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# JAPAN-TURKEY DIALOGUE ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS



TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ  
BAŞBAKANLIK



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EMBASSY OF  
JAPAN

ORTADOĞU STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ  
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES

مركز الشرق الأوسط للدراسات الاستراتيجية



## **JAPAN - TURKEY DIALOGUE ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS**

KÜRESEL İLİŞKİLER  
ÜZERİNE  
TÜRKİYE - JAPONYA DİYALOĞU



# **JAPAN-TURKEY DIALOGUE ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS**

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**By:**

Bahadır Pehlivanürk, *TOBB University of Economics and Technology*

# ***Contents***

Preface .....	5
1. INTRODUCTION .....	7
I. OPENING SPEECHES	
1. Gürsel DÖNMEZ (Director of Foreign Relations, Prime Ministry).....	10
2. Yutaka YOKOI (Japan's Ambassador to Turkey, Embassy of Japan, Ankara).....	12
3. Ali Resul USUL (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, SAM) .....	14
II. KEYNOTE SPEAKERS	
1. Shingo YAMAGAMI (Director General (Acting), Japan Institute of International Affairs) Japan's Contribution to Peace, Security and Stability in Central Asia.....	15
2. Mesut ÖZCAN (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Turkey's Security Challenges in its Neighborhood .....	22
III. SPECIAL ARTICLE	
1. Shingo YAMAGAMI (Executive Director of JIIA, Japan Institute of International Affairs) Japan is Back.....	24
IV. PANEL PRESENTATIONS	
PANEL 1	
TURKEY-JAPAN RELATIONS AND APPROACHES TO CENTRAL ASIA	
1. Tetsuji TANAKA (Central Asia Research Institute, Japan) Japan-Central Asia Relations .....	36
2. Oktay TANRISEVER (Middle East Technical University, METU) Turkey's Relations with Russia and Central Asia .....	40
3. Kohei IMAI (JSPS Scholar, Meiji University) Turkey as a Trading State and the Japanese Model.....	43
4. Ali AKKEMIK (Kadir Has University) On Turkish-Japanese Economic Relations.....	45

PANEL 2

TURKISH AND JAPANESE PERSPECTIVES ON MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRS

1. Koichiro Tanaka (Managing Director of IEEJ, President of JIME Center)	
Japanese Perspectives towards the Middle East.....	57
2. Yutaka TAKAOKA (Senior Researcher, Middle East Research Institute of Japan)	
Analysis of the Resource Mobilization Mechanism of the Islamic State.....	61
3. Haldun YALÇINKAYA (TOBB University of Economics and Technology)	
Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and Turkey.....	74
4. Bayram Sinkaya (Yıldırım Beyazıt University)	
Iran and Turkey Relations After the Nuclear Deal: A Case for Compartmentalization.....	81
V. CONCLUDING REMARKS .....	96

## PREFACE

On the occasion of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Turkey-Japan diplomatic relations, Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM) held a joint symposium titled “Japan and Turkey: Where did we come from? Where are we going?” in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan, Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry’s Presidency of International Relations, and Center for Strategic Research (SAM) on 2014. Building on this symposium, ORSAM also held a second symposium titled “Japan-Turkey Dialogue on Global Affairs” on 1 March 2016, with the support of the Embassy of Japan in Ankara, aiming to offer an insight into Japan-Turkey relations and the opportunities of cooperation on various regional and global issues.

During the symposium, the speakers shared their viewpoints regarding the bilateral relations and several unfolding developments in Central Asia and the Middle East. Academics from various universities in Ankara, representatives of diplomatic missions, government institutions, research centers, Japanese citizens living in Ankara and a large number of students from universities attended the symposium as well as those interested in the foreign affairs and international politics of Japan and Turkey.

Through this report, ORSAM aims at compiling and recording the presentations and topics discussed during the symposium. This will make critical contributions to the long-term friendship and intellectual dialogue between the two countries. Moreover, we hope that these contributions will strengthen the bilateral cooperation toward the solution of both global and regional problems, and will also be beneficial for the world.

*Assoc. Prof. Şaban Kardaş*  
*ORSAM President*



By: Bahadır Pehlivanürk, TOBB University of Economics and Technology

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM), with the support of the External Relations Presidency of the Republic of Turkey's Prime Ministry, Center for Strategic Research of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SAM) and Japanese Embassy in Ankara, organized a symposium, entitled "Turkey Japan Dialogue on Global Affairs" to shed light on Turkey-Japan relations and Turkey-Japan cooperation in the context of different regions and global issues. During the symposium, participants delivered presentations on Turkey-Japan relations; Turkish and Japanese perspectives on developments in East Asia, such as the South China Sea Dispute and the Middle East including developments in Syria, Iraq, Iran, Caucasus, Central Asia, Russia; and the security problems such as foreign terrorist fighters and migration.

While 150 people were expected to attend, approximately 200 people participated to the event. Among the participants; there were academics from various universities in Ankara, representatives from diplomatic missions, government agencies, think tanks and research institutes, Japanese nationals living in Ankara, many university students and various other people interested in Japanese and Turkish foreign policy/International politics.

All of the speeches given in the symposium are included in this volume. Also, Ambassador Shingo YAMAGAMI, the keynote speaker of the symposium, kindly accepted our request for another article about contemporary Japan, and his article is also included here as a Special Article. It was also printed with minor modifications as a part of a separate ORSAM report series. His article focuses on Japan's reemergence as a major player in world politics and its normative strength as a "lifestyle power". This is an interesting and rich study, which evaluates Japanese influence in the world outside of conventional categorizations and also gives insights about Japanese publics, approach to peace and security. I believe that this study is a major contribution in understanding Japan and its potentially huge peaceful contribution to the world.

The symposium proceeded as such: After the opening speeches by Ambassador Yutaka YOKOI, Ambassador of Japan in Ankara and Dr.Gürsel DÖNMEZ from Prime Ministry of Turkey, Head of Presidency of Foreign Relations, the Symposium started with keynote speeches from Ambassador Shingo Yamagami and Assoc. Prof. Mesut Özcan. Ambassador Shingo Yamagami in his speech explained rapidly changing global power balance, technological progress, and emerging threats,



including the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). He made a sketch of East Asia security environment, which has become increasingly severe in recent years. He especially focused on South China Sea Dispute, China's relations with Japan and other East Asian Countries, and he proceeded to explain Japan's new security doctrine purported by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, called "Proactive Contribution to Peace". Such an analysis and examination will certainly be helpful in expanding the understanding of Japanese foreign policy and also in exploring what Turkey and Japan can do together.

