of government's request for authorisation, see Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*, Annex 6.
[844] Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*, p.225.
[845] Cable 03Ankara1207 dated 24 February 2003; 'On the Eve of the Iraq Vote: Which Way Will Turkey Go?' http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/02/03ANKARA1207.html
[846] Ibid.

approval of the US request would elevate the US-Turkey partnership to new heights and cooperation in Iraq would open a new chapter in their relations. Second, in order to satisfy Turkish concerns about the non-binding nature of the documents, Bush pledged that they constituted a sound framework outlining Turkey-US mutual support, and stated his commitment to act in accordance with them.[847]

After exhaustive negotiations, an agreement was finally reached on the military MOU on 26 February 2003. The most sensitive problem was Turkish military activities in Northern Iraq. The parties had had severe disputes during the negotiations on the military MOU, and in some instances the Turkish delegation had left the table. Bölükbaşı states that 'the US side tried everything possible at first to prevent Turkish deployment in Northern Iraq, but they unwillingly came to terms with it once they recognised that there would be no Northern Option if they continued to object to Turkish military plans.'[848] However, according to Bölükbaşı, the US still wanted to constrain the freedom of Turkish troops with a set of rules of engagement, which Turkey did not accept. In the end, the US unwillingly agreed with Turkish plans for military deployment in Northern Iraq. While the MOU reflected a compromise,[849] it satisfied nearly all Turkish concerns; Turkey would deploy four to five brigades into Northern Iraq under national command in addition to the 1,500 troops already stationed in the region. Their primary mission would be to establish a security belt up to the limit of the so-called 'Green Line,' covering all the areas that the PKK had used to infiltrate Turkey.[850]

On 26 February, the prominent newspaper Milliyet published a report titled 'Military Disturbed by Motion' without naming its source.[851] The general who spoke on condition of anonymity was General Aytaç Yalman, the commander of the Land Forces, an ardent opponent of General Özkök and the AK Party government. Yalman's statements were a reflection of the power struggle within the TSK.[852] It demonstrated the concerns of some senior generals that Turkey-US cooperation in Iraq could result in better relations between the US and the AK Party government, strengthening the latter's hold on political power. Gül called General Özkök, who said that the statement merely

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[847] For the copy of Bush's letter see Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası*, Annex 7, p.191.
[848] Bölükbaşı, interview.
[849] Cable 03Ankara1357 dated 3 March 2003, 'Feb 26 Session: US/TU Teams Agree on Text for OPS MOU', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/03/03ANKARA1357.html
[850] Statement of the then Chief of TGS, General Hilmi Özkök, Murat Yetkin, 'Turkey-US had agreed on Turkish troops in Iraq', *Hürriyet Daily News*, 6 August 2012; Bölükbaşı, interview. For the details of the military MOU, see Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası*, pp.44-48.
[851] Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*, pp.226-227.
[852] Bila, interview.

reflected General Yalman's personal views, and not that of the TGS.[853] However, the report created the public impression that the military opposed cooperation with the US. Coupled with Sezer's insistence on international legitimacy as a prerequisite for any vote in the TBMM, and the resistance to the government's motion, this helped create 'the impression that the AK [Party] wants to pull the country into war over the objections of the military and the president.'[854] This put additional pressure on the government as it faced the challenge of shouldering the burden and the full responsibility for any decision. In an effort to avoid the trap and strengthen its hand, the government planned to seek a decisive recommendation from the MGK meeting on 28 February. However, Sezer prevented the discussion, arguing that the subject had been debated, that its results were reflected in the recommendations of previous MGK meetings, and that it was now the government's responsibility to take the decision.[855] The silence of the TGS during the MGK meeting was a surprise to the government. According to Bölükbaşı, throughout the negotiations with the US on the military MOU, not only were military officials present, but the Turkish position had totally reflected the military's views, and the leadership of the TGS, including General Yalman, had expressed their satisfaction with the final MOU, saying it was an 'excellent document.'[856] In the end, the MGK meeting provided no green light or support for US deployment, and all responsibility was left to the AK Party government and the TBMM.

The government's motion went before the TBMM on 1 March. Before the vote, the AK Party group convened and the government briefed representatives about the outcome of the political, military and economic negotiations, as well as the plans for the future of Iraq. Gül delivered a detailed speech, underlining that this was one of the biggest moments in Turkish history and that it was up to the representatives to make the decision. He said that 'We are a democratic party, you are the representatives of the nation, and I cannot ask you to put your will into my pocket.'[857] In addition to a presentation from Minister of Defence Vecdi Gönül on the military agreement, Babacan also briefed the AK Party group about the US financial assistance package. He explained the magnitude of the package, but underlined that its implementation was not to be taken for granted. Before the vote, the AK Party group took an initial unofficial vote to sound out the general inclination of the representatives. The result was

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[853] Gül, interview.
[854] Murat Yetkin, 'Hükümet-Çankaya Savaşı' *Radikal*, 28 February 2003.
[855] Ziyal, interview (2012); Burcuoğlu, interview.
[856] Bölükbaşı, interview.
[857] Gül, interview.

overwhelmingly to support the motion on the floor.[858] However, the AK Party leadership decided not to have a binding group decision to allow the representatives to vote freely on the floor.[859]

After an extensive debate in a closed session on the floor, the TBMM voted for the motion to allow US troop deployment for Iraq operations. Reportedly, of the 533 members present, 264 voted in favour and 250 against, while 19 abstained. All CHP representatives voted against the motion. From the AK Party group, 73 representatives voted against, while 19 abstained.[860] However, the CHP reportedly objected to the vote on legal grounds as the passage of the UNSCR required the support of the absolute majority of the representatives present. Accordingly, Arınç, who had made his opposition to any US troop deployment public, reviewed the legislation and announced that the motion had not garnered the 267 votes required for approval,[861] or only three votes short. The TBMM then adjourned until 4 March 2003.

The result was a shock for the AK party leadership and the US. The TBMM did not support the US deployment, and also rejected Turkish deployment in Northern Iraq. In his memoir, Bush notes his frustration and disappointment, expressing that 'on one of the most important requests that we had ever made, Turkey, our NATO ally, had let America down.'[862] On the same day, Ziyal met with Pearson and explained the extensive efforts the government had made to convince the TBMM to vote in favour. The result also proved the government's point about the difficulties of obtaining parliamentary approval, which Washington had not comprehended, seeing it as a tool for procrastination and bargaining. Ziyal also noted that, 'Prime Minister Gül and the government had risked their political future to stand by American friendship.'[863] Two issues of immediate concern for Ankara were the reactions of the market and the Kurds. The AK Party leadership would soon meet to define the future course of action. It was also evident that the possibility for a quick resubmission of a new UNSCR could only

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[858] Babacan, interview.
[859] Çelik, interview.
[860] However, it was a closed session and the details are confidential and subject to non-disclosure for ten years.
[861] This is known as some civil servants, including Ziyal and Bölükbaşı, were allowed to be present during the closed session by all-party agreement.
[862] Bush, *Decision Points*, p.250.
[863] Ziyal, interview (2010).

occur following the by-election in Siirt on 9 March, in which Erdoğan was expected to be elected and consequently assume premiership.[864]

In fact, after a long legal and political battle to regain his political rights, Erdoğan won the by- election and was subsequently mandated by Sezer to form a new government. Sezer approved Erdoğan's cabinet list on 14 March, and Erdoğan officially became prime minister. Gül was designated deputy prime minister and foreign minister. The US invaded Iraq on March 17, without the deployment of the Fourth Infantry Division though Turkey.[865] On 20 March, the new AK Party government secured the TBMM's authorisation for US aircraft to overfly Turkish airspace for a period of six months and for the deployment of Turkish troops to Northern Iraq. In the end, during the Iraq War, Turkey extended to the US similar support to that Özal provided in 1991 during the Gulf War.

6.15. Conclusion

The 1 March defeat of the parliamentary motion to deploy US troops against Iraq in and through Turkey marked the beginning of a new phase in Turkey-US relations and in Turkey's role in Iraq in post-Saddam era. Abramowitz has noted that the Iraq War 'produced the worst break in American-Turkish relations since the arms embargo.'[866] For Parris, the Iraq War marked a 'watershed' which essentially ended the post-Cold War phase of Turkey-US relations,[867] while Wolfowitz terms the outcome 'the big disappointment.'[868] In fact, the TBMM's decision stirred a debate in Washington about the 'value and predictability of the bilateral relationship.'[869] To date, the debate still continues over why Turkey did not allow the US troop deployment and whether the consequences of that vote served Turkish interests. Most likely, there will be no definitive answer to that question for many years. John Hannah's view of the divergence is suggestive:

> It never quite seemed that Turkey and the US were really hooked up on a strategically common vision and it was hard for the US to figure out how Turkey fit into the overall strategic pose that the US sought to put

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[864] Cable 03Ankara1346 dated 3 March 2003, 'Turkey: Parliamentary Vote Post-Mortem', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/03/03ANKARA1346.html
[865] Taylor, *Global Financial Warriors*, p.192.
[866] Morton Abramowitz, 'The Future of Turkish-US Relations' (Presentation, Global Leadership Forum, Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul, Turkey, 3 June 2006).
[867] Parris, afterword to *Turkish-American Relations*; Mark Parris, 'Allergic Partners: Can US-Turkish Relations Be Saved', *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, 4:1 (2005), pp.49-58.
[868] Bülent Ali Rıza, 'Seeking Redefinition: US-Turkish Relations after Iraq', *CSIS Turkey Update*, 5 June 2003.
[869] Lesser, *Beyond Suspicion*, p.11.

