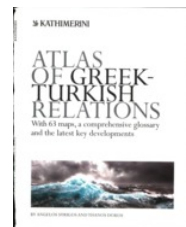


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# GLOSSARY OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS

**Thanos Dokos**

Phd in International Relations - Cambridge University

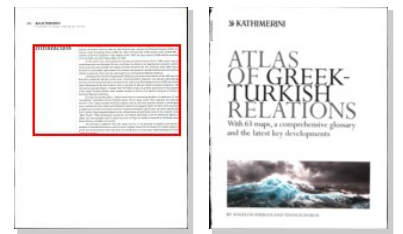
The "Glossary of Greek-Turkish Relations" was originally written in Greek in 2018 and revised in 2019 when the author was the director general of the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP). Some limited revisions were made to the glossary for the purposes of this publication by Kathimerini.

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## Introduction

Over the last 60 years or so, Greece and Turkey have rather frequently found themselves in periods of serious crisis or even on the brink of war: during the Istanbul Pogrom (1955), the various crises involving Cyprus (1963-64, 1967, 1974 and the S-300 missile crisis of 1997-98), a number of serious incidents in the Aegean (1976, 1987, the Imia crisis in 1996 and the evolving crisis of 2020), and the Öcalan Affair of 1999.

At the same time, and especially during the period from 1974 to 1999, there was an escalating arms race between the two countries, resulting in an ongoing low-intensity conflict with occasional lulls. Despite the rapprochement between the two countries after 1999, which resulted in a noticeable improvement in economic and people-to-people relations and the political climate in general, there was no real progress in normalizing bilateral relations.

Although there are few fundamental differences between the policies of the AKP and the Kemalist opposition parties on the issue of Greek-Turkish relations, one should acknowledge that much of the period of rule in Turkey by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) has overall been characterized by low tension, even in periods of intense Greek economic weakness. The situation gradually began to change after the failed coup of July 2016, partly due to the incident of the eight Turkish officers who sought asylum in Greece, but mainly because of Turkey's growing regional ambitions.

During this period (2016- ), there have been an increasing number of references to and “escalating” reminders of the Turkish theory of the “gray zones” (for example, low-altitude flyovers over a large number of Greek islands), which calls into question Greece's sovereignty over a number of rocks, islets and inhabited islands in the Aegean. More recently, there has been a significant increase in tension caused by Turkish statements and actions, and more specifically the Turkish-Libyan memorandum for the delimitation of maritime zones in the context of the “Mavi Vatan” (“Blue Homeland”) narrative, the hybrid operations in Evros (February-March of 2020), and the multiple times Turkey has sent its ships to conduct research in maritime areas which Greece considers as its own.

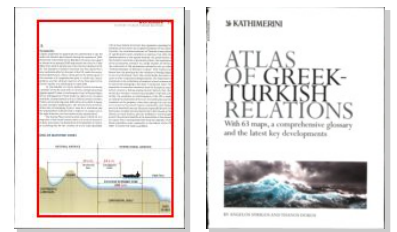
This glossary, together with the maps section, is an attempt to explain and clarify a number of specialized terms as well as more complex issues for the benefit of a wider audience, Greek and international, who may have an insufficient or inaccurate understanding of Greek-Turkish relations.

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## A

### The Annan Plan

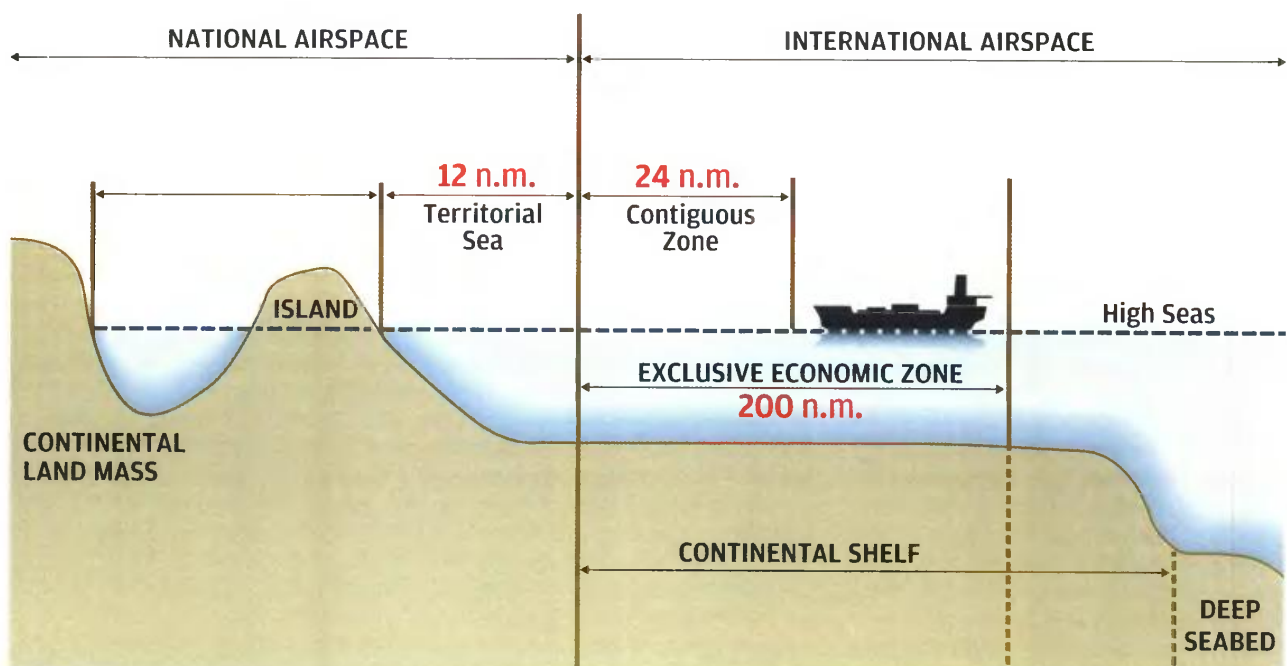
Cyprus submitted its application for membership to the EU under the Vasiliou government during the summer of 1990. The Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Cyprus was signed in Athens in the spring of 2003 and entered into force on 1 May 2004, when Cyprus became one of the ten new members of the EU. The prospect of Cypriot accession was the catalyst for a new mediation effort on the part of the UN, under Secretary-General Kofi Annan, which culminated in the presentation of five versions of a comprehensive plan to resolve the Cyprus problem, and the ultimate rejection of the final plan by the Greek-Cypriots in a referendum in April 2004.

As the Republic of Cyprus headed towards becoming a member of the EU, and with its citizens already launching appeals against Turkey at the European Court of Human Rights for the infringement of their property rights in the occupied territories, Ankara seemed to be in a difficult position; besides, Turkey was also facing great difficulties in its effort to begin its own accession negotiations. The UN Secretary-General's initial idea of leveraging Cyprus' need for a resolution and the simultaneous Turkish need to improve its image was in the right direction, but was rather poorly implemented.

The Annan Plans caused a great sense of distrust in a large part of the Greek Cypriot public as a result of several of its basic provisions: the dissolution of the Republic of Cyprus as a prerequisite for the creation of a new state (probably

with a loose federal structure); the vagueness regarding the timeline for the return of occupied territories to the Greek-Cypriots; the continued presence of Turkish troops (albeit in significantly lower numbers) in Cyprus even after the implementation of the agreed solution; the preservation of the obsolete institution of guarantor powers; the legalization of the permanent presence of a large number of settlers; the conversion of the agreements reached by the so-called "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" with Turkey into federal law; the provision for the existence of foreign judges in the Constitutional Court who would make decisions in cases of inter-community disagreements; the imposition of limitations in the installation of members of each community on territories belonging to the other "constituent state"; the imposition of extensive deviations from the European acquis (which created a feeling among Greek Cypriots that they would also become a second-class member of the EU); and, finally, the weakness or unwillingness of the UN to make an indicative assessment of the cost of reunification and the resolution of the property issue (even though the cost was to be borne by the Greek Cypriot community, and Turkey was to be absolved from any financial responsibilities for the deprivation of rights and the destruction it had caused on the island); all these factors, plus the inability to convincingly present the potential benefits of the Annan Plan to the citizens of Cyprus, led to strong objections from the majority of the Greek population and, eventually, to the failure of the UN effort to resolve the Cyprus problem.

## UNCLOS MARITIME ZONES



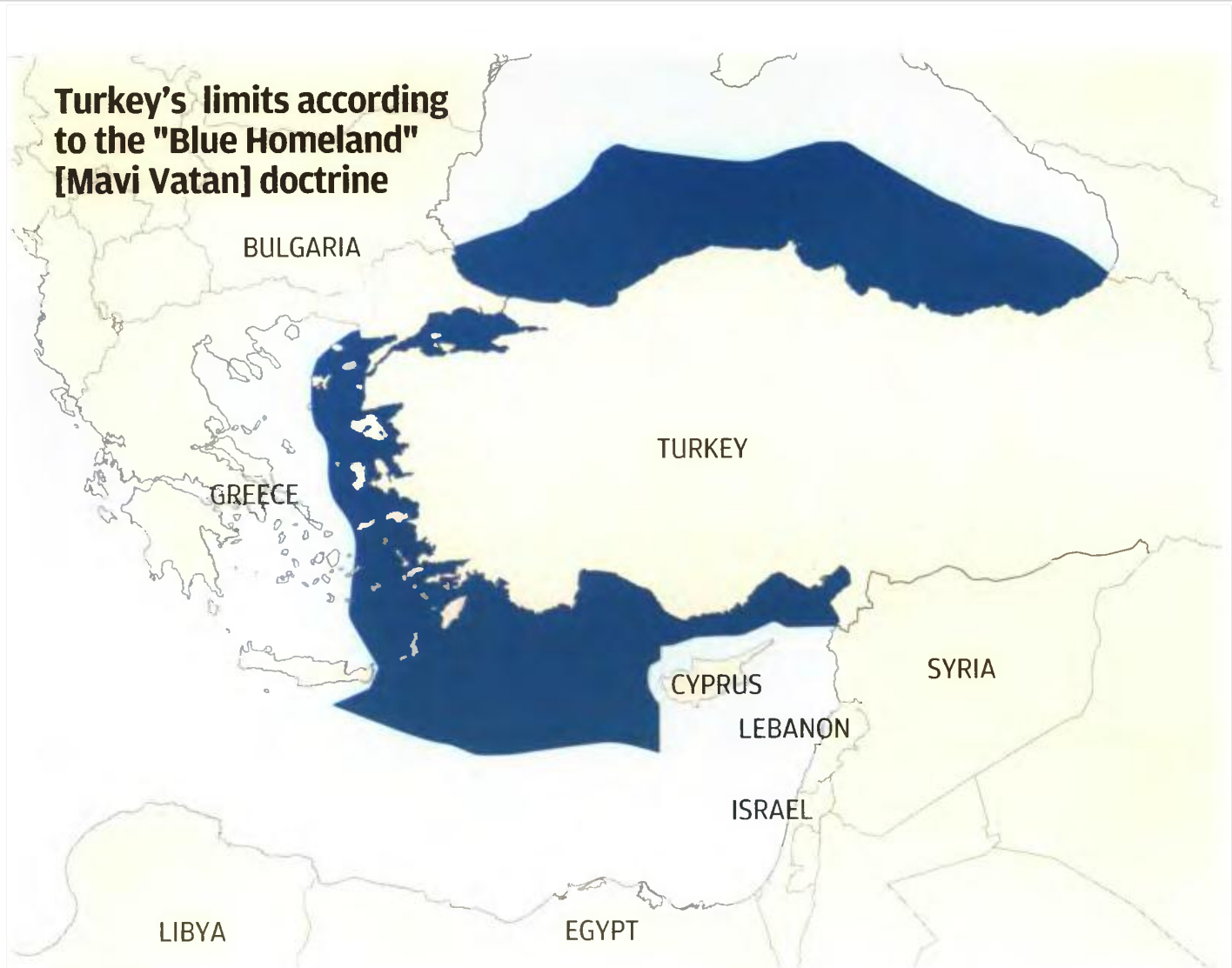
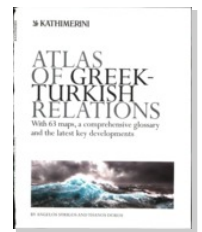
Sources: Batongbacal and Baviera (2013)

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Ultimately, the Annan Plan 5 was accepted by 65% of Turkish Cypriots, but was rejected by 76% of Greek Cypriots in the April 2004 referendum. The accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the EU followed shortly after.

### B

#### Balance of military power

The chart on the following page depicts the balance of military power between Greece and Turkey. It must be noted that, as far as military forces are concerned, the purges of Air Force pilots and other experienced military officials in Turkey as a result of the failed coup of July 2016, and the increasing use of ideological rather than merit-based criteria for promotions or postings, have undoubtedly had a negative effect on the war fighting capability of the Turkish Armed Forces. At the same time, however, in the context of Greek-Turkish relations, the risk of an accident spiraling out of control due to lack of experience has increased. Turkey has invested considerable resources in order to develop its defense industry, while at the same time has been procuring sophisticated air-defense systems (S-400, from Russia; as a result, sanctions have been imposed by the US and Turkey has been excluded from the

program for the co-production and acquisition of the 5th generation F-35 fighter planes), and systems of intelligence gathering and battle management, ranging from a broad spectrum of sensors to space-based systems.

Even though there does not seem to be at present any serious cause for concern regarding a radical upset of the balance of military power between Greece and Turkey, maintaining a balance of power with an adversary with almost three times the budget for defense spending and with strong regional ambitions (although, certainly, also many open “fronts”) will not be a simple matter for Greece. The utilization of new technologies in the context of an out-of-the-box way of thinking could play a major role in this.

#### Blue Homeland (“Mavi Vatan” in Turkish)

This is both a narrative and a strategic plan to overcome the obstacles posed by geography and international law to an expansion of Turkish-controlled maritime zones in the Eastern Mediterranean (as *de jure* changes to land borders is a much more difficult task). In addition to the rather expected maximalist positions, this narrative is characterized by a highly creative and innovative interpretation of international law and a surreal approach to geographical reality (see also Turkey-Saraj Memorandum).



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## C

### Casus Belli

In June 1995, a few days after the ratification of the Convention on the Law of the Sea by Greece, the Turkish Grand National Assembly issued a resolution stating, among other things, that “... *It is not possible... for Turkey to accept that it must establish its naval connection with the high seas and oceans via Greek territorial waters. Turkey has vital interests in the Aegean. The Turkish National Assembly, while hoping that the Greek government will not decide to extend its territorial waters in the Aegean beyond six miles, thereby upsetting the balance established in Lausanne, has decided to delegate to the Turkish government all the responsibilities, including those deemed necessary from a military point of view, for the preservation and defense of the vital interests of our country...*”

This threat of war did not concern a potential violation of international law, but a state exercising its legal rights. Greece made a series of formal protests to international organizations, primarily pointing out how this violated Article 2.4. of the UN Charter (on abstaining from the threat or use of force against another state). The withdrawal of casus belli is included in all the annual progress reports of the European Commission and in the relevant resolutions of the European Parliament regarding the accession of Turkey to the EU.

### Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)

Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) as a concept in international relations theory first appeared almost sixty years ago during the Cold War, initially at a bilateral level in US-USSR relations and then also at a multilateral level. Such measures usually appear after a crisis or war. A prime example of a CBM was the famous “hotline”, which connected the offices of the heads of state of the US and USSR immediately following the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. The term CBM includes a wide range of measures (political and/or military) that states having difficult relations with each other can use in an effort to:

- Reduce tension in their relationships, and/or
- prevent the possibility of accidental hostilities or a surprise attack, and/or
- confirm the non-hostile nature of their intentions.

The starting point for CBMs is the political will of the parties to promote mutual security. The implementation of such measures is aimed at increasing trust in the intentions of the parties (if these intentions are consistent or not with the pursuit of mutual security). In other words, there is a close relationship between security and trust. It's important to note that when implementing CBMs, the following basic condition must be met first: the measure cannot affect the existing balance of power between the parties. That is, the relative benefits must be mutual, and the balance of power that existed prior to the agreed CBMs must not be upset.

Measures can vary, ranging from a simple “open channel of communication”, to steps to curb military activity and verification measures, up to a non-aggression pact. In the context of Greek-Turkish relations, the Papoulias-Yilmaz Protocol has been signed (see related entry), verification measures are in force under the

Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) and a number of CBMs have been signed since the [limited] bilateral rapprochement started in 1999. A series of measures were agreed upon (although not necessarily implemented), including a two-month (later to be extended to four months) summer moratorium on military exercises in the Aegean, exchange of visits at the level military academies and of chiefs of general staff, a hotline for use in the event of an emergency, cooperation on peace-building missions and natural disasters, etc. “Aviation CBMs” have also been discussed, but without result.