Assoc.Prof. Mesut Özcan in his speech focused on difficulties Turkey is facing emanating from its neighborhood. He examined the unfolding events in the Middle East, which are posing serious security threats for Turkey emerging from situations in Syria, Iraq, or other parts of the region. He explained that in the last decade, Turkey increased its economic cooperation with the Middle East but the recent events also created some setbacks for Turkish economic interests in the region, highlighting refugee crisis. He concluded that Turkish and Japanese cooperation will contribute to a better understanding of two respective regions and will help to devise better policies to deal with these challenges for both countries.

In the first Panel after Keynote speeches, Tetsuji Tanaka gave an all-encompassing sketch of Japanese involvement in Central Asia, and explained how Japan and Turkey can cooperate for the construction a peaceful and stable region, highlighting the affinity regional countries have for Turkey and Japan. Oktay Tanrısever in turn explained Turkey's relations with Central Asia and the dynamics of the crisis between Turkey and Russia. At the end of his speech he gave insight about Russia's worldview, which should be very useful for improvement of the Central Asia policies of Japan and Turkey. His

speech was followed by Kohei Imai, who discussed the common diplomatic particularities between Japan and Turkey, especially in terms of "humanitarian diplomacy" underlining their activism. He gave Japan's "trading state" model as a guideline for Turkey's Middle East policy, targeting the construction of a peaceful, wealthy, and stable region. In the last speech of this panel, K.Ali Akkemik, drew an all-encompassing picture of Turkey's economic relations with Japan. This is the only extensive study on Turkey-Japan economic relations, comparing it with Turkey's relations with other East Asian countries and exposing shortcomings and avenues for improvement.

The second panel had a strong focus on Middle East. The first speaker Koichiro Tanaka talked about Saudi-Iranian tensions, energy politics, and drew a very interesting geopolitical analogy between China's situation in East Asia and the conundrum Saudi Arabia is in, providing a very good insight into understanding the recent conflict in Yemen and Saudi Arabia's foreign policy. The speaker Yutaka Takaoka has presented a very detailed picture of resource mobilization by ISIS, their recruiting system, and offered an alternative model into understanding the way ISIL acquires new recruits. This speech was followed by a matching topic, the security challenges posed by Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) by Haldun Yalçınkaya. He argued that Turkey is at an important place concerning FTF's travels, and failure at prevention of free movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters is another threat to Turkey's security, which necessitates international cooperation. The last speech was by Bayram Sinkaya, who explained the dynamics of Turkey-Iran relations. In his study he uses the concept of "compartmentalization" to explain simultaneous operation of conflict and cooperation in the relations of these two countries.

Most of the following are transcriptions of speeches made in the Symposium. Some

of the speakers also transformed their speeches into full-fledged articles and these were published separately in the journal *Perceptions* Spring 2016 special issue. With permission from SAM and the authors, we chose to publish these full

articles here instead of the transcriptions of speeches and we believe they will immensely help to increase our understandings of Japanese and Turkish perspectives on Middle East and East Asia.

# I. OPENING SPEECHES

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## 1. Gürsel DÖNMEZ

*(External Relations President, Prime Ministry)*

---

Dear Excellencies and distinguished guests,

I would like to start by congratulating ORSAM, organizer of this symposium which brought together distinguished academicians from Turkey and Japan, two countries with ancient friendship between them, and also the Japanese Embassy in Ankara and Center for Strategic Research (SAM) of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I hope that the speeches, the discussions, and the exchange of ideas in today's event will aid to the development of renewed and concrete visions leading to the strengthening of Turkish-Japanese relations. I salute you all with respect.

Dear participants, in the past and today, the geographical distance between Turkey and Japan has never stopped us from building strong friendship ties between our governments and our people; indeed, the difficulties emanating from this distance may have even enhanced the friendship. Two years ago we have celebrated 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Turkey, but it is well known that our strong relations have started earlier, after Japan opened itself to the outside, to the stage of world history. During this time, Sultan Abdulhamid II has sent gifts to Japanese Emperor as a sign of friendship, and we very well

know the aftermath of this event. It is also known that there are even movies that take our tragic memories as their subjects.

As I was speaking I remembered the mid-1980s. I was a student back then and the academicians and the intellectuals were writing about Japan and subjects related to what was called "the Japanese miracle". Japan and Japanese success has always been a subject of interest in modern Turkey, just like our cultural affinity and similarities. Coming from such a historical and emotional background, we now witness the foundation of a strategic partnership between the two countries, which began in 2013. Especially recently, we see that Turkey and Japan have started high level exchanges. These exchanges are still continuing; Japanese Prime Minister was in Turkey recently. Turkish officials welcome the delegations from Japan with utmost hospitality. Same can be said for Japan as well, as when our delegations visit Japan we are welcomed with a similar hospitality. I would like to take this occasion to share with you my appreciation for that.

But when we consider the exchanges of visit and joint investments and such exchanges, I have to emphasize that we are yet to reach the trade capacity we hope to achieve. On the other hand, Japanese technology and Japanese investors par-

ticipate in big projects in our country. We would like to take the cooperation and collaboration between our two countries to a higher level. We hope that this symposium and the exchange of ideas will have a serious contribution in this regard. If we look at the statistics of 2014 we see that our trade level has stayed at around \$3.6 billion. When we think about Japan and Turkey's geostrategic position, this number is very small. I hope that in the future we will increase our trade volume. Certainly, Japan-Turkey relations are not only about trade. There is a sense of affinity between the two countries. For example, when Japan has a national soccer game, I support Japan like most Turkish people do. That means there is sympathy between Turkey and Japan. What we have to do is to take this sympathy to a higher level as we increase our cooperation and collaboration.

Also I have to express my gratitude on one point as well. We have established many *Yunus Emre Turkish Culture Cen-*

*ters* around the world, one of which is in Tokyo, in order to strengthen cultural exchange among people. In this regard, I would like to thank to Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Japanese officials for their support. In the academic field and field of science, we have a Turkish-Japanese Science and Technology University project. In that regard, we, as Turkish side of the project, are very prepared in İstanbul in terms of the place, and etc. It is important that this project is realized with utmost speed and the agreement between the parties to be implemented as soon as possible. I take this occasion to express our wish one more time.