together.[870]

In fact, it is possible to make a multi-layered analysis of why the vote failed. Firstly, while there was a broad, fundamental agreement on the need for Iraq's disarmament, Turkish and US views never converged on the nature and urgency of the threat from Saddam and whether it necessitated the use of force.[871] The US case against Saddam was primarily built on proving that his regime was a menace to the international community and the Iraqi people and had systematically flouted its obligations as set out in UNSCRs. Additionally, the US argued that Saddam's regime continued to pursue WMD, support terrorism, and employ brutal oppression against the Iraqi people. For Washington, in the post-9/11 world, Saddam's regime had become a grave and urgent danger for vital US interests.[872] However, the US rationales for going to war with Iraq and overthrowing Saddam's regime constantly shifted between three elements; the elimination of Iraq's WMD arsenals, reducing the threat of international terrorism, and introducing democracy in Iraq to start a region-wide domino effect of democratisation.[873] In essence, the American case for the Iraq War reflected a strand of thinking within the US administration that 'a new and more optimistic regional order could emerge as a result of reformed Iraq.'[874] On the other hand, Ankara's assessment of the Iraqi threat recognised that Saddam had destabilised Iraq and the region but that, while it would prefer a different type of regime, it did not believe that war would be the right way to achieve it. From the Turkish perspective, the US had largely inflated and over-dramatized the nature and urgency of the threat from Saddam to win public and international support for military action, which it did not warrant. Ankara did not agree with the US proposition that Iraq had serious WMD potential and thought that the disarmament of Iraq had to be addressed through a new UN process and diplomatic pressure. In addition, Ankara believed that the US administration had not given serious consideration to the consequences of war on internal Iraqi dynamics, including the Shiite-Sunni sectarian balance and the Arab-Kurdish-Turkomen ethnic balance, or on regional stability. For Ankara, a US military action in Iraq would most likely result in instability that could last for many years and the US would be forced to stay in Iraq as an occupying power for a long period. Rather than simply introducing democracy to

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[870] Hannah, interview.
[871] Gül, interview; Babacan, interview; Ziyal, interview; Bölükbaşı, interview; Altunışık, 'Turkey's Iraq Policy'.
[872] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, pp.195-196.
[873] Michael T. Klare, 'Deciphering the Bush Administration's Motives', in Sifry and Cerf (eds.), *Iraq War Reader*, p.393.
[874] Freedman, *Choice of Enemies*, pp.429-430.

Iraq and the region, the war would have a profound and enduring effect on the regional balance of power. It was certain that Iran would emerge the major beneficiary of regime change in Iraq, with great leverage stemming from its links with Iraqi Shiite groups.[875] In short, there was no Turkey-US agreement on a common threat from Iraq or on the strategy to address that threat.

Secondly, notwithstanding its articulation of a vision for a democratic, unified, post-Saddam Iraq at peace with its neighbours, the Bush administration was in disarray on overall Iraq strategy due to the clashes between the Pentagon and the State Department. The administration especially failed to lay out 'an assessment of how it thinks the course of a war will run'[876] or explain its designs for Iraq's future following regime change. Perle, by then chairman of the US Defense Policy Board, observes that the real division within the administration was not on whether to go to war or how to line up the coalition, but on post-war planning.[877] The neo-cons argued for swiftly handing over responsibility to the Iraqi opposition once Saddam's regime was overthrown, and limiting the function of the US military to advising the new Iraqi government. In contrast, the State Department and CIA insisted on the need for the American military to govern Iraq for a certain period before the Iraqis were given the responsibility of government.[878] For Ankara, Iraq's future unity and territorial integrity would have direct implications for Turkey's security. Ankara believed that Washington did not thoroughly comprehend internal Iraqi dynamics and the regional forces at work. Setting aside the US support for federalism, as favoured by the Iraqi Kurds, Ankara concluded there was no coherent or convincing US strategy for the post-Saddam period. It seemed that what would follow regime change in Iraq was a secondary issue for Washington.[879] As then President of the INA Iyad Allawi observes, 'the invasion was never linked to a clear-cut policy about what to do next in Iraq.'[880]

Thirdly, from Turkish perspective, the course to military action against Iraq lacked proper justification. Turkey, however, lacked the power to stop the US, and neither would its non-contribution make the US alter its course. It was obvious that the US was committed to overthrowing Saddam's regime by military action with or without Turkish

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[875] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[876] Al Gore, 'Against a Doctrine of Preemptive War', in Sifry and Cerf (eds.), *The Iraq War Reader*, pp.326-327.
[877] Perle, interview.
[878] Perle, interview (2012); Hannah, interview; Khalilzad, interview (2012).
[879] When a senior US official claimed that the war with Iraq would introduce democracy in the region, Ziyal responded, 'You must be living on the moon. It is not going to happen. You are invading a country.' Ziyal, interview (2012).
[880] Iyad Allawi, interviewed by author, Ankara, 27 April 2010.

support. Turkey remained reluctant to support the war because of the serious repercussions that would follow a military conflict, including the possible disintegration of Iraq, years of instability, and the potential shift in the regional balance of power. Ankara knew that maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity would be harder than the US assurances supposed. The situation in Northern Iraq could get out of control, provoking a refugee inflow, increased PKK activities, a Kurdish drive for independence, or a Kurdish takeover of Kirkuk. Also, the impact on the Turkish economy would be huge. Consequently, for Ankara, accommodating US requests for cooperation was not a preference but a realpolitik choice that circumstances dictated, allowing Turkish views to factor in US designs for Iraq's future. Washington considered regime change itself a vital US interest. For Ankara, however, the question centred on how to minimise the repercussions of a war on its vital national interests. Consequently, the political, economic, and military tracks of Turkey-US talks were fraught with a trust gap, and were disrupted by the divergent priorities and interests of the two sides. For Ankara, an agreement on the political and economic documents was an essential part of its strategy to secure Turkish interests in Iraq following regime change, and to lessen the effects of the war on the Turkish economy. For Washington, in contrast, all other issues were secondary to the conclusion of the military MOU to secure Turkey's full support for war.

Fourthly, from the very outset, the Bush administration appeared unrealistic in its expectations and requests from Turkey. It never fully grasped the complexities and the challenges for any Turkish government of allowing a large-scale US military deployment in Turkey to attack and occupy a neighbouring Muslim country. The Turkish public, all parties in the political spectrum, and academia overwhelmingly opposed war. For instance, Gül underscored that the first question directed to him in all TV interviews was 'how do you think your government will manage to support war when 95 percent of the Turkish public is against it?' Gül always responded that Turkey was a democratic country and would follow a due and transparent democratic process.[881] In short, it was a big political risk for the government to make the unpopular decision to support the US, and not just in terms of electoral strategy. The TGS had advised the government that the stationing of the Fourth Infantry Division, the deployment of 40,000 to 80,000 US troops, the use of all major Turkish military installations and civilian airports, ports and other facilities, and ensuring the security for

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[881] Gül, interview. On one occasion, to reflect the difficulty of the decision, Gül said, 'I can explain this to the opposition, but not to my own party.' Quoted in Yetkin, *Tezkere*, p.117.

US troops in Turkish territory would require a 'state of emergency' in many cities, especially in south-eastern Turkey.[882] The AK Party government was determined to pursue democratic reforms, yet the introduction of a state of emergency in many cities would be reminiscent of the 1990s when democracy and rule of law were forsaken for security, particularly in south-eastern Anatolia. In such an atmosphere, it would simply be impossible for the government to implement further democratic reforms, creating setbacks in Turkey's relations with the EU and regional countries.[883] Furthermore, the TGS and the Turkish government were worried that the scale of the US military presence would make the whole of Turkish territory a 'US military base' and that US troops would thus constitute an 'occupation force', remaining for an indeterminate period.[884] Such a situation would also have implications for the AK Party government in managing the civil-military relationship. In the end, the Turkish government was faced with one of the most momentous decisions in the history of the republic.[885] Its dilemma was how to support its strategic ally the US while minimising the risks of war and without compromising the domestic political situation or regional balance of power.[886] Scowcroft rightfully observes that one of Washington's biggest mistakes was to take Turkish support for granted when the issue was far more complicated in Turkey.[887]

Fifthly, the strains during the Turkey-US talks reflected a broader problem of Turkish mistrust of the frankness of the consultation and the ensuing feeling of exclusion from the US strategy on the future of Iraq. For instance, Washington told Ankara that the mission of the NILE teams in Northern Iraq was to fight terrorism, whereas Ankara discovered that these teams had made preparations for military action on the ground. In discussions about Iraq's future, both the US and Turkey broadly agreed on the principles of preserving Iraq as a unified state and of establishing a democratic regime at peace internally and with its neighbours. However, Turkish views diverged from US thinking on what constituted a positive outcome following regime change, especially with regard to the status of Northern Iraq. From the Turkish point of view, the situation in Northern Iraq was a serious threat to Turkey's national security, due both to the persistent PKK presence in the region and the emergence of a possible independent

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[882] Gül, interview; Yetkin, *Tezkere*, pp.118-119.
[883] Davutoğlu, interview.
[884] Ziyal, interview (2012).
[885] For instance, Gül remarks on the magnitude of the challenge: 'In those four months, we had to cope with problems that a government would normally face in four years. I did not sleep for more than three hours in any day, and my hair turned grey in that period.' Gül, interview.
[886] Davutoğlu, interview.
[887] Brent Scowcroft, interviewed by author, Washington DC, 10 February 2012.