### Constitutional Amendment (Turkey)

The victory of the “yes” vote in the Turkish referendum of 2017 was rather expected, even though the result was very close. The small margin of victory and the allegations brought forth by the opposition and international watchdogs heightened suspicions of some limited tampering of the verdict, but the result remained the same: Turkey began a new chapter in its history and as a result there are now multiple questions concerning the country's future.

Tayyip Erdogan vigorously promoted a constitutional amendment that significantly strengthened the powers of the president, abolished the office of the prime minister, and weakened the powers of parliament and the judiciary, essentially leading to a new model of governance from the Presidential Palace (Ak Saray/White Palace). What is particularly worrying is the apparent absence of a system of checks and balances, in combination with strong autocratic tendencies.

As far as Greek-Turkish relations are concerned, a functioning Western-style democracy is not a necessary prerequisite for maintaining good neighborly relations, or at least for effectively managing problems. However, it is more likely that an autocratic Turkey might drift further away from the EU and the Western code of conduct in interstate relations.

### Continental Shelf

Under international law, a continental shelf is defined as the underwater sea bed and the subsoil beyond the national territorial waters. A state does not possess full sovereignty within its continental shelf, yet it exercises, nonetheless, sovereign rights. These concern exclusively (a) the exploration of the continental shelf, and (b) the exploitation of the continental shelf's natural resources. The continental shelf extends up to 200 nautical miles from the point from which the breadth of the territorial waters is measured, unless the geographical conditions allow for an extension beyond these limits. In such a case, the continental shelf may be extended to up to 350 nautical miles from the shore. In the Mediterranean, no such distances exist.

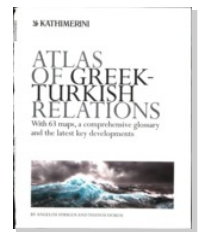
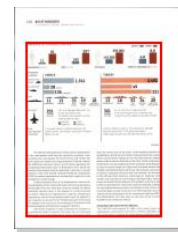
The principal motivation in international efforts to delimit continental shelves has been the exploitation of offshore resources (mainly hydrocarbons), and the same seems to apply in the case of Greece and Turkey, even though the existence of significant and economically exploitable deposits of hydrocarbons in the Aegean has yet to be established with any certainty. The joint exploitation of hydrocarbons in both the Aegean and in the Eastern Mediterranean constitutes a longstanding objective of Ankara.

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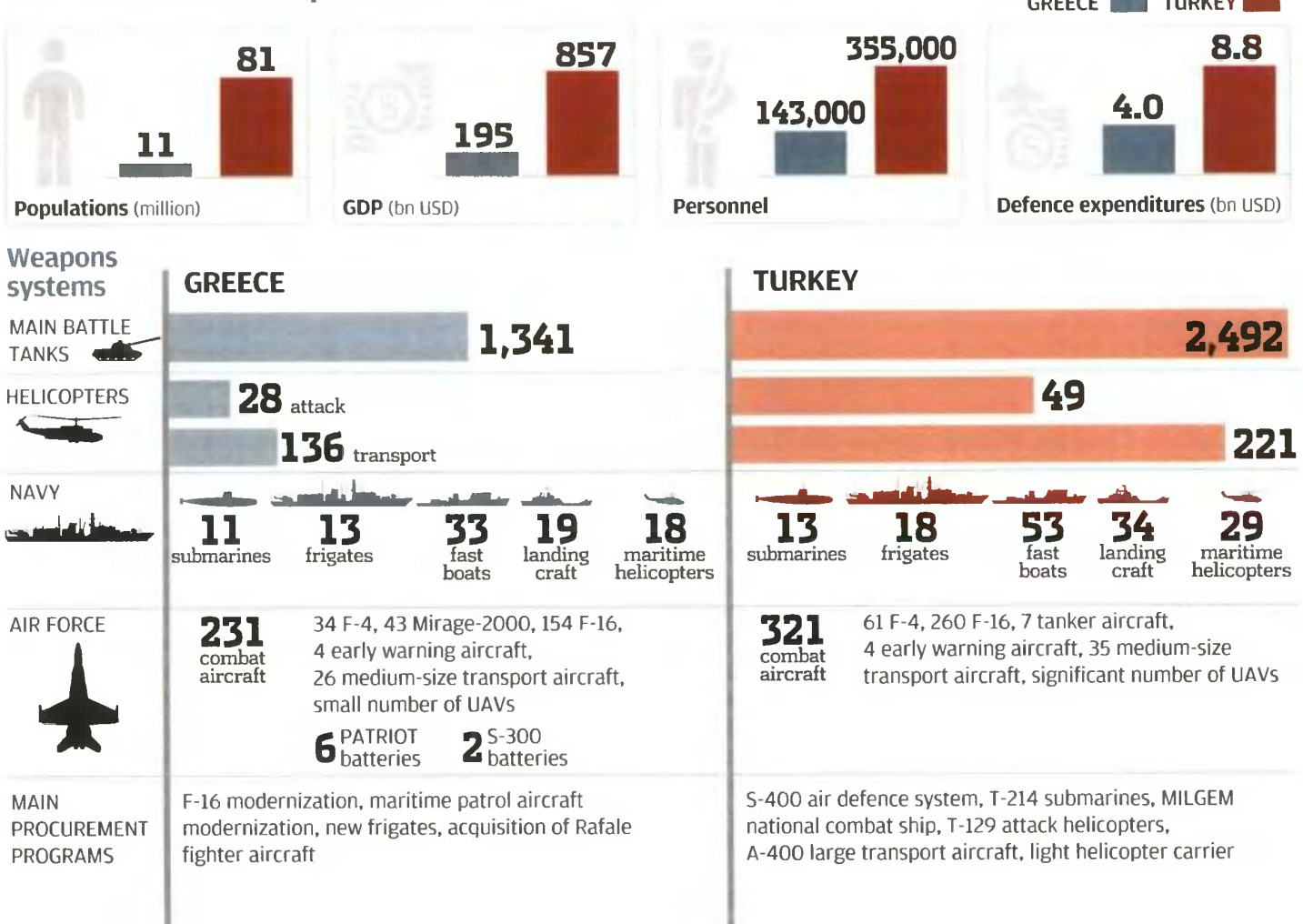
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### Balance of military forces



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The official Greek position has been that the delimitation of the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone constitute the sole dispute between Greece and Turkey (all other issues are treated as being unilateral Turkish claims). The difference between Greece and Turkey regarding the continental shelf dates back to November 1973, when the Turkish Government Gazette published a decision to award licenses to the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) to conduct explorations in underwater regions in close proximity to Greek islands.

Turkey maintains that: a) the fundamental criterion for the delimitation of the continental shelf is the natural-geological relationship of the dry land mass with the seabed; b) islands constitute special cases; c) the Aegean is a semi-enclosed sea which requires the application of special, exceptional regulations; and d) the principle which must be applied is that of equity. An account of the Turkish positions concerning the Aegean can be found at [www.mfa.gov.tr](http://www.mfa.gov.tr) (Turkish-Greek Relations/Aegean Problems/The Aegean Problems).

The Greek response is that a) islands are entitled to a continental shelf in exactly the same way as mainland territories; and b) the delimitation of the continental shelf

must be carried out on the basis of the median line/line of equidistance, which has as its basis of measurement the coastal shores of the Greek islands on the one side and the coastal shores of the Turkish mainland on the other. Greece stipulates, furthermore, two preconditions for the resolution of the dispute: a) that no Greek island will find itself enclosed within the Turkish continental shelf, and b) that the political continuity of Greece's national territory must be ensured. An account of the official Greek positions concerning its relations with Turkey can be found at [www.mfa.gr](http://www.mfa.gr) (Foreign Policy Issues/Issues of Greek-Turkish Relations). The problem with the Greek position regarding the continental shelf and the EEZ as being the sole dispute between Greece and Turkey is that, if the two countries agree to seek recourse to the International Court of Justice for the delimitation of the continental shelf and EEZ, this delimitation will take place on the basis of the current breadth of the territorial waters.

#### Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The UNCLOS was signed in 1982, after many years of negotiations, and entered into force in 1994. It regulates all uses of the oceans, including the delimitation of maritime zones



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and the exploitation of natural resources. More specifically:

- The criteria of the 200-meter isobath and the exploitation of the seabed in the 1958 convention were replaced by the criterion of a distance of up to 200 miles from the coast.
- Islands have full rights to maritime zones, including an EEZ and continental shelf. Rocks that do not have their own economic life were excluded. They were given only territorial waters;
- No specific delimitation rules were defined for the delimitation of the EEZ and the continental shelf. The only question is the general achievement of an “equitable result”;
- The convention has been signed to date by 160 countries, with key exceptions being the United States, Israel, Turkey, Venezuela and Syria.

### Crisis management

Crisis management includes the totality of measures aimed at the avoidance of the military escalation of a political crisis, or, if the original goal cannot be accomplished, the limitation of the extent and intensity of a conflict. Crisis management is more of an art than a science, and is based on a combination of inspiration, wisdom, judgment and abilities of decision makers, rather than a predetermined formula or a rigid set of rules. It is an idiosyncratic mix of decisiveness and caution, intransigence and flexibility, and recklessness and careful moves and actions. Crisis management, a familiar phenomenon during the era of the European balance of powers, gained a new importance in the age of nuclear weapons. Following the terrifying Cuban missile crisis, the then US Defense Secretary Robert McNamara declared – possibly with a hint of hyperbole – that “there is no such thing as strategy, only crisis management”.

Crisis management strategies (in the context of crisis management, the difference between strategy and tactics is smaller than usual, and the two terms often describe similar actions) fall into two broad categories: aggressive strategies, which aim to change the status quo to the detriment of the opponent; and defensive strategies, whose goal is to obstruct or reverse developments that would lead to a detrimental outcome for one’s own side. It should be stressed that instructions on crisis management consist of general advice rather than a specific formula. A single instruction, or a series of instructions, doesn’t cover all eventualities or possible crises. The process of crisis management – assuming there is enough time available – includes the following stages:

- The assessment of a situation as a crisis;
- The correct identification of targets and goals;
- The shaping of alternative courses of action, including the examination of possible benefits and costs for each alternative solution, and the continuous search for new information around the various alternative solutions;
- The selection and implementation of a course of action.

### Crisis of March 1987

A main cause of this crisis, as well as of Greek-Turkish antagonism in general, was the suspected existence of significant hydrocarbon deposits in the Aegean, combined with the geographical peculiarities of the region. According to historian Sotiris Rizas, however, the cause of the crisis

of March 1987 was the lack of effective communication between the two sides and the perception formed by the Turkish leadership at that time that Athens was seeking to start drilling in an area of the continental shelf that had not been delimited. The Turkish side, in responding, sought to emphasize that its strongly-held territorial claims remained unchanged. A possible interpretation is that the crisis was caused by misinterpretations on both sides, and that Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal’s absence from office due to illness gave the ‘hawks’ in the Turkish military and diplomatic corps an opportunity to try to reverse Özal’s policies aimed at a Greek-Turkish rapprochement.

In contrast to the 1996 Imia crisis (see the entry for “Imia crisis”), which most analysts believe led to a negative outcome, the handling by Greece of the March 1987 crisis is seen as having been successful, as Turkey did not subsequently move ahead with offshore seismographic surveys in disputed areas. Paradoxically, and given Turkey’s initial (incorrect) impression that Greece intended to conduct seismographic surveys in disputed areas, the outcome of the crisis was not seen as negative for Turkish interests either.

It is, however, clear that Turkey did not fully mobilize its armed forces during the crisis, whereas Greece proceeded with a general mobilization marked by the departure of the entire fleet from the Salamis Naval Base (and the withdrawal of two submarines from a NATO exercise), the selective mobilization of army reserves and the deployment of fighter jets to front line air bases. Greece also made the decision to temporarily suspend the operation of US bases as a symbolic gesture.

The trip of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Karolos Papoulias, to Sofia and his meeting with the Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov, should also be considered as essentially a symbolic move. The assessment of the Greek side was, however, that this move could create a sense of uncertainty to Turkey, while adding pressure on Western powers to intervene in a firefighting role. It is not certain, however, that Greece would have secured significant diplomatic support from its EEC partners or NATO allies, due to the rather idiosyncratic foreign policy of the Papandreou government, with its waning but still clear leanings toward anti-Americanism and Third-Worldism.

During this period, there was a relative balance between land forces (with a clear, however, numerical superiority for Turkey), a balance between naval forces (but with a clear Greek superiority in terms of personnel quality) and a relative balance in the air (a small numerical superiority for Turkey in fighter jets and a Greek superiority in the quality of personnel). On this point, there is a significant difference with the Imia crisis: in 1987, Turkey did not enjoy air superiority, as it did in 1996.

A comparison of the forces leads to the conclusion that, in a military conflict (if Turkey had decided to mobilize its forces and react in a dynamic manner), Greece would likely not have been defeated. Of course, there is no guarantee that it would have prevailed, either. The most likely result would have been a “draw”, with losses for both sides (depending on the duration of the conflict, which would have been largely determined by the reaction and intervention of the US and NATO). One of the most important lessons of the March 1987 crisis was the need for multiple open channels of communication between

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Athens and Ankara. The lack of such channels played a key role in the 1987 crisis, and made it difficult to manage the Imia crisis in 1996 as well.

### Cyprus Dispute

Even though it does not formally constitute a bilateral Greek-Turkish issue, the Cyprus dispute has played a significant role in the relations between the two countries. The late ambassador Byron Theodoropoulos (the ‘Dean’ of Greek diplomacy), argued that all of the ‘Aegean’ disputes were either invented or exaggerated by Ankara, which wrongly calculated that these could be used to counterbalance the Cyprus problem. Greece constitutes, together with Turkey and Great Britain, a guarantor power of Cyprus, where it has maintained a military presence (the Hellenic Force in Cyprus / ELDYK). It is hard to imagine that a full normalization of relations between Greece and Turkey could ever be achieved without the prior resolution of the Cyprus dispute.

In theory there are three possible alternatives for the future of Cyprus:

- (a) A *de jure* division of the island, involving the return of some of the occupied territories and the two communities agreeing to follow separate paths (to the extent, of course, that this is practically feasible on an island with Cyprus’ particular characteristics).
- (b) Maintaining the current state of affairs in the event that negotiations fail. This would likely not be the final chance for a solution, since diplomacy almost always ensures that there will be a subsequent negotiation. The problem is that in the history of the Cyprus issue, every subsequent proposed solution has been worse for the Greek Cypriot side than the previous one.
- (c) A solution which would be based on the logic of a bizonal and bi-communal federation, based on mutually acceptable terms regarding the central issues/questions (security, territory, property claims, settlers, governance), and with relatively limited jurisdictional powers for the federal government. The key phrase here is that of a “viable and functional solution”, an element which appears to have been missing from the exceptionally complex Annan Plan, which, in its final form, was negative for Greek Cypriot interests (see relevant entry).

In 2004, the Annan Plan for the resolution of the Cyprus dispute was submitted by the United Nations following negotiations between the parties involved. In the referendum, which was subsequently carried out, 65% of the Turkish Cypriot side voted in favor of the plan, whereas 76% of Greek Cypriots voted against it. There have been many (and intense) discussions regarding the weaknesses of the Annan Plan, and most analysts continue to question its functionality and viability. New inter-community discussions were held in 2017, which did not, however, lead to a positive outcome. The main point of disagreement was the question of security (i.e. whether or not to maintain foreign military forces on the island and the system of guarantees).

As a result of flawed assessments, atrocities, distorted perceptions and stereotypes, external interventions and entrenched interests, the Cyprus issue has gradually been

transformed into a particularly multifaceted and complex problem. Its potential solution, however, is based on a simple cost-benefit assessment between two alternatives: the reunification or non-reunification of the island.

In the first case, any solution that may be adopted will be characterized by specific constraints, since the current state of affairs, which is unfavorable to Hellenism, is the result of a defeat in a military confrontation, and, as is well known, any losses sustained on the battlefield cannot be fully restored at the table of diplomatic negotiations. No matter the form of such a reunification of the island, it is possible that it may not allow for the elimination of Turkish influence, yet it could, potentially, achieve its significant reduction. It will certainly bring some territorial gains. Even though the complete removal of all security guarantees and the immediate withdrawal of all foreign military forces is highly desirable, there is disagreement among experts as to whether it is realistic. This is due to the Turkish strategic view regarding Cyprus: according to the former Turkish prime minister, Ahmet Davutoglu (and echoed by high-ranking officials of the erstwhile Kemalist establishment) this is that, “Even if there was not a single Muslim Turk living in Cyprus, there would be a Cyprus question for Turkey because of the island’s geostrategic location, at the heart of its very own vital space.”