In the beginning of my speech I expressed my gratitude to ORSAM and other supportive institutions and Japanese institutions. We wish that our joint activities like this symposium, and the ones in the future will help develop the cooperation between the two countries. Thank you for your participation and I salute you all. (Arigato Gozaimasu)

## 2. Yutaka YOKOI

*(Japan's Ambassador to Turkey, Embassy of Japan, Ankara)*

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[Merhaba, hoşgeldiniz. Ben Yutaka YOKOI, Japonya Büyükelçisiyim. Bugün burada sizinle birarada olmaktan çok mutluluk duyuyorum] Dr. Gürsel Dönmez, President of External Relations Prime Ministry and Dr. Şaban Kardeş President of ORSAM, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

I did my great pleasure as Ambassador of Japan to witness this intellectual dialogue we initiated two years ago how turned into today's Turkey-Japan dialogue on global affairs. Today we may say we are in a golden age of Japanese Turkish relations because of the density of our interactions in various areas. Last year commemorated 105th anniversary of the Ertuğrul Frigate incident, and we had many high level exchanges between two countries. These are highlighted by President Erdoğan's visit to Tokyo in October and Prime Minister Abe's visit to Istanbul and Antalya in November. In December, the jointly produced film Ertuğrul in 1890 was released to Turkey and Japan and nearly 1 million people have watched this film in both countries. And this film has just nominated in many categories of Japanese Academy Awards which will be announced this week in Tokyo. The two episodes depicted in the film are only a small part of the vast examples of the friendship between our people. We also have a long history of helping each other when one of us is in trouble. March 11 will be the 5th anniversary of the Great East Japan earthquake. When we suffered this unprecedented disaster, the Turkish government and people dispatched rescue teams and support us. Despite the geographical distance between our countries, Japanese people will never forget. When earthquake hit Turkey in the same year, we cooperated with your country as well.

When it comes to our cooperation in economic fields we have large scale projects such as Marmaray Tunnel, İzmit Bridge, Sinop Nuclear Power plant, Turksat and so on. In the fields of science, technology and education we are preparing for the establishment of the Turkish-Japanese Science and Technology University which is aimed to be a top-level university in the world. Today in this symposium I am hoping to see a series of active dialogues on Middle East, Central Asia and bilateral cooperation after the keynote speeches that touch upon the diplomatic and security environment surrounding our countries. The situation on Turkey is gravely alarming especially with terrorism in Syria and other areas overshadowing the region. The situation surrounding Japan is increasingly difficult as well with the developments in the Southeast, South China Sea and North Korea. Therefore, this symposium is a great opportunity for both of us to understand each other's positions and views through frank exchange of opinions, and this will enhance the bilateral ties even further. I reckon Central Asia and Caucasus region is considered as your friends and relatives. Japan is becoming more active in interacting and collaborating with this region. There are a lot of large-scale joint projects by Japanese and Turkish companies in Turkmenistan and other countries. On the issue of refugees from Syria and other regions which are devastated now, Turkey is hosting 2.5 million Syrian refugees or more. We appreciate all the efforts and that Turkish government and people are making. The Japanese government hopes to assist in reducing Turkish governments burden by supporting the infrastructure of local municipalities in east of Turkey with a 330 million US dollars program as well as assistance through other UN organizations.

I sincerely hope this symposium will trigger discussions on how the situation in the region we cover today can develop, so the horizon of our cooperation will be broadened. Lastly, to the participants, thank you very much for coming and join-

ing this symposium. And I would like to express my gratitude to SAM, Prime Ministry, ORSAM and all the other organizations which have helped this symposium. This continues our dialogue. Çok teşekkür ederim.

### 3. *Ali Resul USUL\** (*Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, SAM*)

---

Thank you, good morning Their Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our partners for the organization of this timely symposium. Even though located at the opposite ends of the large Asian continent, Turkey and Japan enjoy excellent bilateral relations and deep-rooted friendship ties. Our two countries have sustained high profile roles in international organizations. We combine traditional values with moder-

nity. Foreign policies of the two countries have much in common as well. As peace loving countries adhering to internationalism and perceiving human oriented approaches, conformity of the policies of two countries towards Middle East and other regions is of particular importance at this time in history. This event bringing together esteemed experts and academicians from the two countries serves to this very objective. I would like to thank once again to our partners in organizing this event and wish the event a great success. Thank you.

*\* His message to the symposium.*

## II. KEYNOTE SPEECHES

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### 1. *Shingo YAMAGAMI*

*(Director General (Acting), Japan Institute of International Affairs)*

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#### **Japan's Contribution to Peace, Security and Stability in East Asia**

Good morning everybody. Unlike the previous speakers I don't have any prepared statement so let me just speak my mind. This is actually my first time to come to Turkey. And for that I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the organizers, especially ORSAM that was kind enough to extend me a warm invitation. Let me also express my appreciation for the warm reception you extended to me. My thanks also go to Ambassador Yokoi who is renowned in the Japanese foreign service for his leadership and foresight, let alone his physical height.

Today I would like to start by touching a little bit on the relationship between Turkey and Japan as I see it. It seems to me that we are natural partners, friendship only separated by long distance of 9,000km. When I think about our bilateral relationship, there are several commonalities between the two countries. First, both Turkey and Japan are leading nations in their respective regions. Our two nations are endowed with long and colorful history, and rich and amazing culture, honest people with pride and dignity, and above all great food. And secondly history records that we both are nations of great warriors. Until about four years ago, I was stationed in London and under its grey sky during

winter I used to like to stroll into one of the bookshops there. My favorite subject was war history. It just happened that two subjects covered by a number of books caught my attention: Gallipoli of 1915 and Singapore 1942. So our ancestors' acts of valor, courage, and fortitude are well remembered by one of the greatest former empires. Further, our two countries are countries of understatement. One has to admit that we are so bad when it comes to getting across our messages around the globe unlike perceived propaganda spread by some of our partners. I recall my first exposure to things Turkish was through Hollywood movies such as "Lawrence of Arabia" and "Midnight Express". I know many of you are not too happy about the way Turkey and its people are described in those movies, including the recent British TV movie "Downtown Abbey". Same could be said about many movies made about Japan by Hollywood and others, not to mention "Bridge of River Kwai", "Lost in Translation" and even worse "Kill Bill". We have to do something about this. Maybe it's high time for us to make movies jointly again.