Kurdish state with its potential spill-over effect on Turkey's own Kurdish population. For their part, the KDP and PUK continued to increase Ankara's frustration with public statements on their aspirations for an independent Kurdish state with Kirkuk as its capital. Meanwhile, for Washington, Northern Iraq remained 'the most stable area in the country,' and Iraqi Kurds were 'friends and partners' in pursuit of US strategy.[888] Additionally, while Turkey favoured the establishment of a centralised structure after regime change, the US explicitly supported the Kurdish drive for federalism in Northern Iraq.[889] During the talks, Washington did not seem to understand Ankara's lack of trust, especially towards the KDP. For Masoud Barzani, the trust gap between Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds was the result of 'a misunderstanding and misperception that the Iraqi Kurdistan posed a problem for Turkey's interests.'[890] However, Washington's effort and encouragement to remove these misunderstandings and establish better relations between Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds fell short of eliminating this trust gap.[891] More importantly, the US opposition to Turkish deployment in Iraq largely stemmed from Kurdish resistance to the idea. It seemed Washington would rather consider Kurdish views and share details with the KDP and PUK on its vision for the future of Iraq than accommodate Turkey's key national interests. The CIA plans to arm the KDP and PUK and the exclusion of the ITF from US-sponsored opposition activities, including the opposition leadership council, further compounded the trust gap about real US intentions in Iraq. It was clear that a lot of what the US could achieve in the post-Saddam period would depend on its bases in Iraqi Kurdistan and its dealings with the Iraqi opposition.[892] This subsequently lessened Turkish confidence in US assurances of respect for Turkey's strategic interests in Iraq, including maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity, preventing regional instability, and giving Turkey a say in shaping a post-Saddam Iraq.

In the final analysis, this trust gap was a serious problem throughout the Turkey-US negotiations,[893] further deepened by an expectations gap on both sides. The difficulties in the negotiations were on every critical issue; the status of Northern Iraq, relations with the Iraqi Kurds, the unequal status of the Turkomen with the Arabs and the Kurds, and the US objections to Turkish deployment in the region. Ankara came to believe that

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[888] Cable 04Ankara4131 dated 27 July 2004, 'Iraq, the Turks and US', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2004/07/04ANKARA4131.html

[889] Ziyal, interview (2012).

[890] Barzani, interview.

[891] Ibid.

[892] Hannah, interview.

[893] Ali Tuygan, *Gönüllü Diplomat: Dışişlerinde Kırk Yıl* (İzmir: Şenocak Yayınları, 2012), p.133.

Washington had adopted a policy of satisfying Turkish concerns to the minimum extent possible while pressuring Turkey for maximum cooperation with US military action. In the end, the negotiations failed to produce a coherent understanding on Northern Iraq or a satisfactory agreement on the economic assistance package for Turkey. More importantly, it seemed that the US did not understand or recognise the problems the new and inexperienced AK Party government might have in making an overwhelmingly unpopular decision in the context of pressing domestic political problems and foreign policy issues. The AK Party's problems were further compounded by the noncommittal approach of the TGS to supporting the US and the public resistance of President Sezer on the grounds of a lack of international legitimacy. In essence, as Erdoğan expressed to a US congressional delegation a week after the vote, he and the AK Party government had exposed themselves to 'great political risk by pushing the resolution in the face of opposition from political parties, NGOs, and the public.'[894] Furthermore, the ugly, anti-Turkish cartoons that had appeared in the US press 'became convenient material for the opposition CHP to use to humiliate AK Party representatives and change votes.'[895] Indeed, Bryza admits that US officials 'stumbled over the cliff without a clear understanding of the internal Turkish political dynamics.'[896]

Sixthly, a further complicating factor in Turkey-US negotiations was the 'back channel'—a reference to unofficial contacts between Cüneyt Zapsu, an advisor to Erdoğan, and US officials; namely Wolfowitz, Grossman and Perle. It was widely reported that Zapsu made unsubstantiated commitments to his American contacts that Turkey would support the US in the Iraq War.[897] Ziyal repeatedly warned US officials to listen to what they had heard from the official negotiations instead of counting on informal promises made through back channels, but admits his efforts failed.[898] US officials also note that the back channel was confusing,[899] damaged the process,[900] misrepresented the facts, and made claims to understand the key players that ultimately proved false.[901] However, Zapsu stresses that he only acted on behalf of Erdoğan and followed his instructions to the letter. Despite his personal view that Turkey should

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[894] Cable 03Ankara1485 dated 8 March 2003, 'Iraq: Codel Wexler Presses Ruling AK Party Leader Erdogan for Accelerated Re-Vote on US Troop Deployment', http://wikileaks.org/cable/2003/03/03ANKARA1485.html
[895] Ibid.
[896] Bryza, interview.
[897] Bölükbaşı, interview.
[898] Ziyal, interview (2010).
[899] Grossman, interview.
[900] Bryza, interview.
[901] Deutsch, interview.

cooperate with the US as a way of ensuring its national interests, especially in Northern Iraq, Zapsu underlines that he made no official commitments at all during back channel contacts.[902] Indeed, Perle notes that there were no major differences between what was discussed through back channels and the content of the formal talks.[903] Lastly, some US officials have argued that the TBMM no vote was a failure of US diplomacy, which they attribute to Secretary Powell. They argue that Powell neither visited Ankara in those crucial days to make the US case personally, nor encouraged President Bush or Vice President Cheney to make personal appeals to the Turkish leadership.[904]

In this context, Turkey's foreign policy behaviour during the Iraq War in 2003 offers a fine illustration of scenario three of the integrative model, as displayed in table 7 overleaf. Accordingly, despite Turkey having no agreement with the US on independent variable one, the nature of the Iraqi threat, it felt compelled to cooperate with the US in implementing independent variable two, the actual strategy of regime change in Iraq by military action. This was largely due to a clear alliance security dilemma. First, the US was set on regime change in Iraq by use of force and Turkish support or lack thereof would not influence, change, or stop the US in the implementation of that strategy. For Ankara, it seemed that the risks and costs of non-cooperation with the US outweighed those of cooperation, including exclusion of Turkish views and red lines in US plans for the post-Saddam period. Ankara believed that granting Washington's request for full support offered relatively a less costly option along with the possibility of curtailing the repercussions of US strategy while creating an opportunity to incorporate Turkish views into Washington's plans for Iraq's future. The result was a reluctant effort to take part in the actual implementation of the US strategy without an agreement on the perceptions of threat or the virtues of the strategy itself. An additional factor was the scope of US expectations, which significantly outweighed Turkish designs for a potential role in supporting the US strategy, greatly limiting the prospects for cooperation. Thus, throughout this period, there was a considerable expectations gap compounded by a trust gap. Turkey thus faced a secondary level alliance security dilemma in the form of entrapment in deciding on whether to commit itself to cooperation with the US and on the modalities and degree of its support for the US strategy of war. Due the factors explained above, the resultant Turkish behaviour was non-cooperation, expressed in the 1 March TBMM vote.

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[902] Zapsu, interview.
[903] Perle, interview.
[904] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, p. 451; Feith, *War and Decision*, p.395.

Table 7: Integrative model of Turkey-US non-cooperation on the Iraq War, 2001-2003

Independent Variable 1: Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat	Independent Variable 2: Agreement on strategy to deal with perceived strategic threat	Dependent Variable / Result

I. The US
 	
Saddam's regime and its WMD capabilities are vital and urgent threats to regional and global security. The regime has to be overthrown, if required through US-led military action
	I. Elements of US strategy
	
	1. Regime change through military action
	2. Ensure Turkey's full support and cooperation on Northern Option in:
	  i. Deployment of 80,000 US troops
	  ii. Overflight, basing and transit permissions on Turkish territory, including the use of military bases, facilities, airports, and ports
	  iii. Deployment of CIA's NILE teams to Northern Iraq via Turkey
	3. Arm Iraqi Kurdish groups
	4. Site surveys
	5. Site preparation
		I. Factors in Turkey's unwillingness to fully cooperate in US military action:
		
		1. No power of veto over US action
		2. Implications for national interests
		3. Irrelevance of scope and extent of Turkish support
		4. Alliance security dilemma / entrapment:
		  i. Risks and costs of non-cooperation:
		    a. exclusion from talks on Iraq's future
		    b. non-observance of redlines
		  ii. Supporting US action less costly

II. Turkey
 	
Saddam's regime does not pose an urgent threat that necessitates use of force
	II. Elements of Turkish Strategy
	
	1. Diplomatic solution to prevent war:
	  i. Bilateral efforts to urge Saddam to comply with UN obligations.
	  ii. Establishment of regional platform.
	2. Seek legally binding MOUs with US to mitigate the repercussions of possible war on national interests:
	  i. Political MOU:
	    a. Maintain Iraq's territorial integrity and unity
	    b. Prevent Iraqi Kurdish entity's independence, federalism, and integration of Kirkuk
	    c. Protect Turkomen rights
	    d. Prevent a refugee influx from Northern Iraq to Turkey
	  ii. Military MOU:
	    a. Address governance, status, presence, and activities of US forces
	    b. Deploy Turkish troops in Northern Iraq to ensure Turkey's redlines are respected
	    c. Prevent PKK exploiting war conditions to increase terrorist activities through Northern Iraq
	  iii. Economic MOU:
	    a. Achieve compensation for possible economic losses
	    b. Seek larger assistance package
	    c. Secure guarantees of congressional approval
	    d. Remove any conditions attached to the package.
		II. Factors in Turkey's non-cooperation in US military action:
		
		1. Divergence on:
		  i. Existence, nature and urgency of threat
		  ii. National interests
		  iii. Requisite strategy
		2. Expectations gap
		3. Trust gap
		4. US inability to comprehend Turkish domestic politics

In the final analysis, the decision of the TBMM was a product of a Turkish democracy that the US had supported for many years, and a rare instance of a single-party

government losing a parliamentary vote. The vote heralded the start of a new phase in Turkish foreign policy, and in Turkey's relations with the US, regional countries, and the EU.