Potentially, other solutions could be sought regarding the “easing” of the system of guarantees, and provisions for its gradual phasing out, as well as for the immediate withdrawal of the greater part of the occupying military forces, and for the integration of those that remain in a multinational force, with provisions for a complete withdrawal on the basis of a set timeline.

What needs to be clear, however, is that the solution of a bizonal, bi-communal federation, as it is being discussed today, may on the one hand have potential benefits (territorial benefits, a phasing out of the Turkish presence and influence, economic growth), yet on the other it also entails significant risks in the event that the emerging state of affairs proves to be dysfunctional and non-viable and results in increasing tensions between the two communities and, potentially, between the two “mother countries”. The conversion of a unified Cyprus into a dysfunctional state like “Bosnia - Herzegovina”, and possibly towards the more volatile end of the spectrum, either due to objective difficulties, or due to Turkey’s efforts to undermine the situation after a potential solution, cannot be ruled out.

Alternatively, there is the option of maintaining the current status quo, in the hope of a more favorable set of circumstances and balance of powers arising. However, so far the passage of time has not worked to the benefit of the Greek-Cypriot side, and each new plan for a solution has been worse than that which came before. The most likely outcome is that the non-resolution of the issue will cement the division of the island, with all that entails.

### Criteria for a solution of the Cyprus issue

The solution to the Cyprus issue must be evaluated on the basis of the degree to which the following objectives and interests have been achieved:

As regards the Greek Cypriots, the desired objectives include a clear improvement of the present situation on issues



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such as (a) the territorial question; (b) the reinforcement of a sense of security through the withdrawal of all armed forces, the demilitarization of the island, and the elimination of the Zurich-London system of guarantees; (c) compensation for seized properties; (d) the reduction in the level of political and economic dependence of Turkish Cypriots on Turkey; (e) the smooth functioning of the new state; (f) the unhindered exploitation of energy resources by the two communities; (g) the maintenance of current demographic and political balances; and (h) the economic development of a united Cyprus. The above issues are not presented here necessarily in any order of significance, and they obviously do not all carry the same weight.

As far as Greece is concerned, its interests include: (1) the protection of Hellenism in Cyprus; (2) minimizing the possibility of a political or military conflict with Turkey, and the creation of conditions that will allow for a more general improvement in Greek-Turkish relations; (3) the avoidance of problems that could disrupt the smooth functioning of the EU (in the event that Turkey should wish to use a Turkish-Cypriot veto, or any other arrangements that may be provided for by the solution under negotiation, in order to promote its own interests vis-à-vis the EU); (4) the ability for Greece to have a presence in the Eastern Mediterranean and to continue its cooperation with other countries in the region; and (5) the ability for Greece to participate in energy-related activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. Again, not all of the above interests carry the same weight.

The mix of proposed arrangements regarding the above issues will determine to a great extent the final net positive or negative value of any proposed solution for Hellenic (Greek-Cypriot and Greek) interests. The use of objective criteria (to the extent possible) in the evaluation process can potentially help us come out of a dead-end discussion where the only solutions appear to be either a default acceptance of just about any solution (with all the downsides and the risks this might entail), or the outright rejection of any and every solution (irrespective of their benefits and positive aspects) and the pursuit of an “ideal solution”, which, unfortunately, will never materialize.

In any case, the role of Greece must be to a large degree secondary, supporting the choices made by Nicosia. It should, however, have a more active role in negotiations regarding security arrangements, because of its role as the guarantor of the security of Cypriot Hellenism. The final decision rests with the Greek Cypriots, who will have to weigh the potential benefits and risks of alternative choices.

## D

### Deep State

The term “Deep State” (“derin devlet”) refers to a system, running parallel to the official government apparatus, that regularly intervenes in state affairs, especially those with a national security dimension. Targets of the deep state have included over the years minorities (and especially the Kurds), communists, Islamists, journalists and, in general, anyone who could be considered a threat to the secular state founded by Mustafa Kemal. This parallel system is not subject to any

political control and may act counter to the decisions of the elected government. It became widely known in 1996, with the “Susurluk case”, and a few years later it was identified with the “Ergenekon case”.

In 2014, Erdogan referred to a “parallel state” led by the Gulen organization, known as Hizmet (meaning “Service”). According to government officials, in January 2014 the “parallel state” conspired against the armed forces through the “Ergenekon” and “Balyoz” cases. As a result, court decisions against the “deep state” should be reconsidered in light of the injustices this “parallel state” has caused. As Angelos Syrigos states, “... it is utopian to believe that the Turkish deep state will disappear. The efforts of its ideological opponents in Turkey are focused on transforming it so that it might come under their own control.”

### Dialogue

At various times and for different reasons, the subject of a Greek-Turkish dialogue returns to the fore together with the possibility of reaching an agreement on bilateral issues through negotiation. Every negotiation presupposes bilateral contacts, discussions, and, unavoidably, some form of dialogue. Unfortunately, the very idea of a dialogue with Turkey has been demonized in Greece, as it has become synonymous either with political naïveté, or surrender or appeasement of Turkey's expansionist intentions. The majority of these reactions are emotional, not based on a substantive understanding of the issues, rational argument or strategic analysis. Sadly, any discussion of the major questions in Greece's external relations, be they about relations with Turkey or the (former) ‘Macedonian’ issue, are dominated by aggressive populism and over-simplistic claims to patriotism – or more often claims of a lack thereof on the part of specific individuals – while a dispassionate approach, analysis and debate are sorely lacking.

But at the other end of the spectrum, politicians and academics are sometimes guilty of a rather naïve understanding of the tools available for managing bilateral relations with Turkey, assuming that international law or membership to the EU are sufficient by themselves. This school of thought significantly underestimates the deterrent effect of military power, especially in the context of Greek-Turkish relations.

Abstaining from dialogue can be a useful diplomatic tactic during particular periods, but would be harmful as a permanent foreign policy strategy. Foreign policy demands creative thought, imagination, new ideas and initiatives, good preparation, and trust in one's abilities. The easy solution (to an extent, the result of intellectual laziness) is the offhand rejection of any new idea, proposal or initiative.

Dialogue is not synonymous with formal negotiation, though it can lead there. The international community sees dialogue as an extremely important means for the peaceful resolution of disputes. Even when dialogue does not yield results, its continuation is preferable to its absence. Some analysts even argue that two countries which are talking to each other could hardly go to war. Even though history and international experience do not entirely support this view, it is a fact that dialogue can do no harm when certain preconditions are present, and specifically when:

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- The dialogue is conducted on the basis of a well-designed strategy (what are the vital national interests, what are the red lines, what is the desired goal) and sound negotiating tactics.
  - It enjoys the political support of the governing party and a significant portion of the opposition. Critical statements by the opposition may be useful in the course of the negotiation (as the government may use them to claim its inability to make further concessions), so long as they are based on a prior understanding, and there is agreement on the substance.
- If the above conditions are met, there is no reason to object to dialogue, provided, of course, the necessary safeguards are in place to allow withdrawal if the national interests are no longer served.

## E

### Ecumenical Patriarchate

After 1923, the Turkish state refused to recognize either the ecumenical nature of the institution of the Patriarchate or its nature as a legal entity. Consequently, it did not recognize the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate over the institutions that belong to it. Furthermore, for many decades the Turkish state limited the right to be elected as the Patriarch to clergymen with Turkish citizenship who had been practicing their religious duties in Turkey. There were also similar problems with the election of members of the Holy Synod. After 2009, the AKP governments made some goodwill gestures that may facilitate the future resolution of the above problems. Additionally, in 1971 the Turkish Ministry of Education banned the operation of the Theological School of Halki, invoking a law which banned the operation of private higher education institutions. The issue has not yet been resolved, however, despite promises during the Erdogan period of government.

### “The Eight”, the eight Turkish officers (asylum seekers)

It is not uncommon for a country’s government to face an undesirable development, a “hot potato”, where options are extremely limited and quite problematic. In this case, the Greek government was called upon to handle the arrival and asylum requests of eight Turkish officers that were subsequently accused by the Turkish authorities of taking part in the failed July 2016 coup. For President Erdogan, the issue was extremely sensitive and the exercise of strong pressure needed to be taken as a given.

However, the relevant reflexes of the Greek side proved slow and the issue was not resolved immediately and with concise procedures. Since then, the issue has been used by the Turkish side for negotiation purposes, but also as a tool to put pressure on the Greek side and as a reminder that the cost of ignoring Turkish requests and interests can be high. The arrest of the two Greek soldiers, who appear to have lost their bearings and entered a few meters into Turkish territory in the Evros area, and their detention for 167 days – initially without charge – appeared to be linked to the case of “the Eight” by Ankara. It is worth noting that similar incidents of unintentional border crossings in the past have been almost immediately resolved through communication between local commanders.

### Energy (Greece)

To date, the only discovery of hydrocarbons in Greece took place off the west coast of the island of Thasos (Prinos). Extracting the petroleum from the Prinos Oil Field is currently the responsibility of the Greek company Energean, and production could reach up to 3,800 barrels per day, although in the past it had been as high as 26,000 barrels per day, covering about 10% of national needs.

In 2011, Greece, after a 15-year period of general inactivity, rightly adopted a new policy regarding the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons in its maritime zones in the Ionian and south of Crete. Legislation was adopted explicitly stipulating that the median line / line of equidistance would be the basis for delimitation in the absence of agreements, and this new legislation was officially submitted to the UN.

As part of the implementation of this new policy, international tenders were announced for the exploitation of specific offshore plots in the aforementioned areas, following appropriate explorations and the collection of seismic and other data. There are reasonable hopes for the discovery and exploitation of deposits (probably relatively limited in size) in the Ionian Sea and in the Epirus region. In the event of potential discoveries in the areas south of Crete, the deposits may be quite substantial; at this point in time, however, the uncertainty in those regions is higher.

Of course, exaggerated expectations and projections that are not based on hard data should be avoided. Experts, including scientists and government officials, are of course aware of the lack of sufficient scientific data, the diplomatic difficulties, and the time required to start commercial exploitation of any deposits. Greece’s goal should be to increase the energy footprint and turn the country into an energy player (rather than a mere “spectator”) and, ideally, into an energy hub, through the TAP pipeline, the Greece-Bulgaria Gas Interconnector, a potential future interconnector to North Macedonia, and the EastMed pipeline.

### Energy (Greece-Turkey)

As well as being a cause of friction between Greece and Turkey, the field of energy is also an area of (albeit limited) cooperation between the two countries. (Regarding the areas of dispute and the general ambitions of Turkey in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean, information can be found under other entries). As far as cooperation is concerned, the TGI pipeline (Turkey-Greece Interconnector) transports natural gas of Azeri origin from Turkey to Greece. The TAP (Trans Adriatic Pipeline) will transport natural gas from Azerbaijan to Italy via Turkey, Greece and Albania.

### The EU and Greek national security

The EU’s Global Security Strategy (2016) emphasized the need to strengthen the internal security of the EU member states while also stabilizing the external environment on the EU’s southern and eastern borders by taking on a more active role and launching various initiatives. This text, well-written and certainly useful, is currently not much more than a wish list, at a point when uncertainty over Brexit is widespread and European weakness in the defense sector and in the formulation of a



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common foreign policy is evident. However, common foreign, defense and security policy may be areas in which the EU, following a German-French initiative, could take a “step forward” to counterbalance the negative dynamics caused by Brexit.

Given its longstanding goal of staying at the core of an EU that is increasingly characterized by a variable geometry, and in light of the multidimensional threats to Greek national security, Greece cannot afford to be absent from relevant consultations and initiatives. Active Greek participation in the initiatives already undertaken in the fields of defense and security would strengthen national efforts to claim a distinct role both within the EU and at a regional level, and would help strengthen Greece’s deterrent capability.

### The EU and Turkey

Turkey expressed its interest in joining the European Economic Community in 1959 and formally applied in 1963, when the Ankara Agreement was signed. The Customs Union was signed by both parties in 1995 and entered into force in 1996. After many years of efforts, Turkey started accession negotiations with the EU in 2005. Of the 35 “chapters” that constitute the EU *acquis* (on issues such as energy, human rights, employment, transport, the judiciary and the environment), 16 have been opened, but only one, research and technology, has been closed (temporarily).

The opening of another eight chapters has been blocked by the European Council due to Turkey’s non-compliance with the relevant obligations regarding the opening of Turkish ports and airports to Cypriot ships and planes, while Cyprus itself has stated that it will block the opening of another six chapters for as long as Turkey does not implement the Additional Protocols to the Ankara Agreement.

Several European countries have reservations about Turkey’s potential EU membership. Greece supports Turkish membership because in that case the normalization of Ankara’s relations with Greece and Cyprus would be a prerequisite, and because it believes that a “European” Turkey will be a better neighbor. At present, the scenario of full membership is an extremely low probability one, as the obstacles to membership (which include the country’s size and its “specificities”, as well as Erdogan’s authoritarian tendencies and aggressive foreign policy) are considered to be clearly greater than the potential benefits. A “special relationship” between Turkey and the EU, on terms that have not yet been discussed in detail, is certainly more likely.

As far as Greece is concerned, the limited weight given by the EU to issues of security and defense, together with the importance attributed to Turkey due to the size of its market and its contribution in managing refugee/migration flows, limit any effective European interventions in Greece’s favor to simple expressions of support, and to sanctions that are by and large symbolic (e.g. against individuals involved in illegal drilling).

### The EU-Turkey Statement to tackle irregular migration (March 2016)

1) All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into Greek islands as from 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey. This will take place in full accordance with EU and international law, thus excluding any kind of collective

expulsion. All migrants will be protected in accordance with the relevant international standards and in respect of the principle of non-refoulement. It will be a temporary and extraordinary measure which is necessary to end the human suffering and restore public order. Migrants arriving in the Greek islands will be duly registered and any application for asylum will be processed individually by the Greek authorities in accordance with the Asylum Procedures Directive, in cooperation with UNHCR. Migrants not applying for asylum or whose application has been found unfounded or inadmissible in accordance with the said directive will be returned to Turkey. Turkey and Greece, assisted by EU institutions and agencies, will take the necessary steps and agree any necessary bilateral arrangements, including the presence of Turkish officials on Greek islands and Greek officials in Turkey as from 20 March 2016, to ensure liaison and thereby facilitate the smooth functioning of these arrangements. The costs of the return operations of irregular migrants will be covered by the EU.