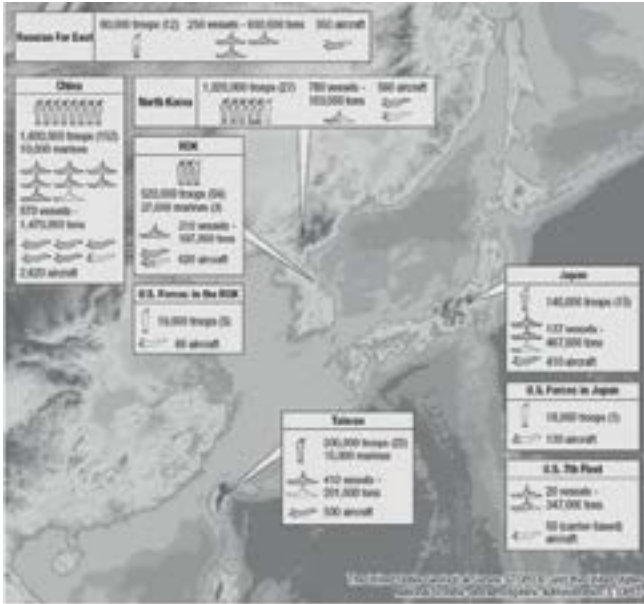
Well, let me then proceed to talk about today's main theme: security situations surrounding Japan and how Japan is going to



respond to them. By the way, I was in the Japanese foreign service until October of last year, but now belonging to a private think tank, I am totally emancipated from the shackles of the government. What I'm going to talk to you right now is completely my own observation, it has nothing to

do with the Japanese government nor my institute: Japan Institute of International Affairs.

First, much has been said to the effect that in East Asia security environment has become increasingly severe. What do



we mean by that? Let me explain: This is a familiar map to us Japanese, maybe not to our Turkish friends. You are looking at the Korean Peninsula in the middle of the map. But interestingly some American experts on the region have called this peninsula as the Sword of Damocles pointed towards the heart of Japan. Why? Because historically national security threats to Japan often came through this peninsula. One example is the 13th century attempts by the Yuan Dynasty of China established by Mongolians to invade Japan on two separate occasions. Also the two great wars fought by Japan in modern history. Here I am talking about the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905. These two wars were fought simply over the control and influence of this peninsula. Let me also add that the Second World War in this region is perceived to be a fight about China be-

tween Japan and the United States. Some might say that's too simplistic, but that's one aspect of history.

What I am trying to draw your attention to is, however, that currently Japan is in the envious position to be surrounded by three countries, which are either nuclear-weapons state or which pronounces its possession of nuclear weapons, i.e. Russia, China, and North Korea. And each and every one of these three countries has a standing army of more than a million. That is why I called the Japanese situation 'envious'. Turkey may have troubles with its neighbors but you may certainly feel a kind of sympathy for the situation surrounding Japan. In fact, the defense budget of China as publicly announced has increased 41 times in 27 years, 3.6 times in 10 years. Thus it is now 3.3 times larger than that of Japan.

Now, let's take a look at security situation region by region, starting with the Korean Peninsula. I think everybody is aware of the numerous ballistic missile launches done by North Korea as well as their nuclear tests. The recent one was conducted in January this year. There is an interesting pattern here: Nuclear test, satellite launch, nuclear test, satellite launch, nuclear test, satellite launch or launch of ballistic missiles. This time nuclear test comes first, and then it was followed by a satellite launch. Some say that in this coming May there will be Workers Party Conference, first time in 36 years. So now is considered to be the time for their young leader to show his leadership, which gives us another concern.

Next let's turn our attention to the South China Sea. The preposterous nature of

this 9 dashed-line drawn by the continental country has been well and aptly mentioned. Surely it is a matter of great concern to almost all coastal state, especially the Philippines and Vietnam. But what I need to emphasize here is that this is an important body of water, not only to such coastal nations, but also to the countries like Japan, the US or countries like Turkey and those in Europe. All goods and services have to go through this body of water when you are going to export them to Northeast Asia or Southeast Asian countries. So keeping this sea free, safe and open should be a matter of concern to any one of us.

Well, the next slide shows the rapid pace and scale of reclamation and also militarization of some sea features in the South China Sea. There are facilities for aircraft



carriers in Hainan. On these islands or atolls in the South China Sea, airstrips have been constructed along with port facilities, and recently ground-to-air missile was also instituted. Moreover, if such facilities are going to be completed on those

key islands in a way to form a strategic triangle, this means control over sea and air space of the South China Sea by one particular country. This is what we have in mind when we say the international community has to uphold freedom of naviga-

tion and freedom of over-flight. It is not that I'm telling my Turkish friends to take the side of particular countries, whether Japan, US, or China. What I am asking to ponder carefully and wisely is what kind of regional and international order you

would like to see in this region and beyond.

These aggressive moves in the South China Sea are accompanied with a great degree of bullying and intimidation to-



wards Southeast Asian nations concerned including the Philippines. The next slide shows a statement made by a Chinese government official, followed by advertisement posted by the Chinese Embassy in Manila, in one of the Philippine newspapers. As you instantly note, this comes with not so subtle, but rather blatant warnings. It is very natural that our Filipino friends take this as a grave insult. In view of all this, we really ought to establish

a regional as well as international order in which any nation treats others as equals. Japan has been often lectured by China to learn from history. If there is any lesson that the Japanese learned through the defeat in a devastating war is the importance of equal partnership.

In response to the recent development in the South China Sea I just described, the Japanese answer is, in a short word, the

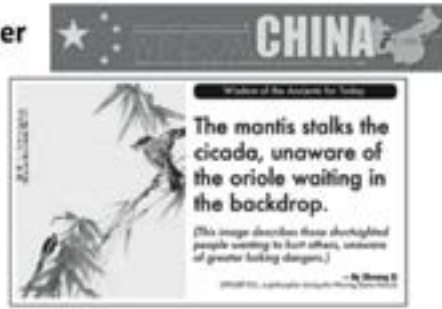
**China's position?**



Foreign Ministry Spokesperson  
Hua Chunying (May 26, 2015)

**Here is a gentle reminder to the Philippines:  
China will not bully small countries,  
meanwhile, small countries shall not make  
trouble willfully and endlessly.**

**Ads on a Philippine newspaper**



(from the "Philippine Star", 11 Aug 2015, placed by the Embassy of China in the Philippines) 8

rule of law at sea. Prime Minister Abe stated "Three principles on the rule of law at sea" in his keynote address of 13th IISS Asian Security Summit "Shangri-La Dialogue", on May 30, 2014: 1. States have to make claims based on international law, 2. States shall not use force or coercion in trying to drive their claims, and 3. States shall seek to settle disputes by peaceful means. To most of you this simply sounds common sense. But the problem about East Asia is that common sense is yet to prevail.