CONCLUSIONS

From the Gulf crisis in 1990 to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, cooperation on the US containment policy of Iraq was one of the most crucial issues in Turkey-US relations. Turkey's contribution to US policy during the Gulf War and cooperation in the following decade was a central factor in adapting the Turkey-US alliance relationship to the new strategic setting after the Cold War. As Ian O. Lesser has observed, Turkey's stance reinforced its image as a staunch strategic US ally 'at the forefront of new security challenges emanating from the Middle East.'[905]

Nevertheless, Iraq also remained one of the most contentious areas between Turkey and the US due to their divergent priorities and conflicting objectives and interests. After the TBMM's refusal to allow a northern front for the US war in Iraq on 1 March 2003, despite broad agreement on the central principles of preserving Iraq's unity and territorial integrity, the two countries' divergent perceptions and approaches vis-á-vis Iraq placed severe pressure on the strategic nature of their alliance relationship. Their contradictory impulses, particularly on the status of Northern Iraq, remained a source of real controversy. Additionally, a severe diplomatic crisis was triggered by an incident in which US forces raided TSF headquarters in Sulaymaniyah, mistreating the Turkish officers during apprehension. The 'Iraq gap' in the following period jeopardised the very essence of the Turkey-US alliance—the strategic partnership—despite efforts by both countries to downplay their differences. This continued until November 2007, when the Bush-Cheney administration defined the PKK terrorist organisation as 'the common enemy.'[906]

Even today, the Iraq question continues to have contradictory implications for Turkey-US relations. Turkey and the US worked as close partners in helping the ethnic and sectarian groups in Iraq to establish a functioning, quasi-democratic political system in the post-Saddam era. They even formed a trilateral mechanism with the Iraqi government to address the PKK presence in Northern Iraq's Kandil Mountains, though this has so far proved largely unsuccessful. Following the Iraqi elections in 2009, Turkey-US cooperation was instrumental in forming a coalition government under Maliki's premiership. However, Maliki's sectarian-driven political agenda and his

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[905] Lesser, 'Turkey, the United States and the Delusion of Geopolitics', p.84.
[906] BBC News, 'US declares PKK "a common enemy"', Friday, 2 November 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7074361.stm

expanded relations with Iran and pro-Assad stance drove Ankara and the Baghdad government apart. Consequently, Turkish and US perspectives once again diverged on Iraq, including the views on Maliki Government and Turkey's flourishing energy cooperation with the Northern Iraqi Kurdish Regional Government (KRG).

This research has sought to find an analytical response to the two fundamental questions of, firstly, why Turkey chose to cooperate with the US during the Gulf War and its aftermath, and, secondly, why it then changed policy leading up to the Iraq War. The research has evaluated factors identified in the rich literature on Turkey's cooperative and non-cooperative foreign policy behaviours after 2002, such as a divergent conception of interests by Turkey's new leadership, the relative inexperience of the new Turkish government in office, and the overwhelming opposition to war of the Turkish public. Nevertheless, it has chiefly been concerned to develop and apply a conceptual model of when and why Turkey engages in security cooperation with the US on Middle Eastern issues that could serve as a comparative analytical tool. In focusing on the Turkish perspective, it has aimed to present a fuller account of the underlying motives and factors in Turkey-US policy-making, conceptions of threat, and corresponding strategies on Iraq.

The integrative model outlined in chapter 1 introduces a two-stage approach about when and how security cooperation arises between Turkey and the US on Middle Eastern issues. In the model, Turkey-US security cooperation is ensured by the concurrent existence of two independent variables; one, an agreement on a significant/strategic common threat, and two, agreement on the requisite strategy to deal with the perceived strategic threat. In the following sections, the validity of the integrative model will be tested in three stages of Turkey-US relationship on Iraq during 1990-2003.

1.   Empirical Case for Scenario One: The Gulf Crisis and War, 1990-1991

The Gulf Crisis and the Gulf War, 1990-1991, constitutes a sample case of scenario one of the integrative model. It demonstrates that Turkey-US cooperation occurred because of fulfilment of both independent variables one and two.

Independent variable one: Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat

Independent variable one involves reaching an agreement on a strategic threat at the systemic level, in the form of Walt's proposition about balance-of-threat against an external power and/or Schweller's balance-of-interests. In this sense, for the US,

Saddam's occupation of Kuwait was a vital threat to security, stability and strategic balance in the Middle East as well as to its regional interests.

For Turkey, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait occurred at a time when Turkey was facing systemic level changes in its international, regional and bilateral strategic environment, with consequences for Turkey's policy formulation. First, at the international level, Turkey faced the challenge of adjusting and maintaining the strategic relationship with the US/West in view of the disappearance of the overarching Soviet threat. Second, this shift was compounded by strategic changes that had taken place in the 1980s in Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbourhood. Turkey needed to formulate strategies to address threats such as the rise in PKK terrorism, the strained relations with Syria due its support for the PKK, and the water dispute with Iraq and Syria. Third, after the Halabja massacre and the immediate aftermath of the Iran-Iraq ceasefire, Turkey had become increasingly wary of Saddam's regional ambitions, his huge military arsenal, and Baghdad's more assertive tone, especially on the cross-border water dispute. More importantly, Turkey perceived that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait would likely have ramifications for its national security, including the disruption of the regional balance of power and the potential of a direct threat from Saddam's regime itself, evidenced in its regional aggression and military capability. Thus, for Turkey, Saddam's Iraq conformed to Walt's formulation of balances-of-threat proposition.

However, the systemic level context was not the only determinant for Turkey's foreign policy behaviour during the Gulf Crisis and War. Like all national security decisions, Turkey's cooperation was effected through a domestic political process, in which structural-level changes interacted with unit-level causes. In other words, Turkey's perception of and policy response to the Iraqi threat was defined at the unit-level, as understood by neoclassical realism, with the domestic political process as an intervening variable. In this case, President Özal was the primary actor in formulating Turkey's perception of threat from Iraq. Özal defined Turkey's interests relative to his assessment of the Iraqi threat at the structural-systemic level of analysis and it was his perceptions and expectations that linked the threat to Turkish policy throughout the crisis. Özal responded to uncertainties in the face of structural level changes by actively controlling and shaping Turkey's strategic international and regional external environment.

At the same time, Turkish foreign policy was not only a balancing behaviour in response to Iraqi aggression. It also involved a strong element of Schweller's proposition of balance-of-interests, since Özal also considered costs, risks and relative gains in the context of the global and regional balance of power (i.e., both threats and interests). Özal believed that the Gulf Crisis presented an opportunity for Turkey to establish a new and enhanced partnership with Washington in the new international structure in which the US had emerged as the supreme power. Consequently, Özal's choices reflected the interaction between domestic factors and Turkish perceptions about how best to respond to the external systemic conditions which finally concurred with the US perception of threat from Iraq's occupation of Kuwait.

Independent variable two: Agreement on strategy to deal with the significant/strategic common threat

Turkey and the US also agreed on independent variable two; the requisite strategy to address the commonly-defined threat and reverse Iraq's aggression. This strategy included ensuring immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait, deterring an immediate Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia, and restoring the ante bellum status quo and balance of power in the region. The instruments of this strategy were UNSC mandated international sanctions and use of force when economic coercion proved ineffective. Most importantly, US expectations of Turkey were also congruent with Turkish perceptions of its possible contribution in the actual implementation of that strategy. The US requested Turkey's cooperation in the enforcement of sanctions, use of military bases on Turkish soil during any attack on Iraq, and deployment of Turkish troops to the Iraqi border. Turkey cooperated in the sanctions by promptly closing down the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline, mobilising 100,000 troops along the northern border of Iraq, and allowing coalition forces to use Turkish bases once military operations started on 16 January. Most importantly, there was no expectations gap in terms of the implementation of the strategy since the US never asked to open up a ground front against Iraq through Turkish territory; a concept that Turkish politicians, including Özal, dismissed outright.

As a result of their agreement on independent variables one and two, Turkey and the US cooperated closely throughout the Gulf Crisis and Gulf War. This marked a milestone in Turkey-US partnership, added Iraq as a positive dimension of the alliance relationship, redefined Turkey's value as a security partner for Washington, and set Turkey-US

bilateral cooperation in a new context. For Turkey, the prospects of threat from Saddam's regime were largely removed by the war.

Finally, even though Turkey-US cooperation on Iraq in 1991 was a balancing behaviour in terms of alliance politics, there was no alliance security dilemma. As Snyder points out, the degree to which allies' respective interests are in conflict with an adversary is one of the determinants of the alliance security dilemma in the form of entrapment and abandonment.[907] In this case, Turkey and the US reciprocally depended on each other's cooperation, shared similar valuable interests, and explicitly recognised the need to reverse Iraq's aggressive behaviour to address the threat it posed. Thus the risks of an alliance security dilemma were minimal and neither entrapment nor abandonment occurred at any point. In other words, Turkey supported the US against the adversary, Iraq, and the ensuing cooperation did not result from US pressure or fears of the costs of non-cooperation, but chiefly from Turkey-US convergence over threats, interests, and strategy.