- 2) For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU taking into account the UN Vulnerability Criteria. A mechanism will be established, with the assistance of the Commission, EU agencies and other Member States, as well as the UNHCR, to ensure that this principle will be implemented from the same day the returns start. Priority will be given to migrants who have not previously entered or tried to enter the EU irregularly. On the EU side, resettlement under this mechanism will take place, in the first instance, by honoring the commitments taken by Member States in the conclusions of Representatives of the Governments of Member States meeting within the Council on 20 July 2015, of which 18,000 places for resettlement remain. Any further need for resettlement will be carried out through a similar voluntary arrangement up to a limit of an additional 54,000 persons. The Members of the European Council welcome the Commission’s intention to propose an amendment to the relocation decision of 22 September 2015 to allow for any resettlement commitment undertaken in the framework of this arrangement to be offset from non-allocated places under the decision. Should these arrangements not meet the objective of ending the irregular migration and the number of returns come close to the numbers provided for above, this mechanism will be reviewed. Should the number of returns exceed the numbers provided for above, this mechanism will be discontinued.
- 3) Turkey will take any necessary measures to prevent new sea or land routes for illegal migration opening from Turkey to the EU, and will cooperate with neighbouring states as well as the EU to this effect.
- 4) Once irregular crossings between Turkey and the EU are ending or at least have been substantially and sustainably reduced, a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme will be activated. EU Member States will contribute on a voluntary basis to this scheme.
- 5) The fulfilment of the visa liberalisation roadmap will be accelerated vis-à-vis all participating Member States with a view to lifting the visa requirements for Turkish citizens

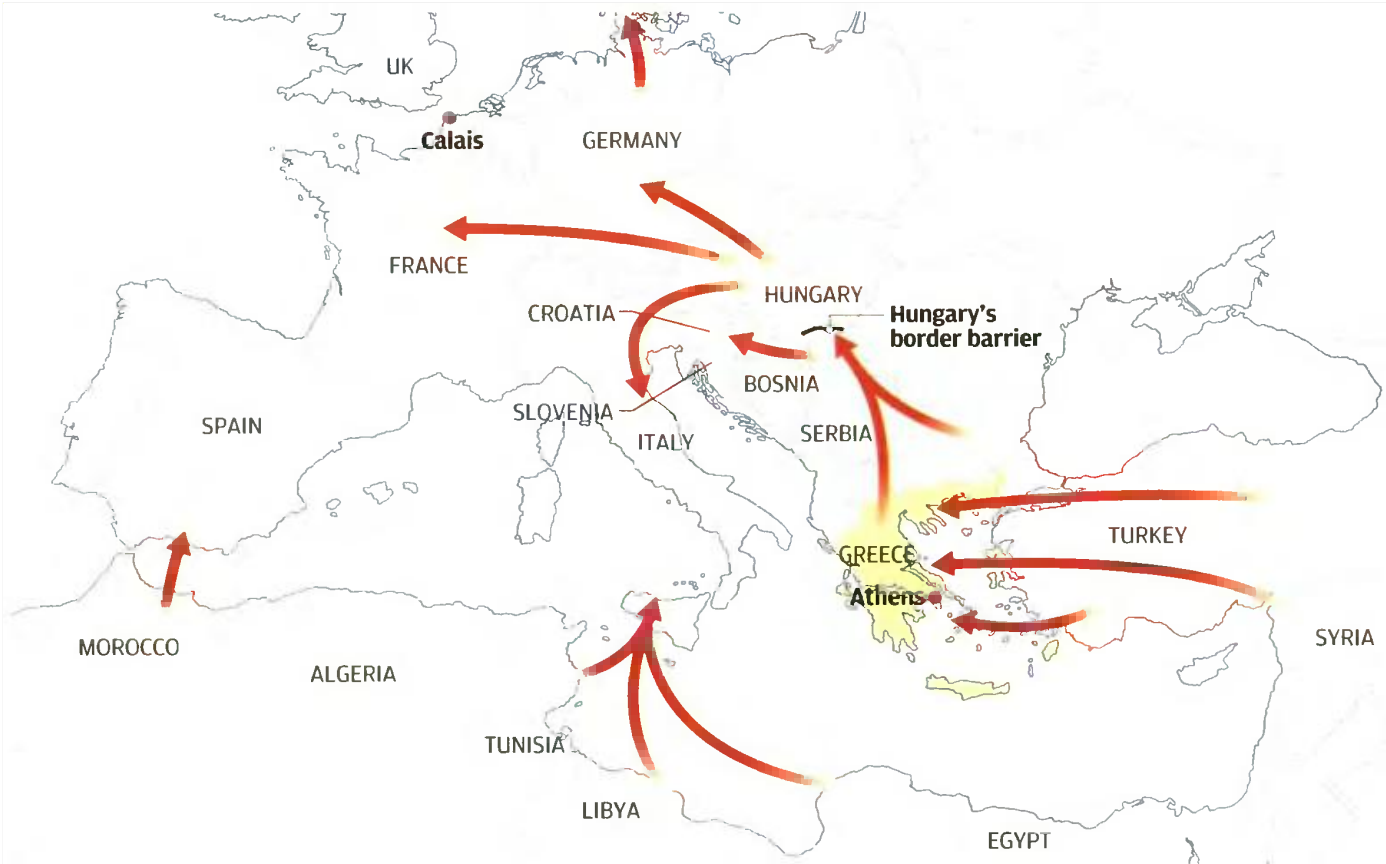
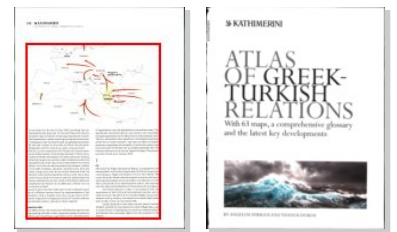


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at the latest by the end of June 2016, provided that all benchmarks have been met. To this end Turkey will take the necessary steps to fulfil the remaining requirements to allow the Commission to make, following the required assessment of compliance with the benchmarks, an appropriate proposal by the end of April on the basis of which the European Parliament and the Council can make a final decision.

- 6) The EU, in close cooperation with Turkey, will further speed up the disbursement of the initially allocated 3 billion euros under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey and ensure funding of further projects for persons under temporary protection identified with swift input from Turkey before the end of March. A first list of concrete projects for refugees, notably in the field of health, education, infrastructure, food and other living costs, that can be swiftly financed from the Facility, will be jointly identified within a week. Once these resources are about to be used to the full, and provided the above commitments are met, the EU will mobilise additional funding for the Facility of an additional 3 billion euro up to the end of 2018.

It must be noted that both sides have voiced complaints (each side of a different nature) about the implementation of the statement, while a broader discussion on the future of EU-Turkish cooperation on migration and on EU-Turkish relations more broadly needs to take place rather urgently.

### Exploratory talks

Since 2002, Greece and Turkey have held 60 meetings between high-ranking officials of their respective foreign ministries, with the aim of reaching an agreement on the commencement

of negotiations over the delimitation of maritime zones. The agreement would provide for any matters not resolvable through negotiations to be referred to an international court. There is speculation that significant convergence had been achieved on certain matters, and that the idea of variable geometry regarding the breadth of territorial waters had been discussed as the basis for a possible agreement (see the relevant reference in the text by Angelos Syrigos). The process has been frozen since January 2016.

## F

### FIR

FIR stands for Flight Information Region, established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for the purpose of providing a flight information service. The Athens FIR covers the entire Greek national airspace, as well as sections of international airspace across the region. Jurisdiction over the FIR is exclusively of an administrative nature, and concerns only the safety and facilitation of international air navigation.

The Greek position is that, in accordance with the regulations of the ICAO and international practice and in order to ensure the safety of civil aviation flights, all aircraft, whether civil or military, are required to submit flight plans prior to their entry into the Athens FIR.

Turkey maintains that state aircraft (which include military aircraft) are not required to submit flight plans, and accuses Greece of attempting to convert an administrative jurisdiction into sovereign rights over the airspace of the Aegean.

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### Syrian refugees naboring countries: 5,573,384

Country	Source	Data date	Population
Turkey	Government of Turkey	4 November 2020	65.1%
Lebanon	UNHCR	30 September 2020	15.8%
Jordan	UNHCR	4 September 2020	11.8%
Iraq	UNHCR	31 October 2020	4.3%
Egypt	UNHCR	30 September 2020	2.3%
Other (North Africa)	UNHCR	31 January 2020	0.6%

## G

### Government Council for National Security (KYSEA)

The Government Council for National Security (as it was renamed in 2019), or KYSEA, is responsible for the cabinet-level formation of government policy and decision-making on matters concerning the country's national security. Among other things, the Council: (a) formulates national security strategy, taking into consideration the country's foreign and defense policy, policy for public order and civil protection, and policy for cybersecurity, energy security, and the security of critical infrastructure, coordinating in parallel all the competent bodies involved and necessary resources for its implementation; and (b) decides on issues that concern the structure of the armed forces and the security forces, and approves the long and medium-term programs for the development of the country's defense capabilities, as well as major programs for the modernization, research, acquisition and production of defense equipment.

The composition of the Government Council for National Security has changed several times since it was first created, yet there have been no major modifications. The regular members of KYSEA are: the prime minister, as its president; the ministers of Foreign Affairs, National Defense, Citizen's Protection, Mercantile Marine and Island Policy; and the chief of the Hellenic National Defense General Staff (who does not possess the right to vote). The Council's secretary is the prime minister's national security advisor.

### Gray Zones

Since 1996, Turkey started talking officially about its "gray zones" theory of undetermined sovereignty for a number of islands and islets in the Aegean (including inhabited islands) and "the need to discuss the issue on the basis of the property titles held by both sides." Following the Imia crisis (1996), in which Turkey challenged Greek sovereignty over the two islets that lie east of Kalymnos, a spokesman for the Turkish Foreign Ministry said that the Imia 'problem' had become broader, to include a number of other islands of similar size, whose ownership was, apparently, unclear. Since then, the Turkish side has insisted that there are gray areas of sovereignty in the Aegean that include at least 100 (other sources refer to 180) small islands and islets, several of which are inhabited (such

as Oinousses, Agathonisi and Farmakonisi). The ownership status of these islands is, according to Ankara, in question and must be determined through negotiations.

It should be noted that, under Article 12 of the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkish sovereignty is explicitly limited to the coast of Asia Minor and to islands up to three nautical miles off the Turkish coast. Also, according to article 15 of the same treaty, "Turkey relinquishes in favor of Italy all rights and titles over the following islands: Astypalaia, Rhodes, Halki, Karpathos, Kassos, Tilos, Nisyros, Kalymnos, Leros, Patmos, Lipsi, Symi and Kos, which are now occupied by Italy, and the islets dependent thereon, and also over the island of Kastellorizo."

With the Treaty of Paris of 1947, these islands were ceded from Italy to Greece. Recently, the issue of the gray zones has been the subject of public political discord between the Turkish government and the Kemalist opposition, which has raised the issue in a wholly irresponsible manner, accusing Erdogan of a lack of patriotism for having "allowed the occupation of 18 Turkish islands by Greece in recent years." According to reports, these islands are: Farmakonisi, Agathonisi, Kalolimnos, Plati, Giali, Levitha, Kinaros, Syrna, Arkoi, Fourni, Thymaina, Kalogeri, Oinousses, Panagia, the Dionysades, Koufonisi and Gavdos.

The general belief is that Turkey is using the "gray zones" in an effort to advance its long-term strategy of expanding its area of direct or indirect control in the Aegean, and secure the maximum possible benefits from any future demarcation of maritime zones. More specifically, Turkey is seeking to question the baselines which will be used to determine the maritime zones in any future settlement. It is also thought that Turkey wishes to use the gray zones as an additional tool for changing the Lausanne Treaty. Negotiations about sovereignty over Greek islands, which is being disputed by Turkey a century after relevant treaties had been signed, is clearly an issue no Greek government could ever accept.

### Greek Armed Forces

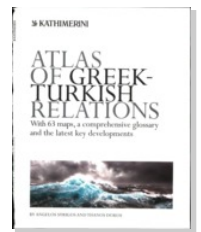
For countries such as Greece that are located in a "difficult neighborhood", the armed forces constitute a fundamental "tool" for deterrence and crisis management. Because the reasons for maintaining a strong military have, unfortunately, not yet disappeared, a credible deterrent capability will remain essential for the national security of Greece for the foreseeable future. There is an urgent need for a new defense policy that

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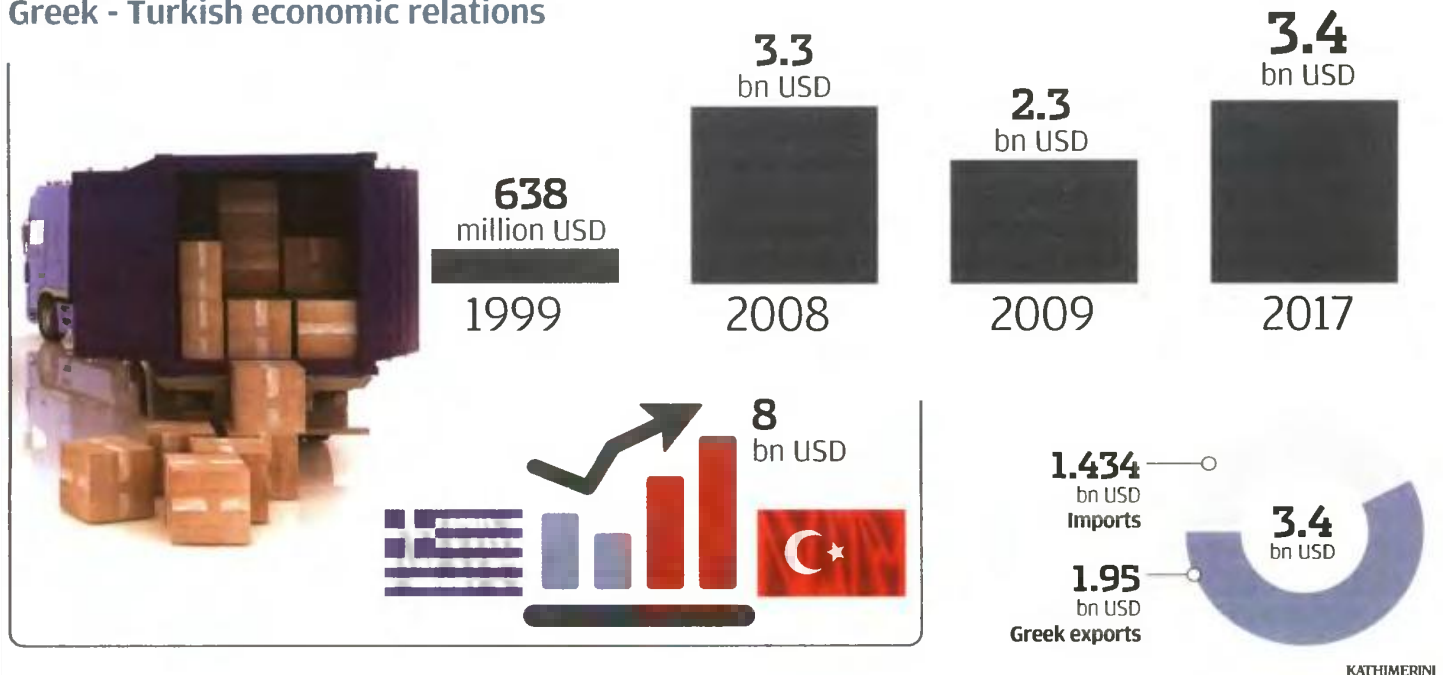
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### Greek - Turkish economic relations



takes into account the emerging global and regional security environment; new technologies, organizational structures and training models; as well as the economic and social circumstances inside the country.

The need for a more efficient use of human and economic resources and, at the same time, more rational and effective organization of the armed forces preceded the current crisis. Unfortunately, local interests and corporatist perceptions, combined with political inertia, have prevented the implementation of changes that should have taken place many years ago. This present period, therefore, needs to be a period of extensive “evolution and adaptation” regarding organizational structures, economies of scale and adaptation to the new economic conditions and restrictions. The central goal should be to make the most of the available resources and maintain the country’s deterrent capacity, which, it is hoped, will help in the diplomatic resolution of disputes.

The geopolitical and economic situation raises a number of questions regarding military service and the manning of units; the need for additional changes in the structure of the armed forces; the next generation of armament procurement programs; the utilization of new technologies; the restructuring of the domestic defense industry; participation in peacekeeping missions; Greece’s role in NATO; possible contribution in efforts to create a European defense capability; and other forms of military cooperation with allied countries. This new defense policy can only emerge from a deep strategic review process, and we must look to countries with significant military capability and organization that implement strategic review processes at regular intervals as examples to follow.

The proposed review process should address a number of key questions (such as the evolving international environment, threat assessments, efficient utilization of other elements that can contribute to national security and defense, the role and the missions of the armed forces, as well as structural,

training, staffing, armament and defense industry issues), and it should present concrete and realistic proposals for the more efficient operation of the Greek Armed Forces and the preservation of its deterrent capabilities in a difficult political and economic situation. All the above proposals are presented in detail in the “White Paper on Foreign Policy, Defense and Security” of ELIAMEP (in Greek, Sideris Publications, 2016, pp. 82-87 and 264-282).

In the medium-to-long-term, Greek-Turkish relations can only be fully normalized through diplomacy. An armed conflict would entangle both sides in a vicious cycle of tensions for many years to come. Since, however, accidents do happen, poor judgment is not uncommon, and domestic political crises can lead to external ‘adventures’ for the sake of distraction, the goal should be to keep any neighboring country from entertaining dangerous thoughts or undertaking hostile actions.

Greece’s aim should be to maintain a negative cost-benefit ratio for any scenario of escalation or conflict (it is important that, so far, the current Turkish leadership has shown no evidence of irrationality in the context of our bilateral relations). The necessary know-how and ideas do exist in the ranks of the armed forces (although out-of-the-box thinking will also be needed), but this will also require political consensus and decisions by successive governments, which will have to demonstrate the necessary degree of responsibility and a willingness to ignore political costs and to go up against established interests wherever necessary.