Let's take a look at what's going on in the East China Sea. This is the Senkaku Islands; Japanese Islands. Only in 1971 Chinese started their claims over these islands, after more than 75 years of silence and started intruding into territorial waters around them. Intrusions started not in 2010, after so-called nationalization by Japan of some of the islands, but started

in 2008. There was also a shocking incident of Chinese fishing boats ramming the Japanese coast guard ships. Not only at sea but also in the air have their activities intensified, including the proclamation of their air defense identification zone and very dangerous flights of their military aircraft. Unfortunately provocations continue both at sea and in airspace. Simply put, you don't send your boats into the disputed waters just because you are not happy with the Japanese sovereignty and control over those islands. Usually you try to solve the issue peacefully, but this is not the case in the East China Sea, regrettably. The frequency of intrusion into territorial waters and also the entry into the contiguous zones around these islands increased considerably in recent years. The important thing is; even after the summit meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese Leader Xi Jinping, intrusions do continue.



On top of this, there is also an issue of unilateral exploitation on oil and natural gas resources conducted by our continental neighbor in the East China Sea. Japan and China have yet to agree on the dividing line of their respective exclusively economic zones and continental shelves between the two countries in the East China Sea. But without heeding Japanese urgings to stop this unilateral exploitation, it is still continuing at the expense of Japan's rights and interests.

Finally Japan cannot forget about its northern neighbor. Yes, Russia is Turkey's neighbor but it is Japan's neighbor as well. The number of Japanese air-to-defense forces scramble flights against Russian aircrafts has been on a steady increase. Russian pilots call it the Tokyo Express. They fly around the Japanese Archipelago in a way to heighten Japanese concern.

These are the situations that Japan is facing in East Asia. Here one could draw an analogy between what's going on in East Asia and what's going on in your neighborhood. Prime Minister Abe as well as Foreign Minister Kishida repeatedly made sure that we will not condone any attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion. This applies not only to the situation in Crimea, Ukraine but also to the situation in the South China Sea and the East China Sea. So after having taken a close look at Japan's regional situation, it brings me to my final point: what is going to be Japan's reaction? This may sound cliché, but no nation, especially Japan, can maintain its own peace and security alone. Therefore Japan needs to strengthen its al-

liance with the United States and cooperation with its partners, including through such means as UN collective security measures and peacekeeping operations. What shall Japan do in specific terms?

The policy announced by Prime Minister Abe is "proactive contribution to peace". You don't have to worry that Japan's peaceful orientation might change. No. It will stay the same. But Japan would like to be more proactive. Proactive in two regards: first, seamless response to any situation to defend Japan, and second, a more robust contribution to international peace and stability. These two are the pillars of Prime Minister Abe's policy on proactive contribution to peace. Specifically what will be changing? I would just mention three big changes for the interest of Turkish friends. The first one is Japan will participate in a wider range of UN peacekeeping operations and other internationally coordinated efforts. Other internationally coordinated efforts include common security and defense policy initiatives done by the European Union. I know that the Turkish government is very much interested in reinforcing its contribution to UN peacekeeping operations. So here we have some shared grounds. The second big change would be that Japan is going to be able to further promote logistical support to international military operations. For example, if there is going to be another kind of Iraq War or mission in Afghanistan, certainly Japan's logistic support could be much more enhanced. It would include provision even of ammunition; it would include refueling of aircraft about to take off for combat missions. Finally, exercise

of the right of collective self-defense. Any student of international law may rightly ask, what on earth do you mean by that? Yes, each and every member of the UN has the right, not only to individual self-defense, but also to collective self-defense. But because of the peaceful constitution, the Japanese government has had in the past taken a long-standing position, not to resort to any exercise of the right of collective self-defense. But after very thorough and active legal debate, Japan has established the following new three conditions for use of force under the revised interpretation of its constitution. You may naturally be surprised to see the Japanese behavior so legalistic, but we are. Only if these conditions are met, Japan will be allowed to exercise its right of collective self-defense. These three New Conditions for “Use of Force” as Measures for Self-Defense are:

1. When an armed attack against Japan occurs [the case of individual self-defense] or when an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result threatens Japan’s survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people’s right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness [the case of collective self-defense],
2. When there is no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan’s survival and protect its people,
3. Use of force limited to the minimum extent necessary, should be interpreted to be permitted under the Constitution as measures for self-defense

That said and however legalistic it may sound, Japan is not going to be indifferent to the security situation in the Middle East. Actually during the debate in the Diet, a possible scenario of blockade of the Strait of Hormuz by sea mines was referred to on many occasions. Of course, it is up to specific cases, but now there are some possibilities that the security situation in the Middle East may meet the requirement ex-

plained and Japan may be allowed, under the three conditions, to exercise its right to collective self-defense.

Let me finish by addressing some of the criticism directed at Japan’s new national security policy. First, there are some voices in only a limited number of Northeast Asian capitals which say things like this: “Japan will become a military state and a threat to the region, again”. My answer to this is: “Don’t worry. Nothing is further from the truth”. Prime Minister Abe repeatedly stated his intention. Peaceful orientation will never change. Here, I would like to share one interesting statistics with you. This is a public opinion poll conducted in many countries several months ago. The question was asked: if there were a war which involved your country, would you be willing to fight your country? The same question was asked in countries like China and Russia, and as a matter of fact, ‘yes’ answer was very high. In European countries, relatively low, including France, UK, and Germany. But Japan recorded the lowest figure. Only 11 percent said, “Yes I’m going to fight for Japan.” I can only imagine that a great fighter like Mustafa Kemal Atatürk would have looked at this figure and stated “how pathetic”. Yes, indeed pathetic. But this shows the deep-rooted nature of Japan’s post-war pacifism. So you don’t have to worry about Japan becoming a war-monger or militarist country. In addition, there is the wrong perception that Japan’s security policy is not supported by other Asian countries. The problem here is one of Japan’s neighbors seems to believe that they have the monopoly of Asian opinions. However this is not the case at all. Our policy is actually supported by a number of countries. As of 2015, 18 Asian countries as well as many countries in other regions of the world have either expressed welcome or support to Japan’s policy of proactive contribution to peace.