However, despite the allied victory, Saddam remained in power, and the ultimate balance sheet of the conflict was not to Turkey's benefit, despite its unwavering cooperation with the US. Ultimately, Turkey had to endure increased political and security risks and economic hardship as a result of the conflict. Firstly, Turkey suffered substantial economic losses because of the UN sanctions, and US attempts to offset some of Turkey's losses and finance the modernisation of the TSK failed to live up to Turkish expectations of its gains from cooperation. The unforeseen continuation of the sanctions inflicted further damage on the Turkish economy. All this led to heavy political costs for Özal, the chief proponent of cooperation. Most important were the unanticipated strategic consequences of the conflict: due to Saddam's brutal repression of the Kurdish uprising in Northern Iraq, the plight of Iraqi Kurds emerged as an international issue, and OPC created a safe haven for Kurdish autonomy in Northern Iraq, marking a new security challenge for Turkey.

2. First Empirical Case for Scenario Three: Unintended Consequences of the Gulf War, 1991-2001

The period of unintended consequence of the Gulf War, 1991-2003, is an illustration of scenario three in the integrative model. However, in this example, a state unwillingly agrees to cooperate with an ally on independent variable two, the strategy to deal with

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[907] Snyder, 'Security Dilemma', p.474

the perceived threat, without agreement on the independent variable one, the nature of the strategic threat. The integrative model argues that under this scenario, the defining factors for an agreement on independent variable two become matters of alliance management, cost versus benefit, relative gains, and whether both parties' expectations of the nature of cooperation converge or diverge.

Independent variable one: Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat

During this period, Turkish and American perceptions of the threat from Saddam's regime differed widely. For successive US administrations, Saddam's Iraq continued to pose a threat to regional and global US interests. From the Turkish perspective, notwithstanding its initial preference for a change in Iraqi leadership, Saddam's regime no longer posed an urgent threat to regional stability given its diminished aggression and the curtailment of its offensive military capabilities and intentions.

Independent variable two: Agreement on strategy to deal with the significant/strategic common threat

The US response to its perception that Saddam's regime remained a serious threat to regional peace and stability was its strategy of containment. This strategy had political, economic and military elements: Politically, the US sought to isolate Saddam's regime internationally, and also organised and supported Iraqi opposition to Baghdad inside and outside the country, sponsoring failed attempts to overthrow Saddam's regime. The US sought to protect and sustain a unified Northern Iraqi administration to maintain the region as a base of US-sponsored opposition activities to Saddam. Washington therefore pursued a policy of preventing KDP-PUK clashes that became detrimental to overall US strategy on Iraq, and sought to mediate their reconciliation. Militarily, the US continued to retain significant force levels in the region to deter Iraq from threatening its neighbours, reconstituting its WMD program, or oppressing the Kurds in Northern Iraq. Through the actual operational components of this strategy, the US used limited force against Iraq for tactical and strategic purposes. Economically, the US maintained UN sanctions against Iraq and opposed any relaxation in the sanctions regime. Washington also requested Ankara's support in implementing its containment strategy, and Turkey's contribution was essential to both continued enforcement of the sanctions and effective military deterrence.

Despite divergence from the US on independent variable one, Turkey closely cooperated with the US on the actual implementation of independent variable two, albeit unwillingly and conditionally. Turkey's cooperative behaviour thus offers a case study of Schweller's balance-of-interests proposition, as well as alliance management and the alliance security dilemma. At the systemic level, given Turkey's high level of dependence on its alliance relationship with the US, Ankara's cooperation with Washington on the containment policy functioned to preserve and maintain the benefits of, and advance its interests within, the alliance relationship. Turkey continued to prioritise its strategic alliance with the US as the sole-remaining super power in the new international setting. Ankara believed cooperation on Iraq fitted into broader Turkish interests by reinforcing the value of continued Turkey-US strategic relations. Consequently, Turkey continued to hope that cooperation on Iraq would be instrumental in strengthening the alliance relationship.

Nevertheless, Turkey's unwilling and conditional cooperation with the US represents a good case of an alliance security dilemma: Turkey had to carefully balance its interests in its predicament over whether to support the US containment policy and to what degree. It had to accommodate the US request for cooperation while dealing with the implications of that strategy on its national interests. The Turkish position at this time suggests entrapment; Turkey unwillingly continued to support Washington's conflict with Saddam's regime in which it shared no identical interests because of the need to preserve its asymmetrical alliance with the US. Turkey had to deal with the damage to its political, economic and security interests of the US strategy of containment itself.

The first of these consequences was the diplomatic impact of the internationalisation of the Kurdish issue, which made Turkey's counter-terrorist campaign against the PKK ever more challenging to justify abroad. The second consequence was the regional security problem for Turkey arising from the new situation in Northern Iraq. Turkey had an interest in preserving Iraq's territorial integrity and unity and preventing the fragmentation of Iraq, as well as constraining the Kurds' aspirations for an independent state in the north. However, in addition to the limitations OPC placed on Iraq's sovereignty over a part of its territory, the KDP and PUK joined their forces to create a de facto local Kurdish state in Northern Iraq and argued for a federal future for Iraq. The Turkish concern was not only the possible spill-over effects of the emergence of an independent Kurdish state on its own Kurdish population, but also the implications of Iraq's disintegration on the regional balance of power. For Ankara, Washington's

commitment was critical in keeping Iraqi Kurdish ambitions for self-rule within the limits of Iraq's territorial integrity. However, the US assurances to this end did not divert the course of developments in the region, which gradually became increasingly separate from Iraq. Thus agreement on the principle of Iraqi unity could not translate into a joint Turkey-US strategy since the risks to Iraq's territorial integrity were actually a result of the US policy. Turkey viewed the situation as transitory and expressed a preference for the reinstitution of Baghdad's authority over the whole country as the only viable alternative for Iraq's future security. The US, on the other hand, was determined to perpetuate the containment strategy to keep Saddam boxed in. Turkey maintained a common regional platform with Iran and Syria to promote Iraq's territorial integrity, while seeking to limit their influence in Northern Iraq. Turkey also had to compel the Iraqi Kurdish leadership to constrain their aspirations for federalism and independence.

The third consequence was the substantial economic losses Turkey incurred due to the enforcement of sanctions regime for an indefinite period. The sanctions cost the Turkish treasury an estimated $40 to $100 billion, depending upon the criteria used to calculate such losses, without compensation and partial relief from the sanctions regime. In the meantime, the trade in diesel carried by trucks across the Iraqi border in violation of the UN sanctions provided much-needed income for the Iraqi Kurdish groups to sustain the local economy.

The fourth consequence was the dramatic increase in PKK terrorism. The power vacuum in Northern Iraq provided the PKK with the chance to establish itself firmly on the ground and use the region as a springboard to carry out terrorist attacks against Turkey. Syria also continued to support the PKK as a proxy for hostility against Turkey. PKK terrorism became a profound national security threat with severe political, economic and human costs. Ankara had to deal with the PKK not only at home, but also in Northern Iraq. Politically, the strategy was to enlist US support for Turkey's fight against the PKK and prevent either the KDP or PUK from entering into pragmatic cooperation with the PKK. Militarily, the strategy was to establish permanent contingents in the region and conduct cross-border military operations to fight the PKK, with or without the support of Iraqi Kurdish groups. However, such operations incurred negative reaction from European and Arab nations. The US recognised the PKK as a terrorist group, and endorsed Turkey's strategy and cross-border operations, instrumental in Turkey's fight with the PKK during the 1990s. However, for the US, the

PKK presence remained a secondary problem in comparison to sustaining Northern Iraq as part of its containment policy. Another component of Turkish strategy was to supply the KDP and PUK with military and logistical support against the PKK presence and infiltration in the region. The Kurdish groups, for their part, had an interest in limiting the influence of the PKK, which gradually became able to challenge their own authority in the region. Turkey's strategy ultimately failed because of the KDP-PUK clashes over political dominance and survival from 1994 until 1998, which created favourable conditions for the PKK to operate more freely in Northern Iraq.

Finally, intra-Kurdish conflict and clashes posed significant challenges for Turkey and the US, and the situation in Northern Iraq became a distinct issue of Turkey-US cooperation within the overall Iraq strategy. The KDP-PUK conflict undermined the US containment strategy to the point where the US had to withdraw its covert presence to organise the Iraqi opposition to overthrow Saddam's regime from the region in 1996. More importantly, the fight for political survival became so bitter that the KDP requested and received assistance from Saddam, the Kurds' archenemy, while the PUK enlisted Iranian support. The escalating clashes damaged the very essence of the US rationale to protect the Kurds from Baghdad. For Ankara, the intra-Kurdish hostilities indicated that the Kurdish groups remained far from forming a unified administration for independence. However, the conflict was paradoxically against Turkey's interests, since it led the PKK to increase its presence in the region and even become a power broker in the KDP-PUK fight. The initial Turkey-US response to the situation was to launch separate, unilateral efforts for KDP-PUK conciliation. When that failed, despite divergent perception of interests and priorities on the situation, they developed a coordinated strategy to end the fighting. Washington's motivation was to sustain the credibility of the containment policy while Turkey's was to prevent increased PKK influence in the region. At the same time, both countries had a joint motive to prevent interference by third parties, namely Iran and Syria. Turkey-US efforts to mediate a Kurdish conciliation began at talks in Drogheda and Dublin, followed by the Ankara Process, and centred on accommodating and balancing divergent Turkey-US interests and priorities. Though these efforts failed, the US eventually brokered the Washington Agreement in 1998—a modus-vivendi for regional stability under two separate Kurdish administrations in Northern Iraq that brought about a relatively calm period. Overall, during this period, Turkey and the US became embroiled in Iraqi Kurdish politics and

the affairs of Northern Iraq and a trilateral relationship emerged between Turkey, the US and Iraqi Kurdish groups.