#### Greek-Turkish rapprochement (“Earthquake Diplomacy”)

The Greek-Turkish rapprochement began in the summer of 1999, when Greek-Turkish relations had reached their lowest point after successive crises (Imia, S-300, and the Öcalan case). It was greatly facilitated by a change in Greek and Turkish public opinion after the earthquakes in Istanbul (August) and Athens (September). This new period of low tension and ‘friendship’



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led to the “Helsinki Agreement” (December 1999), the signing of several bilateral agreements (on issues of economic, cultural, customs, scientific and technological cooperation, protection of the environmental, fighting organized crime, tourism, and irregular migration – the latter were only rarely implemented by the Turkish side), as well as measures to build trust between the two countries and thus improve the political climate and reduce tensions. However, no substantial progress was made on the “high-level” policy issues (Aegean dispute).

That notwithstanding, economic relations between the two sides improved significantly, with bilateral trade reaching \$3.3 billion (2008) and \$2.3 billion (due to the economic crisis) in 2009, compared to just \$638 million in 1999, with a persistent and pronounced Greek export deficit. Greek investment in Turkey increased dramatically (rising possibly as high as \$8 billion), with the most notable example being the acquisition of a significant share of the Turkish bank Finansbank by the National Bank of Greece (the largest Greek investment outside Greece, amounting to \$5.7 billion). Today, Greek investments in Turkey have decreased, while bilateral trade reached \$3.4 billion in 2017 (Greek exports \$1.95 billion, imports \$1.434 billion).

## H

### Helsinki Agreement (1999)

At the EU summit in Helsinki (December 1999) it was agreed that Greece would withdraw its objections (and veto) and support Turkey’s efforts to join the EU, in exchange for two concessions: (a) Cyprus’s entry into the EU in the next wave of European Union enlargement, regardless of whether the Cyprus problem had been resolved; and (b) if bilateral efforts to resolve the Greek-Turkish dispute were not successful by December 2004, then the two countries would discuss the submission of their differences to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Greece decided to support Turkey’s accession to the EU, provided it met the preconditions, believing that this would lead to the resolution of the Greek-Turkish disputes and Turkey becoming a better neighbor for Greece. As a result of developments regarding European-Turkish relations and the opposition of several European states to the prospect of the full accession of Turkey, the Helsinki strategy has ceased to have any practical benefit for Greece, and a Plan B is urgently needed.

Greece has no reason to support the suspension of the EU-Turkey negotiations. However, given the strong opposition of several EU member-states to full-membership for Turkey, Greece needs to become fully engaged in the discussion about a “special relationship” between the EU and Turkey.

### Hora/Sismik - Barbaros Hayreddin Pasa

The *Hora* was an old German vessel that was bought by Turkey in 1976, converted into a survey vessel, and renamed *Sismik I*; it went on to play a “leading role” in the crises of 1976 and 1987 between Greece and Turkey. The vessel was last used in 2011 in the EEZ of Cyprus, and it was subsequently decommissioned. In 2013, Turkey bought the Norwegian research/survey vessel

*Polarcus Samur*, which was renamed *Barbaros Hayreddin Pasa*. This vessel has conducted explorations in the EEZ of Cyprus from 2014 onwards, and, together with the seismic research vessel *Oruç Reis* and the drillships *Yavuz*, *Fatih* and *Kanuni* (which together cost Turkey a total of more than \$800 million), it will be used to promote the Turkish objectives in the Eastern Mediterranean.

### Hotlines

During the crises of 1987 and 1996 (Imia), the absence of channels of direct communication between Greece and Turkey became particularly evident. This was especially true in the case of the Imia crisis, when any consultations were conducted primarily via Washington, and secondarily via Brussels (NATO). One of the benefits of the Greek and Turkish rapprochement, which began in 1999, was the creation of direct channels of communication (hotlines, or “red telephones”) at multiple levels (between prime ministers, ministers for foreign affairs and defense, and chiefs of staff of the armed forces). In the past, these channels of communication functioned rather successfully in the management of several “incidents”. It remains to be seen whether this will still be the case today.

## I

### Imia

In the context of the Turkish “theory” regarding the so-called “gray areas”, the most famous disputed islets are, of course, the pair of islets of Imia (the crisis of 1996 is further discussed in the relevant entry of the present Glossary, as well as more extensively in the main body of the text by Angelos Syrigos). For many years, the Turkish position (at least as it was articulated by officials) was that these were regions of undetermined sovereignty. For some years now, the Turkish position as regards the two islets of Imia has shifted from “sea rocks of undetermined sovereignty” to a “region under Turkish sovereignty”.

The complete list of contested islets had not been officially made public (see entry for “gray areas”). The governments of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) were quite cautious as to the way that they would publicly refer to the issue. However, as mentioned in the entry on “gray areas”, the Turkish opposition, for reasons of internal politics, made the issue of the “gray areas” a subject of public political discourse in Turkey.

Ankara generally believes that by “loading” the bilateral agenda with additional items, it will be able to leave a future negotiating table with more gains. The question is whether Turkey has calculated accurately the cost-benefit ratio in its choice of a matter where the international conditions and the relevant maps (including older official Turkish maps) render its legal position particularly weak. But, of course, it is coercion, and not international law, that continues to be the main tool of Turkish foreign policy towards Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean.

### Imia Crisis (1996)

Turkey tried to take advantage of the “political vacuum” in Greece caused by Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou’s long illness and resignation, and to challenge Greek national

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sovereignty in the Aegean and consequently to weaken its sovereign right to extend its territorial waters. It was hoping to force direct negotiations, with or without US mediation, on all Greek-Turkish disputes (as defined by Turkey). Other objectives may have included distracting the Turkish public from internal problems.

At the time of this particular crisis, Greece's new prime minister, Costas Simitis, was not only inexperienced in matters of national security but was also preoccupied with the formation and functioning of a new government, so he failed to function effectively as a unifying figure. There was limited coordination between the main actors involved (Prime Minister and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Defense) and no comprehensive plan to deal with the Turkish actions. Instead, a number of disconnected measures were adopted.

Consequently, there was no unified center managing the crisis. Due to this lack of coordination, statements by government ministers offered differing (or even contradictory) messages, despite the government's decision to de-escalate the situation.

Another factor that may have had a negative effect on the efforts to manage the crisis was that, while the political leadership was determined to avoid a military conflict, in the armed forces a culture of escalation and preparedness for operations had developed. It became clear, too, that the lack of knowledge and/or experience of the political leadership (ministers, MPs), regarding both the basic principles of crisis management and the National Rules of Engagement (see separate entry) was a significant problem. This insight is valid not only for the Greek government of 1996, but for the Greek political establishment in general.

### **Infringements (of international regulations) & Violations (of national air space)**

Infringements involve the entry of Turkish military planes into the Athens Flight Information Region (Athens FIR) without prior notification and without following the relevant regulations. Efforts have been made, under NATO mediation, for the resolution of the issue of these infringements through Turkish authorities providing limited flight information to the Greek authorities. An agreement was almost reached, without a final result. Violations involve the entry of Turkish fighter planes into Greek national air space (usually in the area between 6 and 10 nautical miles from the coast).

Hundreds of infringements and violations take place each year. In the case of either infringements or violations, the Turkish fighter aircraft are visually identified and intercepted by Greek fighter planes. In many cases, these interceptions evolve into aerial engagements and mock dogfights, which have resulted in the loss of aircraft and pilots. The situation is expected to be further complicated by Turkey's use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs / drones). Since their interception by fighter planes is hardly a cost effective option, the Greek side must now find a way of countering this new Turkish tactic.

It is clear that the two sides have adopted radically different legal interpretations, both about the obligations of state aircraft entering a foreign FIR, and about the breadth of the Greek airspace. Until these differences are resolved through bilateral negotiations or through resort to an international

legal body, there are ways of lowering tensions which do not require either country retreat from its longstanding legal positions – for example, through the submission of flight plans to the NATO headquarters in Naples for Turkish aircraft entering the Athens FIR (as had been discussed in the mid-1990s, regarding the submission of partial flight plans [three instead of five points of information]).

### **International Court of Justice at The Hague (ICJ)**

This is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN). The International Court of Justice consists of 15 judges, appointed every 9 years by the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly. The judges are drawn from different geographical regions, and are selected on the basis of their credentials. The court cannot include two judges of the same nationality. For a case to be tried at the ICJ, all interested states must agree to have the case referred to it. The court's decisions are arrived at in secrecy by a majority vote and are binding, while its opinions are of an advisory nature and are non-binding. Any country which is a signatory to the court's statute can refer a case to it – as can, under certain conditions, countries which are not parties to the statute. Greece recognizes the binding jurisdiction of the court except in matters related to national security, while Turkey does not recognize its jurisdiction.

In 2015, Greece filed a supplementary statement to both courts (of The Hague and Hamburg) regarding its recognition of their jurisdiction. The declaration exempts from binding jurisdiction matters of national sovereignty and measures of a defensive nature, while with regard to another country bringing a case against Greece, it sets the following conditions: (a) that the country in question must accept in advance the binding jurisdiction of the court, and (b) 12 months must elapse between the original recognition of jurisdiction and the case being lodged. Within that period, Greece may depart from the court's binding jurisdiction. Greece has exempted from the Hamburg court (see below) matters pertaining to the delimitation of boundaries, which it considers fall under the jurisdiction of The Hague.

### **International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea**

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, based in Hamburg, is an independent judicial organ established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to try cases and resolve differences stemming from the interpretation and implementation of the Convention. Greece selected the Tribunal for the resolution of differences in the context of the Convention. According to Angelos Syrigos, "the choice of venue... expressed an implicit condemnation by the Greek side of the International Court of Justice at the Hague for a series of judgments in which it gave limited continental shelf rights to islands... In essence, however, the Greek declaration in favor of the Hamburg tribunal has no practical significance. Turkey is not a signatory to UNCLOS and is rather unlikely to become one".

### **International waters**

The waters between the territorial waters of individual states are known as international waters. No state can exert national



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sovereignty in international waters, and all states have the rights to fishing, navigation, overflight, laying cables and pipelines, and scientific research. Today, 49% of the Aegean Sea are international waters.

### Islands

There are about 9,000 islands in the Aegean (including islets and rocks), 450 of which belong to Turkey, while the rest belong to Greece. About 100 Greek and 7 Turkish islands are inhabited.

### Israel and Turkey

The strategic relationship of the 1990s was succeeded by the difficult relationship of the Erdogan era, culminating in the episodes of Davos and the *Mavi Marmara* vessel. The prevailing mentality of the Israeli state, and especially of its foreign policy and national security apparatus, which is characterized by a deep suspicion of other actors, quite possibly may not permit a full normalization of relations with an Islamist Turkey (despite the strong urging of the US during the Obama Administration, and despite the significant economic interests that exist between the two countries). Moreover, any process of rapprochement between Israel and Turkey will be tested by the next Palestinian crisis. In the energy sector, which is of particular interest to Cyprus and Greece, one has difficulty imagining how Israel might trust a country like today's Turkey – with its dynamic regional agenda, with a growing Islamist influence – enough to make the main transport route of its natural gas to Europe dependent on its good relations with Ankara. Even though an improvement in bilateral relations, mainly for economic reasons, cannot be ruled out, a return to the pre-2000 levels of strategic cooperation must be considered highly unlikely.

## K

### The Kurdish issue

In its modern phase, the Kurdish issue has beleaguered Turkey for approximately 35 years. Tayyip Erdogan and the AKP promoted the so-called “Kurdish Opening” initiative, with religion rather than ethnicity being the link connecting Turkish citizens. He even reached the point of promising the Kurds a degree of local autonomy. This policy, which for a number of years had significant electoral benefits for the AKP, also included negotiations with the imprisoned Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan (who remains an influential figure among Kurds), and brought the two sides closer to a political solution to the Kurdish problem in the period 2014-2015. However, Erdogan, who deserves credit for his political courage up to that point, is also responsible for abandoning this policy and using the “Kurdish threat” to win the November 2015 snap election. Today's situation has some similarities to the 1980s, when heavy clashes between security forces and Kurdish separatists were taking place in the southeastern part of the country.

At this point, it looks quite difficult to return to a meaningful dialogue between the two sides. The “demonization” by Erdogan of not only the PKK but of moderate Kurds as well, may have helped him win the election, but it is possible that

he has again unleashed nationalist forces on both sides which neither he nor Kurdish moderates like Selahattin Demirtaş of the HDP party will be able to control.

Although there is a growing polarization in Turkish society, it is not clear that the majority of Kurds want independence. Moreover, their geographical dispersion between large urban centers and areas in southeastern Turkey does not facilitate such a solution. Substantial concessions in granting cultural rights and local autonomy would probably go a long way towards resolving the Kurdish problem. However, time is not in Turkey's favor on this issue.

The problem becomes even more complicated as there is also an important regional dimension. The gradual formation of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq (despite the temporary setback caused by the referendum of September 2017), combined with the inability to manage the internal Kurdish issue politically, and the developments in Syria (which led Turkey to a military incursion and temporary [?] occupation of Syrian territories), has seen a resurgence for the Turkish political-military establishment of the “Sevres Syndrome”, i.e., the fear of territorial fragmentation of Turkey as a result of the plans and actions of “external forces”. The picture becomes even more complex if one takes into account the roles and interests of the United States, Russia, the central Iraqi government, and, on another level, of Iran and Syria, countries with large Kurdish populations within their territories.

### The Kurtulu

The Kurtulu was a Turkish cargo ship that, together with the *Dumlupınar*, another Turkish vessel, transported food and humanitarian aid to Nazi-occupied Greece (Athens and Piraeus in particular) during the famine period of 1941-1942. The aid was sent at the initiative of the Turkish Red Crescent and international humanitarian organizations.

## M

### Median line / line of equidistance

In cases where the distances between two states do not allow the full development of their maritime zones, the median line, or line of equidistance, is usually chosen as the delimitation line. The median line is used in the case of states whose coasts face one another; it's a line parallel to the two opposing coastlines, each point of which is an equal distance from the baselines of each state. In the case of states whose coasts are adjacent to each other, we refer to a lateral line, where each point of equidistance is calculated based on the nearest points of the respective baselines.

### Military coup (failed) 16th July 2016 – consequences

The desperate, poorly designed and rather amateurishly executed attempt by a group of active Turkish officers to overthrow President Tayyip Erdogan and the government of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) had dramatic consequences for Turkey. Erdogan believes the coup was masterminded by his former mentor and close collaborator, Fethullah Gülen, a cleric who has been living for many years in self-exile in the state of Pennsylvania in the US. The considerable

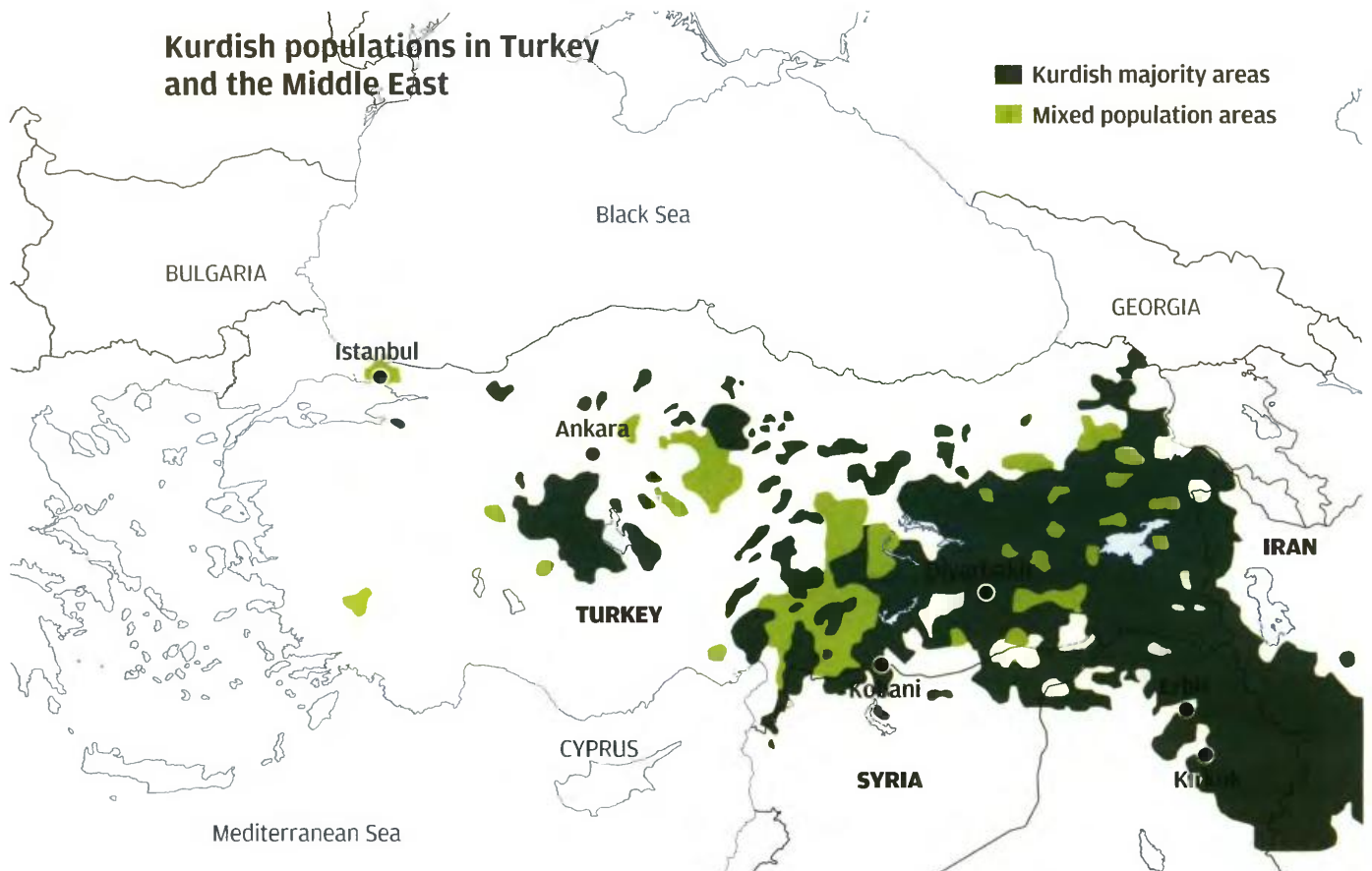


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influence and deep infiltration that Gülen and the moderate Islamist movement Hizmet had over the Turkish police and civil service, allowed Erdogan to dismantle the Kemalist establishment and to obtain overall control of the country. It must be noted also that Gülen had founded a large number of educational institutions inside and outside Turkey which had been used by Turkish diplomacy as tools for exercising soft power. The rift between Erdogan and Gülen over the division of power a few years earlier had led to what were at times very fierce confrontations, and to the frequent expulsions of so-called “Gülenists” from the state apparatus.