Here I have one regret: Turkey is missing. So I am just dying for the day when Turkey will say, yes, I support you Japan. Thank you very much.



## 2. Mesut ÖZCAN (*Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*)

### **Turkey's Security Challenges in its Neighborhood**

Thank you very much and I'd like to welcome all the participants on behalf of organizers. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I have listened Ambassador Yamagami about the Japanese security challenges, and after reflecting on our own security situation regarding our neighborhood and challenges that we are facing from the south as well as from the north, I realized that both countries have some similarities. Turkey is also positioned in a difficult neighborhood where Turkish foreign policy is almost everyday challenged by negative outcomes emanating from this neighborhood. Nowadays there are several security challenges in our vicinity unfortunately that we have to face. When we are talking about the security challenges in our neighborhood, unfortunately most of the time in last couple of years we are talking about the Middle East. Unfolding events in the region started with uprisings and they are posing challenges as well as opportunities. The state failures in some countries in the region are some of the major problems for Turkey and Turkish foreign policy. The unfolding events in the Middle East are posing serious security threats for Turkey emanating from Syria, from Iraq, or from other parts of the region. Turkey has to deal with these security challenges. In addition to these, the events in the region are also posing some economic challenges for Turkey as well. In the last decade or so Turkey has increased its economic cooperation with the Middle East. Thus the deterioration of stability in the region also created some setbacks for Turkish economic interests, creating economic difficulties. On the other hand, beginning with the last year, the decline of oil prices is a good development for Turkey, since Turkey is a huge importer of oil and gas. However, in an indirect way,

the decline of oil resources is also creating some problems for the Turkish markets in the neighboring regions as well. So, even though we are benefiting from the declined oil prices in a direct way, in an indirect way we are negatively affected as well, as the Middle Eastern markets are also becoming increasingly limited for Turkish products.

Another major security challenge in the region, with a humanitarian aspect, is the refugee problem. This is maybe the most difficult task for Turkey; as it is mentioned in previous speeches, as now Turkey is hosting more than 2.5 million Syrian refugees as well as around 200.000 Iraqi refugees. The refugee issue is creating several problems for Turkey, especially for the governorates on the vicinity of Syria and Iraq. For instance, in the governorates like Kilis, the Syrian population is more than the local population now. This is a huge burden in not only economic terms but also in social terms. Turkish government and at the same time Turkish NGOs are trying to deal with the humanitarian aspect of this challenge as well.

So, regarding our neighborhood in the Middle East, there are serious challenges that Turkey is dealing with day by day. And unfortunately, as far as our neighborhood is concerned we are not only having problems in the Middle East, but in other parts as well, especially in our north, in Caucasian region where former Soviet States reside. I was with the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs last week in Georgia. Turkey is trying to develop good relations with the Caucasian countries. The region is under immense pressure. Even the territorial integrity of Georgia is under threat. And the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the occupation of Karabağ is still continuing.

Unfortunately skirmishes are going on, raising the tensions on the armistice line. This obliges Turkey to be vigilant of the developments taking place in this part of the world as well. And regarding the latest developments in Ukraine, such as the annexation of Crimea and the developments in eastern Ukraine, one can see that here are lots of difficulties to our north as well. A result of these difficulties, unfortunately, our security situation in the north have also deteriorated. So for these reasons we have to be also alert in that region as well.

Thanks to Turkey's close relations with the West, the directness and severity of these security problems to Turkey are contained. But the economic crisis and its aftermath are still affecting the European continent and Turkey, and the refugee issue emanating from the problems in the Middle East is also directly affecting the developments in Europe, especially Greece, Balkan countries and even Germany. As you have most probably followed last year, the refugee issue dominated the agenda of European continent and this year this issue will continue to dominate the agenda as well. And in that regard although we do not have any traditional security problems to our west, still there are some economic and humanitarian challenges.

After having drawn a very negative picture, I should also point some positive developments as well. There are some positive signs that we may have a kind of solution in Cyprus soon. The talks are getting on a very positive way. And today Undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in Greece and Turkish Minister will visit Greece on Monday. Although there are some other problems, some difficulties, between Turkey and Greece, I am sure that we will find some ways to decrease the tension and try to overcome these challenges by bilateral negotiations. And I hope this will bring a very positive dynamic for regional security as well. In the Middle East, the nuclear agreement regarding the Iranian Nuclear Program is

also a very positive development for Turkey. From the very beginning of this issue, Turkey supported a diplomatic solution and started with Brazil a similar initiation some years before. And thanks to this deal we hope that it will be a solution for the concerns regarding Iran's nuclear program, reduce the tensions in the region, and it will also provide some economic opportunities for Turkey and for other countries in the region. In that regard this will always be a positive development.

In a final note, Turkey is trying to increase its options not only in our neighborhood but also in other areas as well. For example, Turkish President is now visiting West Africa, and Turkish president and officials are increasing contacts with Latin American countries and East Asian countries. So although our neighborhood presents several challenges for Turkey and Turkish foreign policy, Turkey is trying to diversify its options in the rest of the world. Turkish President's activism is an example in this regard. Turkey is very much benefiting from its newly developed relations in these areas. So for this year, for 2016, the troubles in our neighborhood will obviously continue. But on the other hand Turkey is doing its best to eliminate at least some of the negative outcomes, and continue to contribute to the solution of the problems like Cyprus and Aegean issues. Turkey is also contributing to the humanitarian problems emanating from the conflict in the Middle East.

I hope this symposium will contribute to Turkish and Japanese perspectives in their respective regions. Although there is an interest about Japan, most of the time Turkish knowledge about the Japanese security challenges or developments in East Asia is very limited. I believe that this symposium and this cooperation by Turkish and Japanese counterparts will contribute to a better understanding of two respective regions and two respective countries. Thank you for coming.