Ultimately, alliance management issues in the form of entrapment were clearly evident in Turkey's cooperation with the US during this period. First, the US was the dominant power defining the strategy on Iraq, and Turkey had no ability to change the US strategy. More importantly, in light of Ankara's perception of potential political, economic, and military costs of non-cooperation, Washington had coercive potential to exact cooperative behaviour from Turkey, the weaker partner. For example, though Turkey never fully realigned with Saddam's regime, it argued for a strategy of normalisation with Iraq as an alternative to the containment strategy and elevated its diplomatic representation in Baghdad to ambassadorial level in 1998. The US was resolved to oppose any effort to undermine the containment policy, and categorically opposed any rapprochement with Iraq, especially Turkish initiatives to that end.

Nevertheless, both parties also enjoyed considerable leverage over each other's policies in terms of alliance management. They both pursued common interests (in preserving the alliance against Iraq) and competitive interests (in maintaining the benefits of the alliance through intra-alliance bargaining). This was what Snyder describes as a process to 'maximize joint benefits and minimize costs to one's independent interests.'[908] Accordingly, for Ankara, US commitment and support were imperative to maintain Iraq's territorial integrity, to constrain Iraqi Kurdish aspirations for federalism and independence, to enlist support in its fight against the PKK, and to prevent the PKK becoming a third Kurdish force wielding considerable regional influence. Cooperation with the US on containment offered the only prospect for achieving all these objectives and for ensuring that Turkey's considerations were factored into US policy on Iraq. For Washington, the perpetuation, viability, and success of containment hinged largely on Turkey's cooperation in the sanctions regime and its renewal of the mandate for continuation of OPC-II/ONW through İncirlik air base. More importantly, Turkey provided the US its only viable access to Northern Iraq, which was a significant dynamic for managing the situation in the region. The result was certain level of mutual accommodation of basic interests without harmony in the bigger picture of what Turkey and the US wished to accomplish through their respective strategies on Iraq.

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[908] Ibid., pp.165-166.

Against this backdrop, despite Turkey's dilemmas and the damage to its national interests, it continued to support and cooperate with the US on Iraq policy, which remained a significant factor in the US-Turkish strategic relationship. Nevertheless, Turkey's divergence from the US on interests and priorities, and the costs, risks and necessity of preserving the alliance relationship for Turkey's national interests translated into frustration and resentment in Turkey. This negative legacy formed the context of the major challenges to Turkey-US cooperation in the subsequent period.

3. Second Empirical Case for Scenario Three: Towards the Iraq War, 2001-2003

Turkish foreign policy behaviour during the Iraq War in 2003 offers a demonstration of scenario three. In this scenario, when state (a) does not agree on independent variable one, the nature of the strategic threat, and if the demands and expectations of state (b) from (a) for the actual strategy are likely to create high costs and risks for (a), there is an expectations gap, and (a) will disagree on the actual strategy, (independent variable two). Nevertheless, in the second part of this scenario, (a) might still feel forced to cooperate with (b) in implementation of the actual strategy if the perceived costs of non-cooperation are higher than those of cooperation. In this scenario, security cooperation may vary from cooperation to limited or non-cooperation in the absence of agreement on independent variable one, but conditional agreement on independent variable two. In other words, in the absence of an agreement on a strategic threat, there is still a possibility for cooperation on strategy, conditional on issues of alliance management, costs and benefits, relative gains, and whether the expectations of both parties converge or diverge, although the resultant state behaviour may vary from cooperation to limited or non-cooperation. This scenario is applied to Turkey's behaviour during the Iraq War below.

Independent variable one: Agreement on a significant/strategic common threat

As argued in Chapter 6, there was no convergence of Turkish and American perceptions of the Iraqi threat before the Iraq War in 2003. From the US perspective, Saddam and his regime constituted a grave and urgent threat to vital US interests, especially in the post-9/11 world. Turkey, however, while appreciating the destabilising effect of Saddam's regime on the region, neither concurred with nor was convinced by the US case, which seemed to greatly exaggerate the nature and urgency of the threat from Iraq. This divergence was therefore prevalent in the Turkish approach to Turkey-US discussions on strategy to deal with Saddam's regime.

The first area of consideration is the impact of unit-level factors in Turkey's definition and perception of the threat from Iraq before the Iraq War. Schweller argues that balancing is not the expected form of state behaviour when there is a significant disagreement among state elites in terms of threat perception, or when elites agree on the threat but disagree over the appropriate remedy.[909] In this sense, the two successive Turkish governments of Ecevit and Gül pursued near-identical approaches during negotiations with the US in 2002-2003 in that they had no agreement with the US over the nature of the threat from Iraq. At the same time, three significant factors were at play in terms of determining the domestic political context of Turkey's behaviour: the continued resentment over the unintended consequences of the Gulf War on Turkey's political, security, and economic interests; the overwhelming public opposition to war; and the risks that cooperation with the US on Iraq posed for the AK Party government's democratisation reforms.

Independent variable two: Agreement on strategy to deal with the significant/strategic common threat

The absence of agreement on the first independent variable, the strategic threat, precipitates the questions of whether there was still the possibility for Turkey and the US to agree on the requisite strategy to deal with Saddam's regime. The answer involves analysing the parameters for a state to agree on the requisite strategy and the prospects of the resultant cooperation.

The US strategy to address the perceived threat from Saddam's regime was military coercion to ensure Iraqi compliance with UNSC obligations, but, more importantly, to achieve regime change. The US sought Turkey's full support and cooperation in the implementation of this strategy. Turkey would have preferred Saddam's replacement with a more democratic regime, and agreed with the US case for disarmament. Yet, for Turkey, the Iraqi situation neither warranted war, nor did the use of force offer the appropriate method for achieving the desired ends. From the Turkish perspective, there were a number of complicating factors regarding the merits of the strategy. First, Turkey believed the US had not seriously considered the likely consequences of war, especially on Iraq's internal balance of ethno-sectarian identities and on external dynamics, including implications for the regional balance of power, whereby Iran could potentially become the major beneficiary of regime change with substantial leverage on

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[909] Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*, p.173

Iraqi Shiite groups. Second, the Bush administration was seriously divided on Iraq strategy, including on US objectives, post-war plans, designs for Iraq's future, and the role of opposition groups. The split within the US administration and the absence of a coherent strategy for any post-Saddam phase magnified Turkey's concerns about the potential consequences of war on Iraq's future. Third, the US strategy focused on use of force against Iraq, which lacked proper justification or a UN mandate. In short, in addition to divergence on threat analysis, there was also disagreement on the key strategy to address the Iraq problem.

Given these clear divergences on the threat and requisite strategy, the most pertinent question is why Turkey, albeit unwillingly, felt compelled to attempt to cooperate with the US in the actual implementation of the strategy to overthrow Saddam's regime by force. The answer involves an element of alliance security dilemma. It was obvious that the US was determined to pursue a strategy of regime change even if it required large-scale military action. It was equally clear that Turkish support or lack thereof in the implementation of that strategy would not influence, change, or stop the US pursuit of a military solution. When war became unavoidable, Turkey would face all its corollary implications, including Iraq's fragmentation and continued instability and shifts in the regional balance of power. It would also create direct challenges to Turkish interests, including Kurdish independence, a resurgence of PKK activities in Northern Iraq, a refugee flow across Turkey's borders, and a heavy blow to the Turkish economy. Thus the risks and costs of non-cooperation with the US seemed higher than those of cooperation, including exclusion of Turkish views and red lines in US plans for the post-Saddam period. In view of the importance that Washington placed on regime change and its apparent inevitability, accommodation of Washington's request for full support offered Ankara a less costly option along with the possibility of curtailing the repercussions of US strategy. It also presented an opportunity to factor Turkish views into Washington's plans about Iraq's future. The result was a reluctant effort to take part in the actual implementation of the US strategy without an agreement on the level of threat or the virtues of the strategy itself. This problem became evident and prevailed in the ensuing Turkey-US talks on political, economic, and military tracks.

The Turkish motive was thus to secure its interests following regime change and, especially after AK Party's rise to power, the Turkish strategy on Iraq was an extension of this general concept. Concurrently, Turkey sought a diplomatic solution to the Iraq problem through bilateral and regional efforts to convince Saddam to comply with his

disarmament obligations. At one stage, Turkey even initiated an effort among Iraq's neighbours to mitigate the negative ramifications of the increasingly inevitable war.