In response to the failed coup, and as though well-prepared in advance, in the words of the European Commissioner Johannes Hahn, the Turkish government unleashed a massive wave of purges not only among the armed forces and law enforcement agencies, but across the entire public sector, including many thousands of higher education professors and judges. The total number of public servants who faced judicial persecution or were simply fired is potentially as high as 200,000, and it continues to increase, albeit at a much slower pace. It is generally believed that Erdogan took advantage of the coup in order to completely purge the state apparatus not only of those who may have been implicated in the coup and of Gülen’s supporters more generally (FETO, a terrorist

organization according to the Turkish government), but also of those who were in positions of high authority (e.g. in the judiciary, or in the education sector) and did not fully agree with Erdogan’s own positions and objectives.

### Minorities

With the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, the Greek population of then Constantinople (now Istanbul) and the Muslim population of Western Thrace were excluded from the population exchange and remained in the territories in which they resided. Articles 38 to 45 of the Treaty of Lausanne contained explicit provisions for the protection of the minorities excluded from the population exchange. The drafters of the treaty apparently had as their model an Ottoman-style minority community, a “millet”, with its own places of worship, schools, charitable institutions and cemeteries, and with its own separate jurisdiction over family and inheritance law in accordance with the minority’s customs.

In the years that followed the signing of the treaty, the Greek minority communities of Istanbul, Imbros (Gökçeada) and Tenedos (Bozcaada) suffered severe persecution by the Turkish state. The result is that its members today number 2,000-3,000, mostly elderly people. The Muslim minority in Greece, on the other hand, numbers about 120,000 people, or

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1% of the total Greek population. Its greatest numbers are in the region of Thrace, while several thousand members of the minority live in Athens and Thessaloniki.

Turkey has systematically violated its obligations on minority issues under the Treaty of Lausanne. The tragic fate of the Greek minority in Turkey's largest city is discussed below in the entry about the Istanbul pogrom. The creation of an open rural prison on Imbros in 1964 and the expropriations of the most fertile land on the island contributed significantly to the shrinkage of the Greek minority there, just as the Varlik tax had been a blow against the Greeks of Turkey during WWII. In addition, significant pressure was exerted on the Patriarchate, culminating in the closure in 1971 of the Theological School of Halki in Turkey, an institution which had supplied the Patriarchate with properly trained priests. What's more, there are still issues regarding the fate of Greek properties in Istanbul, with the beneficiaries having in some cases appealed to the Council of Europe.

As for the Muslim minority in Western Thrace, in 1923 it numbered 86,000 people. Today it stands at 120,000 (about 50% Turks, 30-35% Pomaks and 15-20% Roma). During the 1960s, the treatment of the Muslim minority was directly linked to the treatment of the Greek minority by the Turkish state, and in particular the expulsion in 1964 of all Greek citizens of Turkey who resided in Istanbul.

The Greek state, searching for ways to put pressure on Turkey to stop the persecution of its Greek minority, adopted a series of discriminatory administrative measures against the Greek Muslims of Thrace. This policy began a few months before the 1967 coup in Greece and was fully developed during the military dictatorship. With regard to the Greek Muslims of Thrace, Turkey criticizes Greece for: a) the implementation of Article 19 (of 1955) of the Greek Citizenship Code (repealed in 1998 but without retroactive effect), which provided for the removal of Greek citizenship from nationals of non-Greek descent who left the country without the intention of returning; b) the fact that muftis and the administrators of waqfs are appointed by the Greek state, instead of being chosen by the minority itself; and (c) the administrative discrimination carried out against the minority in order to drive its members out of Greece.

After the end of the dictatorship, the political status quo for the Muslim minority was restored with the election of two Muslim deputies to the Greek parliament. The administrative measures, however, continued to be applied to the detriment of Muslims, though in a much less intense and systematic fashion. Over time, the discriminatory administrative measures against Muslims turned into an excellent vote-winning tool for parliamentary and mayoral candidates in the prefectures of Xanthi and Rodopi. After 1991, the Greek state began to pursue a policy of equality under the law and equal participation, and important measures have been taken for the integration of the Muslim minority into Greek society.

While the new policy retained the definition of the Lausanne Treaty of the "Muslim minority", for the first time it was recognized that this minority consists of three sub-groups: the Turks, the Slavic-speaking Pomaks and the Roma. Unacceptable administrative quotas were abolished

and discrimination in issues of infrastructure in the areas where the Muslim minority lived was discontinued. At the same time, a large-scale effort was undertaken to improve the overall economic situation for Thrace, which, until then, had been the poorest region within the EEC. The aim of this policy was the integration of the minority into society.

This policy of equality under the law and equal participation was followed consistently by all the governments that followed. After the critical period of 1990-91, two more important measures were taken. The first was the decision of the then minister of education, George Papandreou, to establish a quota of 0.5% for admission to universities and technical colleges for people from the Muslim minority. It was a measure of positive discrimination that resulted in the ending of the sizeable student migration to Turkey that had been taking place upon completion of elementary school. The second measure was the repeal of Article 19 of the Citizenship Code, under which Greek citizenship had been stripped from Muslims who stayed out of the country for a long period of time.

Despite significant progress, problems remain, including the problematic behaviour of the Turkish consulate in Western Thrace, Turkish economic influence in the wider region of Thrace, the position of Muslim women, the question of classifying the minority as national or religious, attempts to create networks with links to extremist Islamists, and, of course, the completion of efforts to effectively consolidate equality under the law and equal participation for this minority.

### Montreux Convention (1936)

The Montreux Convention regulated the terms of freedom of navigation in the Turkish Straits by foreign ships. The international character of the regime of the Straits ceased to exist. Also, any possibility of intervention in the Straits by states other than Turkey was terminated, with the country essentially becoming the guarantor for the implementation of the convention. Turkish sovereignty was fully restored on land and in the maritime zones from the Bosphorus to the Dardanelles.

The protocol of the convention allowed for the rearmament of the broader area of the Straits. Even though Greece failed to include an explicit reference to ending the regime of demilitarization for Lemnos and Samothrace, the official Greek position is that the abolition of the entire Convention on the Straits of 1923 led to the abolition of the provisions regarding the demilitarization of those two islands.

### Motives and causes for Turkey's behavior vis-à-vis Greece

Approximately 2,500 years ago, the Chinese general and strategist Sun Tzu stressed the need to really know one's adversary as a prerequisite for success in any conflict. Greece's performance in this matter has, unfortunately, been rather poor. Its relatively limited understanding of the domestic political situation and Turkish strategic thinking has not, to date, allowed Greece to successfully engage in such intellectual exercises. A systematic and in-depth effort to analyze and understand the current political, social and economic developments of Turkey



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remains of vital importance, as an in-depth understanding of internal processes and foreign policy planning is a absolute prerequisite for Greek efforts to design an effective foreign policy vis-a-vis Turkey, with the central goal of managing challenges and, if possible, normalizing relations.

To understand Turkey's foreign policy, one must consider at least five elements. The first is Turkey's deep military involvement in Syria, seen in the context of its overall Kurdish policy. To Turkey's nervousness one must add Erdogan's grandiose ambitions regarding the regional and broader role of his country. This mixture of insecurity and arrogance is a cause for concern for a number of other countries.

The second element is the shift in Turkey's alliances, a change that has brought it closer to Russia and, consequently, created difficulties for its relations with the US, NATO, Germany, the EU and Israel.

The third factor to consider is the criticism within Turkey of Erdogan from (more) nationalist circles accusing him of failing to defend Turkish national interests, and his struggle for political and personal survival in light of the 2023 elections; this will force him to adopt increasingly hardline positions on domestic and foreign policy issues.

The fourth point to keep in mind concerns the Eastern Mediterranean, where Turkey considers that, if it does not react to existing and planned exploratory activities, it risks a weakening of its claims. At the same time, Erdogan seems to have adopted an aggressive strategy put forward by factions of the armed forces, and based on the "Blue Homeland" narrative (see separate entry for "Blue Homeland").

The final element is that since 1996 Turkey has been pursuing a "gray area" policy in the Aegean, that is, a strategy of calling Greek sovereignty over certain islets in the Aegean into question in an effort to improve its negotiating position in the event of any future negotiations on the delimitation of the continental shelf.

### Muftis

Turkey protests against the muftis, the religious clerics of the Muslim minority in Thrace, being appointed by the Greek state instead of being elected by the local populace. The Greek argument is that there is no tradition of electing muftis, because such a thing would contradict their function as judges of Islamic law in matters of family and inheritance law. At the moment, there are three official muftis in Thrace, appointed by the Greek state, and two "pseudo-muftis" allegedly elected by the Muslim minority, but in fact appointed by the Turkish consulate.

At the end of 2017, the Greek government announced its intention to change the way muftis are elected and to impose preconditions so that an electorate would be formed that would be free from the influence of non-minority elements or other external actors. Law 4511/2018 altered the jurisdiction of muftis in matters of the administration of justice. Their jurisdiction became optional for members of the Muslim minority and only when the parties concerned both agree to be subject to it. Otherwise, the civil courts have mandatory jurisdiction. This was a necessary change, as Greece was the only European country in which Islamic law (sharia) was implemented.

## N

### National Airspace

Through a presidential decree of 1931, Greece set its airspace at 10 nautical miles. After its 1974 invasion of Cyprus, Turkey began to question, through statements and the flights of fighter aircraft, the breadth of the airspace, claiming that the extension of Greek airspace in the zone from 6 to 10 miles was illegal because, according to international law (the Chicago Convention), national airspace must align with a country's land territory and territorial waters. Greece claims that what has come to be known internationally as "the Greek Paradox", has customary force in international law since Turkey did not dispute it for 40 years. This argument is not, however, Greece's strongest legal "card", and the final resolution of the airspace issue is directly linked to the issue of the breadth of its territorial waters.

### The National Pact [Misak-I Milli] (and the "Borders of our Heart")

This was a standard point of reference for the Turkish delegation to the Lausanne Conference. According to Angelos Syrigos, "The National Pact (Misak-I Milli), which was adopted in 1920 by the last Ottoman parliament, included all the demands of the emerging nationalist movement during the last stages of the Ottoman period:

"The National Pact was a text that adopted 'modern' ideas for its time, such as (a) referenda to determine the fate of territories, (b) the protection of minority rights...

"The National Pact was a realistic text. Neither the Arab nor the Balkan regions were claimed. The immediate Turkish claims were confined exclusively to the territories controlled by the Ottoman army at the time of the signing of the Armistice of Mudros immediately after the end of the First World War. These included the region of Eastern Thrace, along with Adrianople/Edirne.

"Areas outside the borders of the armistice could be included in the Turkish state only if the local population expressed that desire in a referendum. Such areas were the Arab regions, Kars, Ardahan and Artvin (on the present-day border of Turkey with Armenia and Georgia), as well as Western Thrace."

Although he has repeatedly maintained that "Turkey has no ambitions on the territory of anyone," Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has also stated, according to the Athens News Agency - Macedonian Press Agency, his positions on the "borders of the heart" of Turkey, saying: "Turkey is larger than Turkey. It is not possible for us to be imprisoned in 780,000 square kilometers. Natural borders are one thing, and the borders of our heart are another. Our brothers in Mosul, in Kirkuk, in Skopje, may be outside our physical borders, but they are within the borders of our heart, at the heart of our heart... The Turkish Republic did not come out of nowhere. Just as the Ottoman Empire took over from the Seljuks, so did the Turkish Republic take over from the Ottoman Empire. We embrace our history as a whole."

### National Rules of Engagement

The purpose of the National Rules of Engagement (NRE) is to establish procedures and provide specific instructions regarding the reaction of the Greek armed forces in crisis



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### Ottoman empire 1914-1920

**Conceptual map based on the claims of the Misak-i Milli with known territorial borders from 1914, 1918, 1920 and 1878.**

**Borders of other countries were highly fluid between 1914-1926, these are not shown.**

-  Unoccupied core territories of the Ottoman Empire in the boundaries of 1914 as on the eve of the Armistice of Mudros (1918-10-30).
-  Ottoman Empire territory with Turkish (Muslim) minorities – leased to third powers (as of 1920).
-  Former territory of Ottoman Empire (before 1914) with Turkish (Muslim) majorities.
-  Arab Majorities.



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or conflict situations. Such actions can be isolated incidents or major crises. The NRE also aim to both preserve national prestige and to ensure the minimum loss of life of armed forces' personnel, while avoiding pointless and provocative actions.

The NRE are divided into two categories: (1) those that may not lead to the escalation of a crisis because they are restrictive in nature and are implemented under the authority of the general staffs of the armed forces, without the need for special authorization; and (2) those that may cause an escalation of a crisis and whose implementation requires special authorization from the Government Council for National Security (KYSEA).

It should be noted that, beyond any order or guideline, it remains the obligation and the inalienable right of the commander of a unit or captain of a ship or aircraft to take all necessary measures, in any event, to protect the lives of his personnel and the safety of the unit.

#### **National Security Council (Greece)**

In order to deal with both external and internal threats and challenges to its security, the institutional and organizational reinforcement of the national security apparatus and emergency response is essential. To this end, it is of critical importance to establish a high-level body (National Security Council/NSC), which will be able to design the long-term Greek national strategy, as well as to make policy recommendations to the country's political leadership: the prime minister and the cabinet, or KYSEA – the institutions that, according to the constitution, are involved in decision making and the implementation of national security policy. This body – streamlined, kept to the minimum possible size for its efficient operation – will be staffed by diplomats, military officers and

other public servants, as well as a small number of experts, and will function to support KYSEA, which will continue to have the central role in decision making. The proposed body, which is currently in the final stages of creation, should avoid getting involved in issues of a tactical nature, which should be the focus of ministries and services.

#### **NATO**

An objective and dispassionate historical assessment would likely lead to the conclusion that it was an erroneous and counterproductive view to consider that NATO, as an alliance, bore significant responsibility for its lack of response to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the adoption of a neutral stance on the points of friction between Turkey and Greece (that conclusion regarding non-responsibility of the organization does not necessarily apply to specific member states). This is because, by its nature and charter, NATO did not and does not have the power of any institutional intervention in disputes between its member countries. This sense of injustice has led Greece to not make the most of what NATO can offer: the training of members of the armed forces, and the transfer of know-how regarding operational doctrines and the structure and organization of the armed forces. For a number of reasons, NATO membership can be a useful foreign and defense policy tool for Greece. But we should not expect the Alliance to take a position regarding the Greek-Turkish conflict (unless Turkey decides or is forced to leave NATO, a scenario whose probability, while non-zero, remains quite low).

#### **NAVTEX**

This is an international service which has the aim of disseminating to ships at sea navigational, meteorological

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and emergency information concerning coastal areas. The information is automatically received and directly printed. Turkey often announces the reservation of large areas in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean for naval exercises and hydrocarbon exploration.