### III. SPECIAL ARTICLE

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*Shingo YAMAGAMI*<sup>1</sup>

*(Director General (Acting), Japan Institute of International Affairs)*

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#### Japan is Back

##### Foreword: Where is Japan?

When I was Political Minister at the Japanese embassy in London several years ago, I met a gentleman at a Chatham House event who asked me, in a refined Oxbridge accent, “Could you be kind enough to tell me where Japan is?” Obviously he was not ignorant of the geography of East Asia, to which his countrymen used to apply the rather Euro-centric term of ‘Far East.’ He went on to explain that “Japan is not on the radar screen of the UK any longer.”

Whether on the radar screen or not, Japan is accustomed to Western perceptions of Japan fluctuating between over-evaluation and under-evaluation. For example, Japan’s resounding victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 was totally unexpected by many in the West. I was told during my recent visit to Ankara that the event tremendously inspired many young Turks, including the venerable Kemal Ataturk, who were in despair at the humiliation of the declining Ottoman Empire at the hands of Russia and other European powers. However, one very different response to this surprising turn of events was the resurgence of xenophobic fear of the ‘Yellow Peril’ in the US, even culminating in fears that the Japanese might eventually invade the west coast of the US<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, the fall of the supposedly impregnable fortress of Singapore in February 1942

shocked many in the West, while it made a profoundly different impression on many Asians who had long resented living under the colonial rule of Western powers.<sup>3</sup>

For some time after Japan’s devastating defeat in World War II, ‘made in Japan’ was synonymous with cheap and shoddy goods. However, in 1980s, following the dazzling economic growth of the 1960s and 1970s, the book ‘Japan as No.1’ became a run-away bestseller after it was published in 1979. Written by one of the most renowned Harvard sinologists, the book focused on drawing lessons for Americans.<sup>4</sup> Such rosy views did not last long. The bursting of Japan’s bubble economy in the early 1990s followed by years of subsequent poor economic performance produced a new mantra in the West about ‘lost decades’. In recent years, Japan has been regarded as if the country has lost its capacity to do good in the world and is in constant decline. Neither the triumphalism of the Japan as No. 1 nor the post-1990’s pessimism was accurate.

Why this extreme swing of the pendulum? It could be said that the tyranny of distance both from the US and Europe hinders an accurate and objective grasp of Japan. One of the causes might be the pessimistic self-portrayals written by Japanese themselves. And there may be an

element of *Schadenfreude* on the part of some excessively critical onlookers.

Through closely examining the current state of affairs regarding Japan, we can better understand such roller-coaster views and provide some ideas as to how Turkey and other important partners of Japan can benefit from their respective relationships with this Land of the Rising Sun.

**Japan’s Mood**

Japan is now living in a moment of “It’s the economy, stupid.” Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has repeatedly stated in public that the top priority for his cabinet is the economy. He has also said that priorities number two and three are the economy as well.<sup>5</sup>

Certainly the term ‘lost decades’ was not invented without legitimate reason. It is true that the Japanese economy has experienced low growth rates such as 0.9 % for 2012 and 2.0% for 2013. 2014 even saw negative growth of -1.0%.<sup>6</sup> No wonder the Abe government sees it as an urgent task to get out of this low growth and deflationary spiral.

Other numbers and figures, however, may well give different impressions. For example, recent years especially since Prime Minister Abe took office, have seen some of the highest corporate profits and stock prices. Profits for 2013 increased 28.4% over the previous year.<sup>7</sup> The Nikkei 225 average, which reflects the business outlook for the future economy, shot up from 8,560 in January 2012 to 18,450 in January 2016.<sup>8</sup>

One noteworthy phenomenon is the increasing gap between Japan’s GNI (gross national income) and GDP. In 2013, this gap amounted to 3.55% of Japan’s GDP, almost twice the figure for the US economy (Table 1). What does this mean? It means that Japanese firms are harvesting a lot of profit outside of Japan. This reminds us of extensive outreach that corporate Japan has accomplished over the past several decades by expanding overseas business activities, including massive direct investment. Toyota is now said to produce about 9 million cars worldwide, out of which only 3 million are produced in Japan.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 1 GNI-GDP Gap**

(% of GDP)	1990	2000	2006	2010	2013
Japan	0.62%	1.27%	2.84%	2.64%	3.55%
USA	0.85%	0.63%	0.76%	1.65%	1.76%

Source: World Development Indicators, WB.

Observers should be careful to note that some poor numbers do not necessarily reflect the state of business activities by corporate Japan. Indeed, the nation is facing unprecedented challenges. Demographic issues, i.e. a rapidly aging society and a dwindling population,<sup>10</sup> are sure to pose enormous problems for the future sustainability of prosperity. That said,

such issues are not limited to Japan. Many other nations face similar problems. The birthrate for countries such as South Korea and Singapore is even lower than Japan’s,<sup>11</sup> and China is aging faster than it’s becoming rich.<sup>12</sup> In this regard, Japan’s challenges could be described as a precursor of things to come for a lot of others, including Turkey.

## Nation of 3Cs

Foreigners visiting Japan look around them and then wonder whether the nation is really in recession.<sup>13</sup> True, shops and restaurants are thriving, skyscrapers continue to sprout up, and roads and streets are beautifully maintained and constantly improved.

A certain globetrotter once told me that he finds Japan a nation of “3Cs”: clean, convenient and comfortable. This might ring a bell in the mind of many who have visited or lived in the country. For others, though, it may require more explanation.

Clean: Cars, streets, houses and office spaces are definitely so. Taxi drivers even wear white gloves! Discarded newspapers and plastic bags are rarely found on the floors of buses or subways. Even public toilets at department stores and railway stations are equipped with washlets to satisfy the needs of users for cleanness. The other day I was told that a visiting Turkish businessman spent almost an hour in a toilet because he was so enchanted by the gadgets and enjoyed trying all the functions provided.

Convenient: In big cities such as Tokyo, extensive public transport networks including subways, trains and buses make movement a lot easier and faster. Users can even find the fastest and cheapest routes by checking their smart-phones. This is a big difference from most emerging economies, which chronically suffer from a rapidly mushrooming number of cars and resultant traffic jams. In Japan, for delivery of furniture and electric appliances, you can basically designate a two-hour time slot and they will surely come on time. Japan Post offers similar time slots for delivery of first-class mail. Even if you forget to buy eggs and yogurt for the next morning, most convenience stores are open 24 hours. Those stores provide such services as cash withdrawal, post as well as delivery of lunch/dinner

boxes to senior citizens. If you just want a soda, shiny vending machines are waiting to quench your thirst on many street corners.