In explaining Turkey's behaviour in 2003, in addition to the apparent problem of divergence on independent variables one and two, the question of the expectations gap is another area that is worth analysing. Scenario three in the integrative model argues that an expectations gap plays an important role in determining security cooperation. Turkey fundamentally disagreed with the US perception of the nature and urgency of the Iraqi threat. However, had the US requests and expectations from Turkey regarding its strategy to address the threat been minimal or limited, and had there been minimal costs, risks, or even some relative gains for cooperation, in all likelihood Turkey would have agreed with the US on the actual strategy, yielding full security cooperation. However, from the very outset, the considerable expectations gap was a complicating factor during the negotiations. Washington never appreciated the difficulty and risks for Ankara of allowing enormous levels of US troop deployment in and through Turkish territory, or of basing rights and use of military installations in a political context in which the Turkish public was overwhelmingly war averse. Most importantly, the scale of the US deployment would have required declaring a state of emergency in many Turkish cities, undercutting the AK Party government's focus on democratic reforms. The dilemma for Ankara in supporting the US was to mitigate the associated risks of war without compromising the domestic political situation and regional balance of power. Since non-cooperation would create high costs and risks, Turkey tried to implement the US strategy on a conditional basis. Turkey pursued a strategy of eliciting binding political, military, and economic MOUs with the US with a view to mitigating the repercussions of war on its national interests. For the US, all these issues seemed secondary to its primary interest in assuring full Turkish support in its military action.

The tension that prevailed in the Turkey-US discussions on Iraq strategy reflected another problem; the trust gap over the frankness of the bilateral consultations. The negotiations stalled on every critical issue, including the status of Northern Iraq, relations with the Iraqi Kurds, the treatment of the Turkomen, and the objections of the US to Turkish military deployment in the region. The Turkish motive was to constrain the Iraqi Kurdish drive for independence and federalism, while the US enlisted the support of the Kurdish groups in pursuit of the strategy of regime change through military action, explicitly endorsing the Kurdish cause for federalism. The most sensitive issue emerged in Washington's fervent opposition and reluctant agreement to

Turkish force deployment in Northern Iraq, apparently in tandem with Kurdish objections. From the Turkish perspective, Washington's policy was to, as far as possible, avoid accommodating vital Turkish national interests, even as it pressured Turkey for full cooperation in the military action. This calculation undermined Turkish confidence in the reliability of US assurances that it would respect Turkey's strategic interests in Iraq, maintain Iraq's territorial integrity, prevent regional instability, and give Turkey an important voice in shaping post-Saddam Iraq. In the end, Turkey and the US reached agreement on the political, economic and military MOUs, but failed to overcome their considerable expectations and trust gaps. The TBMM's decision on 1 March 2003 to reject the AK Party government's motion to allow the opening up of a northern front through Turkey for the US invasion of Iraq was thus a result of these intertwined factors. However, it should be remembered that this was not the last act of the TBMM regarding the Iraq War; on 19 March 2003 it accepted the government' second motion to grant unconditional overflight permission to US forces, which Wolfowitz defines as 'enormously important' since the US used Turkish airspace to conduct air operations and transport special forces and airborne troops during the Iraq War.[910]

In the final analysis, in the lead up to the Iraq War, there was no agreement between Turkey and the US on whether Iraq was an adversary posing a significant/strategic threat (independent variable one), or on the merits of the proposed strategy (independent variable two), yet there remained a possibility for cooperation on its implementation. For Turkey, whether to commit itself to cooperation with the US, and the modalities and degree of its support for the US in its strategy of war was a secondary level alliance security dilemma in the form of entrapment: Turkey's attempt to cooperate with the US resulted from pressure and fear of the costs and risks of non-cooperation rather than from convergence of interests and perceptions. First, Turkey had no power of veto over the US course of action since the scope and extent of Turkish support was irrelevant for Washington in pursuing the strategy of regime change through military action. Second, Turkey had no identical interests with the US in the implementation of the strategy, and in fact the strategy would most likely produce repercussions on Turkey's national security interests. Third, for Turkey, the risks and costs of non-cooperation with the US seemed to outweigh those of cooperation since non-cooperative behaviour would potentially lead to Turkey's exclusion from talks and plans for a post-Saddam Iraq, as

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[910] *Special Hearing on Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2003 Before the Committee on Appropriations of the US Senate* on 27 March 2003, 108th Congress.

well as non-observance of Turkey's redlines. The problem of Turkey and the US' divergent expectations of the actual implementation of the strategy and the trust gap between the parties also undermined the prospects for cooperation. Lastly, the US administration was unable to comprehend the unit-level factors in terms of the sensitivities of Turkish domestic politics. The resultant Turkish behaviour was non-cooperation, expressed in the 1 March TBMM vote.

Against this backdrop, what happened in the TBMM on 1 March 2003 defined not only a decision on whether to support the US in the Iraq War, but determined the future orientation and scope of the Turkey-US strategic partnership. As Parris observes, 'what is indisputable is that US-Turkish strategic partnership, to the extent it still meant anything at all, meant something quite different on the evening of March 1 than it had that morning.'[911] That vote, despite the later decision to extend limited support to the US war effort, put Turkey-US relations in a new strategic context defined by the 'Iraq gap'; an issue of continuing controversy in Turkey-US relations. In the final analysis, however, Turkey's decision in 2003 was a reflection of Ankara's decade-long grievances over the unintended consequences of the Gulf War. These grievances were instrumental in how Turkey conceived both the prospects for its cooperation with the US on Iraq and Washington's assurances about the application and consequences of the US strategy.

This research has presented a detailed empirical analysis of Turkey's relationship with the US vis-á-vis Iraq in 1990-2003, based on an integrative model of Turkey-US security cooperation. However, the question remains of whether the integrative model is a valid conceptual framework to explain Turkey-US relations on Middle Eastern issues beyond the Iraq case. In this sense, two recent cases stand out: Iran's nuclear program and the situation in Syria.

Firstly, there is the question of Turkey-US non-cooperation on Iran's nuclear program. Turkey and the US agree on the general principle that all nations are entitled to peaceful nuclear energy and that any nation with a nuclear program has to fully abide by their obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Turkey and the US also both fully object to Iran developing nuclear weapons capability. Thus, in accordance with independent variable one of the integrative model, Turkey and the US concur on the significant/strategic threat that a nuclear Iran could pose to regional and global stability.

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[911] Parris, 'Starting Over'

The question then remains of why Turkey voted against the resolution that introduced additional sanctions on Iran in the UNSC in 2010. There are various conflicting explanations for Turkey's behaviour, including the popular contemporary implication that the perceived shift in the axis of Turkey's foreign policy was due to the government's ideological orientation. However, that argument soon dropped out of public debate as events soon demonstrated its nonsensical character, especially after Turkey's decision to allow basing rights for NATO missile defence radar systems in Turkish territory in 2011. The integrative model offers a rather more accurate explanation. Even though Turkey and the US agreed on independent variable one, in terms of independent variable two, there was no agreement on the strategy to deal with Iran's nuclear program. Turkey argued that diplomacy and dialogue with Iran were key to settling the risks of and concerns about Iran's nuclear program while the US insisted on implementing enforcement measures on Iran, including multiple sanctions through the UNSC and in coordination with the EU. Turkey was opposed to the sanctions on the grounds that they had never worked efficiently to change the foreign policy behaviour of states. In view of the experience of UN sanctions against Saddam, the policy was most likely to inflict damage on neighbouring countries without achieving the intended outcome. However, Turkey did agree to implement sanctions against Iran mandated by UNSCRs, but opposed the additional sanctions devised by the US and the EU alone. More importantly, in coordination with the US, Turkey worked closely with Brazil to negotiate the Tehran Agreement in 2010, which satisfied US expectations from Ankara for a swap of Iran's enriched uranium. Surprisingly, however, Washington then opposed the agreement once it was concluded, and this was instrumental in Turkey's no vote in the UNSC. Thus, in the end, despite agreement on independent variable one, the absence of agreement on independent variable two was the major factor in non-cooperation between Turkey and the US on Iran's nuclear program.

The same argument can be applied to Turkey-US cooperation on the situation in Syria today. In terms of independent variable one, Turkey and the US agree that Bashar Assad's regime and its massacre of thousands of Syrian civilians is a threat to regional stability and that his regime has to be replaced with a democratic one. They have also agreed on independent variable two during discussions in terms of the need for UNSCR-mandated policies to protect civilians, but these have never materialised due to Russian and Chinese vetoes in the UNSC. However, it is not possible to argue at this

point that, despite Turkey-US concurrence on the threat, they have an agreement on a tangible strategy to achieve transition and regime change in Syria.

Finally, questions over the explanatory power of any theoretical model of state behaviour and foreign policy formulation remain central among scholars of international relations and practitioners of diplomacy. In addition to exhibiting certain limitations, even regarding relevant cases, such models might prove unreliable when tested empirically. This raises the question of what explanatory power any theoretical strand can bring to bear in understanding and capturing what Waltz defines as the 'complicated business' of states foreign policy formulation.[912] As this author witnessed in the office of the Turkish Foreign Minister over four and a half years, the formation and making of foreign policy is really a very dynamic and complicated process, contingent on human responses to both long-term structural factors and sudden, unprecedented developments on the international and domestic political scenes. Although structural realism, alliance theory and neoclassical realism all contribute to a conceptual framework for international politics, it is impossible for either the realist paradigm or any other theory to exhaustively explain foreign policy formulation as well, which involves both first-hand knowledge and interdisciplinary work across fields. This challenge was perhaps best formulated by Madeleine Albright, when she lamented in interview the 'disconnect in many ways between people that are pure academics and people that are practitioners.' This underlines the need for active diplomats to understand theory and historical context, as well as for theorists to aim at policy relevance.[913] To that end, it is hoped that the integrative model developed here will continue to offer an analytical tool that contributes to the understanding and study of Turkey's foreign policy behaviour in terms of whether it cooperates or not with the US on issues related to the Middle East.

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[912] J. J. Mearsheimer, 'Reckless States and Realism'. p.241.
[913] Albright, interview.