### The nineteen thirties (1930s)

Following the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922 and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, one of the main goals of Eleftherios Venizelos (but also of Kemal Atatürk who wished to transform Turkey into a modern, European-style state) was to secure an atmosphere of detente with neighboring states, which would allow the country to devote itself without distractions to a long-term national growth project, a necessary step after the disastrous Greek-Turkish war of 1919-1922 and the resulting influx of a large number of refugees from Asia Minor.

The first step in Venizelos' plan of diplomatic engagements was Italy. Next came the Greek-Turkish Treaty of Friendship, Neutrality, Conciliation and Arbitration and the Protocol for Naval Armaments, signed in Ankara on October 30, 1930. On September 14, 1933, the two countries signed the Ankara Pact (Pact of Cordial Friendship), under which they undertook to guarantee their common borders, as well as to communicate on international matters of mutual concern. The treaty in question was, perhaps not surprisingly under the circumstances, not implemented by Turkey in 1940-41, when Greece was attacked by the Axis powers. In any case, the 1930s have been described as the "golden decade" of Greek-Turkish relations.

### NOTAM

A NOTAM is a "notice to airmen" regarding issues of flight safety, the reservation of areas for aviation exercises, etc. Turkey routinely reserves large areas of the Aegean for exercises, thus abusing the relevant right.

## O

### Ocalan case

The Ocalan case has gone down as an example of unsuccessful crisis prevention and management, with particularly negative consequences regarding Greece's international image, and Greek-Turkish relations. The crisis began with the arrival of the leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Abdullah Ocalan, on Greek soil and ended with his arrest in Kenya following a twelve-day stay of himself and his entourage in the Greek ambassador's residence. He was subsequently sentenced to death (later commuted to life imprisonment) by a Turkish court.

The role of private citizens in the effort to transfer and shelter Ocalan in Greece raised very serious questions. The obvious one that arises was who was shaping the foreign policy of the country: the elected government or private citizens (whether well-intentioned or not) with different goals, perceptions or even interests? The cost of pursuing a "private" foreign policy was also particularly high in the Imia crisis. The result of "private" actions in the Ocalan case was to burden Greece with an extremely difficult problem which would certainly have a high cost, but no visible benefit.

The Greek participation in this failed operation, aside from causing a significant deterioration in the already problematic Greek-Turkish relationship, also provoked negative reactions from the Kurds, who felt that at the end Greece betrayed Ocalan. It also resulted in tarnishing the country's image. A direct result of the Ocalan case was an effort to reorganize the Greek National Intelligence Service, which began with the appointment of an active ambassador to the position of director.

### Operational Control of the Aegean

Following Greece's withdrawal from the NATO military command in 1974, Turkey challenged Greece's responsibility for operational control of the Aegean through a series of actions. The issue was partially resolved with the readmission of Greece in 1980. Turkey continued to raise the issue of operational boundaries, and twice tried to set new standards: in 1992 (with NATO's new command structure), and in 2000, (with the delimitation plan for regions of aerial policing). Today, disagreements and periodic friction remain, although their importance has diminished significantly, due to changes in NATO's command structure.

### Operation Balyoz (Sledgehammer)

In 2008, a significant number of military officials and other public servants were brought to trial in Turkey (and many were given long prison sentences) as part of the Ergenekon case, an alleged clandestine, paramilitary organization with close ties to the Turkish military and security forces and the "deep state". The Erdogan government accused high-ranking members of the Turkish armed forces of drafting plans in 2003 to create a "hot incident" with Greece (even involving the shooting down of a Turkish airplane through friendly fire), with the aim of destabilizing Turkey and eventually leading to the removal of the AKP government. The alleged existence of such plans created understandable concern in Greece.

## P

### Papoulias-Yilmaz Protocol

Within the framework of the short-lived easing of tensions between Greece and Turkey following the signing of the Davos Declaration (1988), the then Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias and his Turkish counterpart Mesut Yilmaz agreed on a protocol of measures for the building of mutual trust. It stipulated, among other things, a moratorium on military exercises in the Aegean for a two-month period (later extended to four months) during the tourist season and on days of religious or national celebration. Greece complains that Turkey frequently violates the protocol.

### The Paris Peace Treaty (1947)

As a result of consultations between the United States, Britain and the USSR, it was agreed that the Dodecanese would be ceded to Greece. According to Article 14 of the Paris Peace Treaty: "(1) Italy hereby cedes to Greece in full sovereignty the Dodecanese Islands indicated hereafter, namely Stampalia (Astropalia), Rhodes (Rhodos), Calki (Kharki), Scarpanto,



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*Casos (Casso), Piscopis (Tilos), Misiros (Nisyros), Calimnos (Kalymnos), Leros, Patmos, Lipsos (Lipso), Simi (Symi), Cos (Kos) and Castellorizo, as well as the adjacent islets. (2) These islands shall be and shall remain demilitarised."*

Turkey was not a combatant in the Second World War and as a result it did not participate in the Paris Peace Conference, and thus it could not put forward any claims regarding the Dodecanese. On the basis of multiple official and unofficial Turkish statements over the years, there is little doubt that the ceding of the entire Dodecanese to Greece was a significant disappointment for Turkey.

### **Procès-Verbal of Berne**

Following the sailing of the Turkish research vessel *Sismik I* into the Aegean, discussions were undertaken in November 1976, which led to the signing of the *Procès-Verbal* of Berne. The procès-verbal was not intended to resolve the problems between the two countries, and it did not address the substance of the dispute. It sought to establish a code of behavior and the general framework within which the discussions between the two countries might proceed.

The problem that arose in relation to the procès-verbal was located in paragraph 6, which stipulated that the two countries would abstain from any initiatives or actions that were related to the continental shelf of the Aegean. There were two points of contention. The first concerned the time limitation set on this abstention from explorations of the continental shelf. The second point concerned the geographical area covered by the procès-verbal. Both issues were raised with pressing urgency during the crisis of March 1987, and they continue to preoccupy, to a certain extent, the two countries until today, since Turkey deems that the moratorium on exploration which was agreed covers the entire Aegean.

### **Public opinion and Greek-Turkish relations**

The responsibility for the incomplete reporting and distorted views regarding certain foreign policy issues is shared by a significant portion of the Greek political, intellectual and journalistic elites. For many years, they have opted to publicly support stereotypical views and opinions that have little to do with reality, rather than informing the Greek public objectively, as they have the responsibility to do, about the real dimensions of the problem.

In the case of Greek-Turkish relations in particular, it is extremely important to have a sober public debate and to provide responsible and well-substantiated answers to questions such as: which disputes concern sovereign rights and which are about operational responsibilities? Where does international law favor Greece and where does it not? Which actions being taken by Turkey in the Aegean are illegal and which are not? What would be a realistic way for resolving the bilateral problems, and what would be the positive and negative consequences of implementing that option?

Any solution to serious foreign policy problems – which inevitably will involve some elements of compromise, while of course taking into account vital national interests – must enjoy at least a basic level of support among the citizens of a country, who must be sufficiently informed. In the event

that a significant gap exists between the terms of a proposed agreement and the (stereotypical) demands of public opinion (which should neither dictate the moves of the political leadership nor be ignored), the lack of democratic legitimacy and consequent high political costs will create significant difficulties in the approval, ratification and implementation of the agreement.

## R

### **Rocky islets**

According to the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), islands have full rights to maritime zones. This excludes "rocks" that cannot sustain human habitation or economic life and therefore do not have the right to maritime zones (Economic Exclusion Zone / Continental Shelf) other than territorial waters. There is no other definition of "islet" in the Convention.

### **Russia, Greece, Turkey**

In recent years, Russia has sought to strengthen its economic, energy (in the sectors of natural gas and nuclear power), and military (S-400 air defense system) ties with Turkey. It is possible that Russo-Turkish cooperation on the basis of common political and economic interests is of a rather opportunistic nature, not a true strategic partnership. Also, disagreements appear to exist between the two countries regarding the situation in Syria, Libya and, lately, in Nagorno-Karabakh. However, these differences have so far been manageable, and it appears that, so far at least, a *modus vivendi* has been found. The deepening of Russo-Turkish relations is a source of serious concern for both the US and NATO.

This thaw in Russian-Turkish relations came as a rather unpleasant surprise for some in Greece. It shouldn't have because Russia, a traditional great power, formulates its foreign policy on the basis of its national interests, rather than any sentimental considerations regarding history or religious faith. As a result, any high expectations of substantive Russian support of Greece in the context of its problems with Turkey, or on the issue of Cyprus, should be avoided. Having said this, there are still significant mutual interests between Greece and Russia, and an effort to improve bilateral relations, and to seek realistic areas of cooperation is imperative for Greece.

## S

### **Scramble**

Scramble is a command for take-off in the shortest possible time (a few minutes maximum) of fighter aircraft that the Hellenic Air Force is routinely keeping in a state of readiness. This tactic is used to quickly identify and intercept Turkish aircraft that commit violations and infringements in the Aegean.

### **Search & Rescue (SAR)**

Search and rescue for maritime accidents is conducted under the framework of the 1979 Hamburg International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue. For air accidents, search and rescue is governed by the relevant agreements established

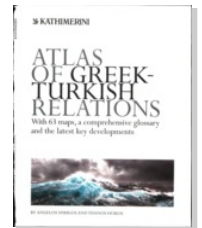


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### Military bases in the Eastern Mediterranean



through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). According to the Regional Air Navigation Agreement of 1952, the areas of responsibility of states for aviation accidents correspond to the Flight Information Regions (FIRs). In the event of a plane crash in which the aircraft goes into the sea, the relevant search and rescue provisions of the ICAO apply. In the case of maritime accidents, on the other hand, the Hamburg Convention stipulates that in areas of the high seas, an agreement must first be reached between any adjacent coastal states.

Since 1944, Greece has coordinated the search and rescue operations in all high-sea areas of the Aegean. The search and rescue zone is aligned with that of the FIR. There has been no agreement between Greece and Turkey with regard to maritime accidents, however, as Turkey is seeking to equate aviation and maritime accidents, and consequently to challenge the limits of the Athens FIR. It should be noted that search and rescue, like the issue of air traffic control in the Athens FIR (see related entry), are not questions of sovereign rights but of administrative responsibilities.

#### September events or Istanbul pogrom

On September 6, 1955, in connection to international developments regarding the Cyprus problem and in response to a bomb placed by a Turkish agent in the house where Kemal Atatürk was born in Thessaloniki, a Turkish mob, with the tolerance of the Turkish authorities (as was proven in 1960 during the trial of Adnan Menderes, who was prime minister at the time), committed acts of violence against the Greek population of Istanbul (with a number of murders, rapes and beatings) and looted Greek homes, shops, schools and cemeteries.

These events constituted the first major blow against the Greek population of Istanbul. In 1964, most of the remaining

Greeks in the city were expelled or forced to leave their homes and properties and find refuge in Greece. From 100,000 Greek inhabitants of the city in 1923, today only 2,000-3,000 remain (including mixed marriages), while out of the 8,200 inhabitants of the islands of Gökçeada (Imbros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos), very few elderly people remain.

#### Sevres Syndrome

The so-called “Sevres Syndrome” or “ghost of Sevres”, i.e. the possibility of the fragmentation of Turkey as a result of the plans and actions of various “external forces”, is directly related to the “Kurdish problem”. It is a concern of a psychological nature that is not supported by events. However, it seems that it has long influenced the way of thinking and behavior of the Turkish military-political establishment.

#### Souda Bay, naval / air base

Souda Bay is a deep-sea port and advanced naval base for the support of US and NATO armed forces operating in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. It is considered by the US to be a military installation of high importance in a particularly volatile region. It also houses the Greek-administered NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center (NMIOTC), where Special Forces from all the allied forces are trained. Use of Souda Bay by the US is expected to increase as a result of the renewal of the Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement (MDCA) between Greece and the US.

#### Straits used for international navigation

As mentioned in the relevant entry, the right of innocent passage was not considered enough to meet the needs of travelling ships. For this reason, a new regime was created in the Convention on the Law of the Sea, which applies in parallel

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with that of innocent passage. It is the regime of “transit passage” and it applies only to straits used for international navigation.

Straits used for international navigation belong to the territorial sea of a state and connect one part of the high seas or an exclusive economic zone and another part of the high seas or an exclusive economic zone. In the straits used for international navigation, the transit of vessels is exercised without being impeded by the coastal state, which generally cannot prohibit the transit of ships. The only restrictions concern the obligation of traveling vessels to not navigate in a manner that could endanger the security of the coastal state, to not pollute the sea, to comply with the rules of navigation, and finally to not engage in fishing and research activities or smuggling. It is accepted that submarines can transit international straits submerged. In addition, the UNCLOS gives aircraft the right to fly over and transit international straits freely, a right which is not provided by the regime of innocent passage through territorial waters. Finally, no prior permit from, or even notification of, the coastal state is required.

In the case of the Aegean, straits used for international navigation are those that are located within territorial waters and connect one part of the high seas with another, i.e. virtually all the areas connecting the northern with the southern Aegean and the passages around Crete. The geography of the Aegean, with its large number of islands, in combination with the 6-mile territorial sea, create a large number of straits, many of which could potentially be considered as straits used for international navigation. For this reason, Greece submitted a statement in 1982 claiming the right to limit the number of straits used for international navigation in the Aegean, and to specify which of the many alternative straits could be used for “transit passage”. Despite the statement, the issue of establishing the routes where the right of “transit passage” can be exercised remained dormant.

# T

### The Theory of Two-and-a-Half Wars

In 1996, an article by a senior Turkish diplomat Sukru Elekdag was published on the subject of the “Two-and-a-Half-War Strategy”, in the March-May issue of the Turkish journal *Perceptions*. This quarterly journal was published by the Strategic Studies Center, which was funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Elekdag was one of the two experts appointed by Turkey for the “wise men dialogue” with Greece, and someone with significant influence in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Below are excerpts featuring the key points made in the article:

“In order to cause social and political chaos in Turkey’s internal affairs, and so as to be able to impose a state of *fait accompli* in the Aegean, Greece is providing significant financial support to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). Moreover, it sends PKK terrorists, who have settled in its territory, to Turkey, so that they may carry out attacks against the Turkish tourism industry”.

“Athens seeks to change the balance of power in the Aegean to its own benefit as regards naval and air forces. It

does this on the premise that the US and the Europeans will not allow a prolonged clash between Turkey and Greece. Therefore, air and naval operations will be of decisive importance during the early stages of hostilities”.

“Peace with Greece depends exclusively on maintaining unquestionable military superiority on the Turkish side. The key for stability in the Aegean is Turkey’s power of deterrence”.

“In a second phase, after the extension of national territorial waters to 12 nautical miles, Greece intends to declare that the triangle demarcated by Rhodes, Crete and Cyprus constitutes its own exclusive economic zone. In this manner, it will enclose Turkey inside a “strategic zone” extending from Lemnos, opposite the Dardanelles, to the Gulf of Iskenderun, and it will place under its control all supply routes to Anatolia”.

“Turkey deems that the creation of a political crisis with Syria that will culminate in a conflict will provide Greece with the opportunity to realize its designs in the Aegean, and force Turkey to fight on two fronts”.

“From now onwards, Turkey must not rely on the collective defense of NATO. Turkey must rely exclusively on its own powers”.

“In the event of a military conflict between Turkey and a neighboring state, foreign support for the PKK will increase and this internal threat will require the engagement of a far greater military force”.

“The potential attackers against Turkey [i.e. Greece and Syria] will coordinate their moves”.

“For the above reasons, Turkey must adopt a strategic policy of ‘two-and-a-half wars’, that is to say of two simultaneous large-scale operations in the Aegean and on its southeastern borders, and to be prepared for a ‘half war’ in the country’s interior, against the PKK”.

### Treaty of Lausanne (1923)

This is the basic treaty governing Greek-Turkish relations. With the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey reclaimed Eastern Thrace, which the Treaty of Sevres had ceded to Greece. Turkey also took back the area of Smyrna (Izmir). Greece retained the Aegean islands, except for two at the entrance of the Dardanelles: Gökçeada (Imbros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos). Finally, Ankara recognized the annexation of Cyprus by Great Britain and of the Dodecanese by Italy. Also, the mandatory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey was agreed, while the Muslims of Western Thrace and the Greeks who were settled before 1918 in Constantinople (Istanbul) were excluded.