APPENDIX 1: CAST OF INTERVIEWEES

Morton Abramowitz: US Ambassador to Turkey, 1989-1991.

Yıldırım Akbulut: Prime Minister of Turkey, 1989-1991.

Mustafa Akşin: Permanent Representative of Turkey to the UN, 1988-1993.

Madeleine Albright: US Secretary of State, 1997-2001.

Iyad Allawi: President of Iraqi National Accord, 1991-2003; Prime Minister of Iraq, 2004-2005.

Ali Babacan: Turkish Minister of State for Economic Affairs, 2002-2007; Foreign Minister, 2007-2009; Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey 2009-.

Masoud Barzani: Chairman of the KDP, President of the Governing Council of Iraq, 2004, President of the Kurdistan Regional Government, 2005-.

Nechirvan Barzani: Deputy Chairman of the KDP, Prime Minister of Kurdistan Regional Government 2006-2009, and 2012-.

Fikret Bila: Turkish journalist and columnist for *Milliyet*.

Hüseyin Avni Botsalı: Head of Department for Middle East and Gulf Affairs of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs,1996-98; Counsellor at the Turkish Embassy in Washington DC, 1998-2001.

Ali Bozer: Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, 1989-1990; Foreign Minister, 1990.

Deniz Bölükbaşı: Ambassador and Turkey's negotiator on the military Memorandum of Understanding with the US before the Iraq War

Matthew Bryza: Director for Europe and Eurasia of the US National Security Council, 2001-2009.

Tahsin Burcuoğlu: Deputy Director General for Policy Planning Department of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993-1997; Ambassador, Director General for Middle East of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2002-2004; Secretary General of the Turkish National Security Council, 2007-2010.

Cengiz Çandar: Turkish journalist and columnist, adviser to the late President Turgut Özal.

Ömer Çelik: Member of the Turkish Parliament since 2002 and political adviser to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan; Deputy Chairman of the AK Party 2010-2013; Minister for Culture and Tourism, 2013-.

Hikmet Çetin: Turkish Foreign Minister, 1991-1994; Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, 1997-1999.

Ahmet Davutoğlu: Turkish Foreign Minister, 2009-; Chief Adviser to Prime Minister Abdullah Gül, 2002-2003 and Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan 2003-2009.

Oğuz Demiralp: Special Adviser to Turkish Foreign Minister İsmail Cem, 1997-2000.

Süleyman Demirel: Prime Minister of Turkey, 1991-1993; President of Turkey, 1993-2000.

Robert S. Deutsch: Director of Northern Gulf Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, US Department of State, 1995-1998; Deputy Chief of Mission to US Embassy in Turkey, 2002-2005.

Vehbi Dinçerler: Turkish Minister of State, 1989-1991.

Safin Dizai: KDP Representative to Turkey in the 1990s, the Spokesperson of the KRG.

Sefa Giray: Turkish Minister of National Defence, 1989-1990; Turkish Foreign Minister, 1991.

Marc Grossman: US Ambassador to Turkey, 1994-1997; US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, 2001-2005.

Abdullah Gül: Prime Minister of Turkey, 2002-2003; Deputy Prime Minister and Turkish Foreign Minister, 2003-2007; President of Turkey, 2007-.

John P. Hannah: Deputy National Security Adviser and National Security Advisor to US Vice President Dick Cheney, 2001-2009.

Fuad Hüseyin: Chief of Staff of the President of the Kurdistan Regional Government 2009-.

Tacan İldem: The Chief of Cabinet and Chief Foreign Policy Adviser to Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, 2000-2003; Turkish Ambassador to the Netherlands 2003-2006; Turkish Ambassador to 2007-2009.

Nüzhet Kandemir: Turkish Ambassador to Iraq 1982-1986; Undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1986-1989; Turkish Ambassador to US, 1989-1998.

Kamran Karadaghi: Iraqi Kurdish journalist, interpreter, diplomatic correspondent, and editor, former adviser to Jalal Talabani.

Zalmay Khalilzad: Special Assistant to the US President and the Senior Director for Southwest Asia, Near East, and North African Affairs at the US National Security Council, 2001-2003; Special Presidential Envoy for Afghanistan, 2001-2003; Ambassador at Large for Free Iraqis, 2002-2003; US Ambassador to Afghanistan, 2003-2005; US Ambassador to Iraq, 2005-2007.

Osman Korutürk: Deputy Director General for Middle East of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993-1996; Turkish Ambassador to Iran 1996-1997; Ambassador and Special Envoy for Iraq, 2003-2005.

Alan Makovsky: State Department liaison officer and political advisor to Operation Provide Comfort, 1992; Special Advisor to US Special Middle East Coordinator in 1993; US Senior Fellow, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1994-2001.

John J. Mearsheimer: Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

Onur Öymen: Ambassador, Undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1995-1997; Permanent Representative of Turkey to NATO, 1997-2002.

Murat Özçelik: Deputy Chief and Chief of Cabinet to President Turgut Özal, 1990-1992; Special Envoy for Iraq, 2007-2009; Turkish Ambassador to Iraq, 2009-2011.

Mark Parris: Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near East Affairs, Department of State, 1992-1995; Senior Director and Special Assistant to the President of the United States, National Security Council, 1995-1997; US Ambassador to Turkey, 1997-2000.

Richard Perle: Assistant Secretary of Defence for Global Strategic Affairs, 1981-1987; Chairman of the US Defence Policy Board Advisory Committee, 2001-2003.

Barham Salih: PUK Representative to the US, 1991-2001; Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, 2006-2009; Prime Minister of KRG, 2009-2012.

Özdem Sanberk: Ambassador, Undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1991-1995; Turkish Ambassador to the UK, 1995-2000.

Brent Scowcroft: US National Security Advisor, 1975-1977 and 1989-1993; Chairman of the US President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, 2001-2005.

Feridun Sinirlioğlu: Adviser to Prime Minister Demirel, 1992; Chief Foreign Policy Adviser to President Demirel, 1996-2000; Deputy Director General for the Middle East, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2000-2002; Turkish Ambassador to Israel, 2002-2007; Undersecretary, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009-.

Kaya Toperi: Ambassador, Spokesperson for President Turgut Özal, 1990-1993.

Stephen M. Walt: Professor of International Affairs at Harvard University

Cüneyt Zapsu: Founding Member of the AK Party, Adviser to Chairman and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, 2001-2011.

Hoshyar Zebari: Spokesperson and Representative of the Kurdistan Democratic Party to the UK and the US in the 1990s; Iraqi Foreign Minister, 2003-.

Uğur Ziyal: Turkish Ambassador to Syria, 1992-1997; Deputy Undersecretary and Undersecretary, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998-2004.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AK Party   *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party)
ANAP   *Anavatan Partisi* (Motherland Party)
CBM   Confidence Building Measures
CENTCOM   Central Command
CENTO   Central Treaty Organization
CHP   *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican Peoples' Party)
CIA   US Central Intelligence Agency
D-8   The Developing Eight Countries (Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Turkey)
DOD   US Department of Defense
DSP   *Demokratik Sol Parti* (Democratic Left Party)
DYP   *Doğru Yol Partisi* (True Path Party)
EC   European Community (EU after 1993)
ESF   Economic Support Fund
EU   European Union
EUCOM   European Command
FMF   Foreign Military Financing
FOIA   US Freedom of Information Act
IMF   International Monetary Fund
IMTP   *Irak Milli Türkmen Partisi* (Iraq National Turkomen Party)
ILA   Iraq Liberation Act
INA   Iraqi National Accord
INC   Iraqi National Council
ITF   Iraqi Turkomen Front
KDP   Kurdistan Democratic Party (Iraq)
KF   Kurdish Front
KRG   Kurdistan Regional Government (Iraq)
MCC   Military Coordination Center
MFA   Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MGK   *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu* (Turkish National Security Council)
MHP   *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Turkish Nationalist Movement Party)
MOU   Memorandum of Understanding
NAC   North Atlantic Council (NATO)
NATO   North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFZ   No-Fly Zone
NILE   Northern Iraq Liaison Element (CIA)
NSC   US National Security Council
ODS   Operation Desert Storm
OEF   Operation Enduring Freedom
OIC   Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

ONW	Operation Northern Watch
OSW	Operation Southern Watch
OPC	Operation Provide Comfort (both phases)
OPC-I	Operation Provide Comfort I (April 1991-July 1991)
OPC-II	Operation Provide Comfort II (July 1991-December 1996)
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PMF	Peace Monitoring Force
PUK	Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan
RP	*Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party)
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SCIRI	Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SPMG	Supervisory Peace Monitoring Group
TBMM	*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi* (Grand National Assembly of Turkey)
TGS	Turkish General Staff
THK	*Türk Hava Kuvvetleri* (Turkish Air Force)
TSF	Turkish Special Forces
TSK	*Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri* (Turkish Armed Forces)
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
US	United States
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Letter dated 22 January 1997 by Jalal Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK, to Onur Öymen, the Undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Letter dated 20 June 1997 by Süleyman Demirel, the President of the Republic of Turkey, to the leaders of members of the Arab League.

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Letter dated 27 February 1998 by Jalal Talabani, the Secretary General of the PUK, to İsmail Cem, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Letter dated 1 February 2002 by Bülent Ecevit, the Prime Minister of Turkey, to Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq.

Letter dated 9 January 2003 by Abdullah Gül, the Prime Minister of Turkey, to Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq.

Letter dated 24 February 2003 by George W. Bush, the President of the US, to Abdullah Gül, the Prime Minister of Turkey.

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