No wonder that Tayyip Erdogan’s statements about the revision or modernization of the Lausanne Treaty have caused concern and apprehension in Greece. Even if one accepts the explanation that it was addressed to an internal audience and challenging the existing regime in the Aegean and Thrace may have not been his (primary) motive, how should one interpret the frequent declarations concerning Turkey’s interest (*droit de regard*, in the language of diplomacy) – or perhaps right to openly intervene? – in a vast region starting from the Balkans and reaching as far as Central Asia and beyond?

The mixture of pan-Turanism and neo-Ottomanism with Islam as a cohesive force is the spiritual child of Turgut Özal, a prime minister and later president of Turkey (1983-1993).



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Erdogan's statements also show touches of Russian influence, as President Putin, for whom Erdogan has openly expressed his admiration, has adopted a doctrine bearing his name that refers, among other, to the protection of Russian minorities in the former Soviet Union.

### Tripartite cooperation between Greece and Cyprus with Israel and Egypt

In turbulent times and/or periods of limited financial resources for the exercise of an active foreign policy, cooperation with neighboring states and the establishment of alliances at a tactical and strategic level may constitute an extremely useful tool for the promotion of national interests. This is precisely the logic behind the evolving "triangular" cooperation between Greece and Cyprus with Israel and Egypt respectively. A common factor in both cases is the difficult to poor relations of Cairo, Tel Aviv, Nicosia and Athens with Ankara. Of course, the existence of a common adversary does not by itself constitute a solid basis for building a relationship of strategic cooperation. Cooperation should be based on common interests, and this is what the states mentioned above are trying to accomplish.

Examining the stance of all Greek governments since 2010, it is positive that there has been remarkable continuity on this matter. Continuity and consistency are key prerequisites for a successful foreign policy. In the case at hand, there exist important common interests between the countries involved, including the exploitation of potential energy resources, the exchange of information on security matters, the need for broader political, military and economic cooperation, as well as the containment of state and non-state actors that act in a destabilizing manner.

The importance of Israel for the US, and Egypt's key role in the Arab world and the Middle East in general, make these efforts for strategic cooperation even more attractive and potentially beneficial for Greece and Cyprus. The EU also benefits indirectly from closer cooperation between two member states and two important regional players.

The strategic relationship with Israel will remain one of the key elements of Greek foreign policy. Of course, Greece will have to walk a fine line between strategic interests on the one hand, and historical ties and a sense of justice (but also the potential impact on regional stability) on the other, when it comes to the Palestinian problem.

Now that the tripartite cooperative relationships have been established, the priority must be on the deepening of relations with Israel and Egypt. Exchanges of visits at the level of heads of state and senior ministers are certainly important, but the creation of institutional and personal links between mid-level officials who will remain in positions of responsibility for quite some time – and will therefore ensure the necessary continuity – is also of high significance. In this framework, in addition to the extremely useful military exercises, one should explore various ideas, including student exchanges in English-language programs at Military Academies, the creation of joint working groups for information analysis, crisis management exercises and simulation-based wargaming; joint seminars at diplomatic academies and military schools, parliamentary working groups, cooperation on combatting Islamic terrorism, etc.

It is expected that the tripartite cooperative relationships will contribute to the creation of an 'axis of stability' in the troubled Eastern Mediterranean. Such cooperation could be expanded to include Jordan, Lebanon, the UAE, as well as

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the US (which has expressed its interest for a “3+1” format), and France. The effort for the creation of a regional security architecture – in a region where there are no such institutions – should be open-ended in terms of joint activities and also open to the membership of other countries from the region, provided they behave in a non-aggressive manner and respect a basic code of conduct.

### Turkey-Saraj Memorandum

On November 27, 2019, Turkey and the UN-recognized Saraj government of Libya (also known as the Government of National Accord/GNA) signed two memoranda. The first concerns the delimitation of maritime zones between the two countries, and the second deals with the provision of Turkish military assistance to Libya. The content of the first – highly favorable to Turkey – memorandum was largely determined by the dependence of the Saraj government on Ankara. As one analyst summed it up, “Saraj breathes with Turkish lungs.”

The memorandum on the delimitation of maritime zones not only ignores the relevant provisions of the international law of the sea convention as it recognizes only territorial waters of six nautical miles and not the right to a continental shelf and EEZ for Greek islands such as Crete, Rhodes and Karpathos, but also defies logic and common sense (something that is immediately apparent from a simple glance at the map).

The memorandum on maritime delimitation is a direct challenge and threat to Greek sovereign rights and national interests, as if acted upon, as Turkey threatens to do in the form of hydrocarbon exploration and drilling, it will completely cut off Greece from the Eastern Mediterranean. Greece’s aim is to delegitimize this memorandum, mainly through a (partial) delimitation agreement it signed in July 2020 with Egypt. At the political level, once the Turkey-Libya memorandum was signed, the Greek government had no choice but to support [through diplomatic means] the rival faction, that of the Libyan National Army (LNA), led by General Haftar. Greece has also developed good relations with Angila Saleh, the Speaker of the internationally recognized Libyan Parliament, based in Tobruk, which opposes the Saraj government. Europe’s inability to play a decisive role in its immediate neighborhood and the limited interest of the United States have opened the door for other actors (Turkey, Russia, UAE), turning the Libyan civil war into a complex international conflict. Egypt is deeply concerned, not wanting to see a neighboring country dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood and becoming a pawn of Turkey. An attempt by the GNA to seize additional territory (especially oil-rich areas) is likely to provoke an Egyptian military intervention.

Ankara has made a major political and military investment in Libya as part of its bid to become a dominant power in the Eastern Mediterranean. It has even sought to acquire permanent military bases in Libya. It is, however, too early to judge the success or failure of Turkey’s Libya policy.

### Turkish foreign policy and “Strategic Depth” (the “Davutoglu doctrine”)

According to the architect of the AKP’s foreign policy, Ahmet Davutoglu, Turkey is striving to build its foreign policy along alternative strategic axes (“strategic depth”), as opposed to

its previous solely Western-oriented approach. This does, of course, entail a risk of strategic overextension, particularly if diplomatic and military activity is not backed by the necessary economic strength.

According to Davutoglu, Turkey should endeavor to implement a multi-level, multi-dimensional foreign policy, making overtures in all directions. If these efforts are successful, the benefits will certainly be considerable. However, as analysts have pointed out, it is by no means easy to succeed in simultaneously satisfying different partners that on certain issues have conflicting interests. And in today’s circumstances, a number of questions arise: Can Turkey successfully integrate these multiple dimensions: independent, nationalist, Islamic, pan-Turkist/neo-Ottomanist, global and Western? Do Turkey’s ambitions continue to be compatible with the strategic objectives of the West? Indeed, analysts and officials in the US have for some time been asking the question, “Who lost Turkey?”, concerned that the country has clearly been moving away from the West .

One should note the role of the powerful lobby of the Eurasianists, who promote the idea of Turkey making a strategic shift towards Asia, as they believe the West has entered a period of decline. However, it appears that the influence of this school of thought has waned recently, as the Turkish president has engaged in to an effort to “square the circle”, by maintaining close ties with Russia but also avoiding sanctions from the US, returning to the F-35 jet fighter program and securing some form of support for the ailing Turkish economy.

Generally speaking, Erdogan has managed to strengthen his country’s international role and influence, partly by exploiting international circumstances. Of course, the policy of “zero problems with neighbors” – the brainchild of then foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu – has not been successfully implemented. Despite Turkey’s perceived importance for the US, there are clearly visible “dark clouds” over US-Turkish relations. Relations between Turkey and the EU have been at an impasse for a number of years, with no progress in accession negotiations in part due to the Cyprus problem, but also – and more importantly – due to Turkey’s failure to meet accession criteria.

In the Balkans, Turkey continues its policy of neo-Ottomanism, centered on Muslim/Turkish minorities and with a particular focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia (although the normalization of relations with Greece appears to be hampering Turkish plans) and Albania, while its interest in Western Thrace remains undiminished. However, it can be argued that Ankara has clearly overestimated the attractiveness of the Ottoman past for the peoples of the Balkans (and the same can be said of the Middle East), while Turkey’s continuing path of divergence from the EU, which – despite its problems and weaknesses – remains the clear priority for the countries of the Western Balkans, only serves to constrain the expansion of Turkish influence in the Balkan Peninsula.

At the same time, Turkey’s emergence as an energy hub remains a top priority for Ankara, and in this context it continues to actively press ahead on different energy fronts, such as the Southern Gas Corridor and TurkStream, while also seeking to participate in the exploitation of hydrocarbons in the Eastern Mediterranean.

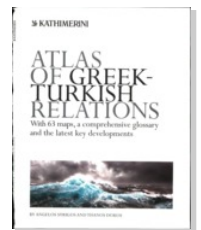


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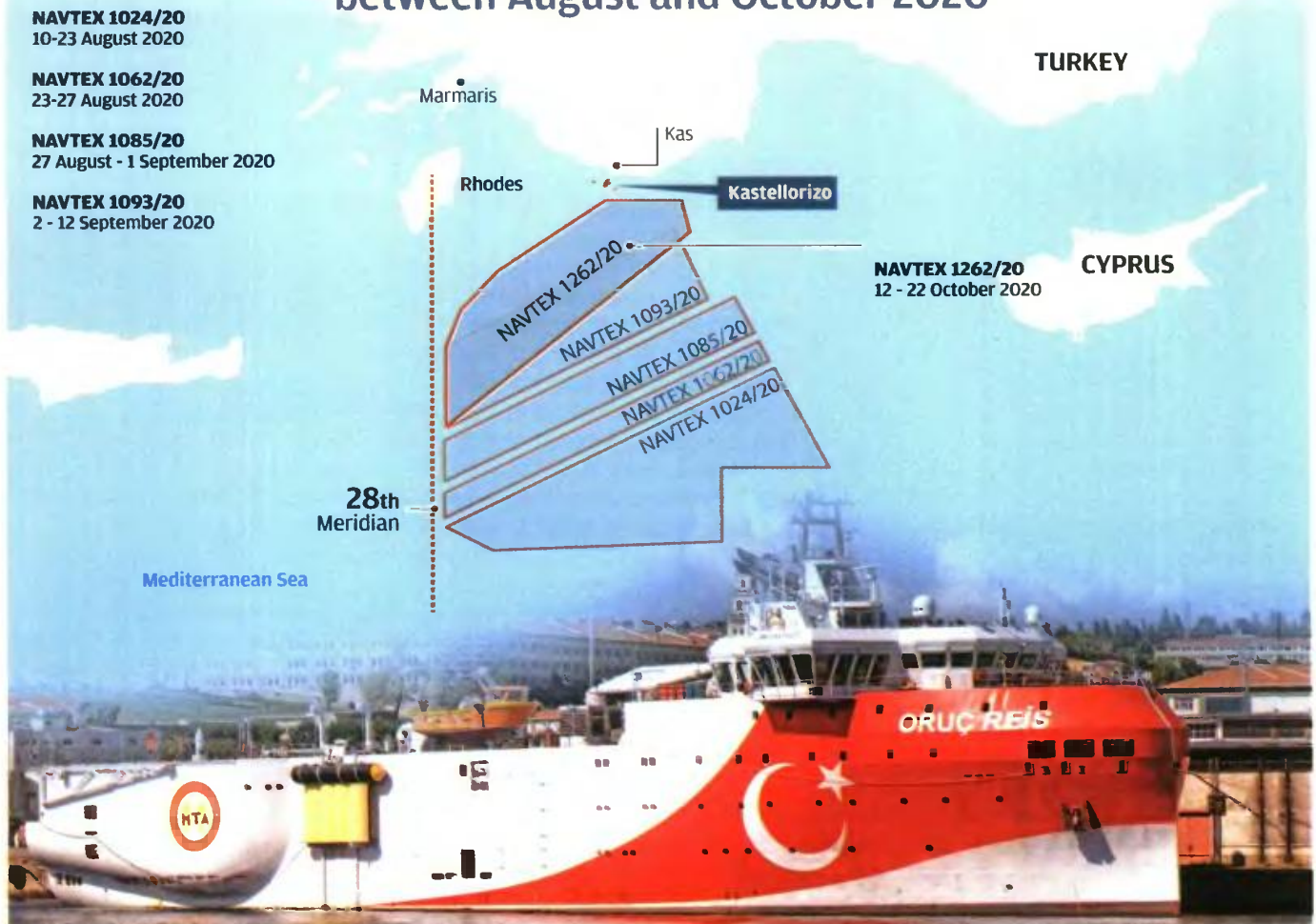
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### Turkish NAVTEX in the Eastern Mediterranean between August and October 2020



It is also important to point out that present-day Turkey appears to have fallen victim to what has been termed the “arrogance of power”, having lost any sense of moderation and proportion on many foreign policy issues. Historically, strategic overextension (the gap between goals and means) is not an uncommon phenomenon in international politics.

Today, one can see a systematic tendency towards the overestimation of Turkey’s – undeniably considerable – capabilities, coupled with a systematic underestimation of its serious problems.

Finally, from a Greek point of view, the management of Greek-Turkish relations is made even more difficult by the decision-making system in Ankara: all important decisions are being taken by a tight circle of advisors in a closed environment, where dissent is not encouraged, while formerly important actors such as the Foreign Ministry have been marginalized. The whole situation has become even more complicated because of the insecurity of the Turkish president, both personal (following the failed coup in July 2016) and political (his concern about losing domestic political dominance due to economic and other problems), as well as his very ambitious plans for 2023 and his legacy.

#### Turkish strategy in the Aegean

Turkey has a long-term strategy of increasing the part of the Aegean it controls, directly or indirectly. Possible motives include the need for free navigation as that is perceived by Ankara, the desire to participate in the exploitation of the wealth-producing resources in the Aegean (to the extent that they exist in substantial quantities) and in the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as the mindset of a major regional power that seeks to impose its will on neighboring states.

To achieve its goal, it uses a variety of “tools”: airspace infringements/violations, legal arguments about the demilitarization of islands, disputing search and rescue jurisdiction, casus belli threats regarding territorial waters, and the particularly dangerous theory of “gray zones” and the questioning of the sovereignty of a number of islands (including inhabited ones).

## U

#### USA, Greece, Turkey

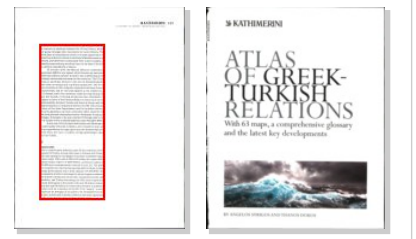
One could write a great deal about the history of the triangular relationship between Washington, Athens and Ankara. Today,

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relations between the US and Turkey are particularly difficult, in contrast to relations between the US and Greece, which are going through their best period in recent history. The Naval Base at Souda Bay (in Crete) is of great significance to American military activities in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond, and there have occasionally been rumors of plans to transfer some military activities from the air base of Incirlik to military installations in Greece.

In October 2019, the Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement (MDCA) was signed, which foresees an increased American military presence in Greece and a deepening of the strategic relationship between the two countries. The US has shown a particular interest in the port of Alexandroupolis, both from an energy and a military perspective. The US is also interested in the triangular cooperation between Greece-Cyprus-Israel, and its own participation in the scheme (in a 3+1 format), and it has, moreover, taken the step during the past few months of issuing strong and clear statements of support in favor of the Greek positions on issues such as the memorandum between Turkey and Faye al-Sarraj, and the right of islands to a continental shelf and an EEZ. This positive stance of the State Department and the broader national security apparatus has been somewhat offset, however, by the close personal relationship between Presidents Trump and Erdogan. It remains to be seen whether US foreign policy vis-a-vis Turkey will be markedly different under President Biden.

In any case, this very good relationship with Washington is particularly welcome in Athens, yet it would be wise not to set expectations too high, given the ever-present objective of the US to not “lose” a country of high geostrategic value such as Turkey.

## V

### Vision for 2023

This is a particularly ambitious plan for the centenary of the Republic of Turkey. Among other goals, it foresees that Turkey will rank among the ten biggest economies worldwide (today Turkey ranks 17th), with a GDP of \$2 trillion (it is about \$850 billion today), exports of \$500 billion, income per capita of \$25,000 and unemployment reduced to just 5%. The plan also includes: the construction and operation of three nuclear energy power plants with a total capacity of 4,700 MWe; the development of ports to be among the top ten largest worldwide; the domestic production of aircraft, unmanned aircraft and satellites; and Turkey becoming the fifth most important tourist destination in the world, with over 50 million visitors each year and \$50 billion of revenue from tourism. In addition, Turkey will be a member of the EU. This “legacy” is very important for Erdogan in his quest to be remembered in his people’s minds and in history books as the most important leader in the history of the modern Turkish state.