Comfortable: Crime rates are extremely low compared with other advanced economies.<sup>14</sup> Virtually no rioting and looting takes place even during grave disasters such as the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 2011 and the most recent Kumamoto Earthquake of April 2016. Migrant and ethnic tensions are virtually non-existent by global standards. Exquisite cuisine and four distinct seasons, along with a number of great tourist spots all around the nation, from powder snow ski resorts in Hokkaido to white sand beaches in semi-tropical Okinawa, provide ideal settings for casual trips as well as long and leisurely vacations. Incidentally Japan is one of very few nations to have hosted both summer and winter Olympic Games.<sup>15</sup>

## Quality of Life

The other day I was enjoying lunch with a senior Italian diplomat at a newly-opened and very chic Italian restaurant near the Imperial Palace. Savouring the cuisine, he told me that the best Italian food outside of Italy can be found in Japan. On another occasion, a long-term Chinese resident in Tokyo said that aside from the space of living, Japan offers him and his family the highest quality of life.

What does this all add up to? It is not out of hubris that the above stories are presented. One is often able to better know how well Japan is really faring and what kind of daily lives people there are leading by using these on-the-ground reality checks rather than by overly depending on economic statistics. Indeed, safe and clean streets, attentive and caring service, and stress-free tranquil comfort amidst crisp air and clear water do not directly translate into GDP figures. But these are certainly things to be cherished in a world clamoring for better quality of life.

## The Abe Government

What are the changes that brought about the recent increase of Japan's presence on the international radar screen? Many would point to various measures introduced and promoted by the current government led by Prime Minister Abe. Here I characterize the current government along three strands: stability, productivity and pragmatism.

First, stability. Starting with Prime Minister Abe's first term, Japan has had six prime ministers in a row,<sup>16</sup> who stayed in office for only a year or so. Even before that, a former German Chancellor allegedly stated that, since Japanese prime ministers change so often, he gave up bothering to remember their names. Contrary to past practice, the Abe cabinet has been stable for the past three years since he came to power in December 2012. Three years after he took over from the former Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ, currently renamed the Minshin-to, or Democratic Progressive Party), his approval rate still stands around 40 to 50%,<sup>17</sup> which is quite high by the standard of Japanese politics. Along with a high rate of support for his party (LDP),<sup>18</sup> such strong support for his cabinet is leading many political pundits in Tokyo to believe that several more years of stability is likely.

The current government is also noted for its productivity, when it comes to initiating policy changes and getting the job done. One good example is national security. The establishment of the National Security Council (NSC), the development of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the subsequent passing of the new national security legislation are truly unprecedented and epoch-making. The way was also formally opened for overseas transfers of Japanese defense equipment and technology. Another example is economics. Much has been talked about Abeonomics. One needs to wait longer for the effects of the 'Third Arrow' reforms to be

secured, primarily because the time-span applicable to structural reform is different from those for the first arrow (monetary policy) and the second arrow (fiscal policy).

The third characteristic of the current government is its pragmatism. Some observers were quick to label the Prime Minister as ultra-right or revisionist. Recalling that 'revisionist' was a term once used by the Gang of Four and Cultural Revolution zealots in China to denounce the likes of Deng Xiaoping, one cannot help but feel perplexed by the choice of such a term. It could leave the impression of a peculiar political angle from which sniper shots are aimed. Irrespective of possible political motivations behind such criticism, the track record of the Abe administration for the past three years speaks for itself. The handling of the official statement on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWII demonstrates how pragmatically his government addressed this extremely sensitive issue.<sup>19</sup> Another great example of pragmatism is displayed in the manner his government has reached an historic agreement with the ROK on the issue of comfort women.<sup>20</sup> Given the persistent and apparently-recalcitrant stance by the ROK, which had consistently rejected even a summit meeting between its president and the Japanese prime minister, citing the issue as an obstacle, the fact that Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida appeared at a joint press conference with his South Korean counterpart to reconfirm that the issue was finally and irrevocably settled is further evidence of the pragmatic diplomacy of the current government.

## Diplomacy

The rise of Japan's profile in the international community has much to do with the Abe government's adroit global diplomacy.

The first and most visible element is the government's active engagement. The

Japanese Prime Minister's visit to Turkey in May 2013 was not only the first in seven years, but was also followed up by a subsequent visit the same year. Turkey has not been his only destination. The current prime minister has visited some nations as Ireland and Portugal which none of his predecessors had ever visited. As of January 2016, Prime Minister Abe has visited 63 countries.<sup>21</sup> Equally notable is the remarkable increase of visits to Japan by other countries' top leaders. During the Abe administration, 95 national leaders have visited Japan.<sup>22</sup> One interesting phenomenon under this government is that 'Omotenashi' (Japanese for hospitality) is certainly on full display: almost every time the prime minister receives dignitaries from overseas, he personally hosts lunch or dinner in addition to the formal bilateral meeting in his office.<sup>23</sup>

The Abe diplomacy is also characterized by strategic thinking. The need for alliance management with the US is firmly ingrained in the minds of the policymakers in this administration. Revision of the guidelines for Japan-US security cooperation is one prime example. Moreover, the passage of new national security legislation -- which makes it possible for the first time in post-WWII history for Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defense -- contributes enormously to cementing security ties with its sole ally. Consistent and tireless efforts by his government to tackle the politically sensitive issue of relocating the US Marines from Futenma in Okinawa offer more evidence of its strong commitment to strengthening the alliance.

Another pillar of his strategic diplomacy is to establish closer ties with Australia and India. The bilateral relationship between Tokyo and Canberra is now hailed as a "special relationship".<sup>24</sup> Having acquired a quasi-ally status, Japan and Australia are now in the process of negotiating an agreement to facilitate joint exercise and other military cooperation. As for the Austra-

lian decision for its next flotilla of submarines, Tony Abbott, former prime minister of Australia, stated in his speech at the Japan Institute of International Affairs last February that, while the French and German offers are commercial, the Japanese offer is strategic.<sup>25</sup> Notwithstanding the regrettable Australian choice, the fact that Japan decided to offer its state-of-the-art advanced technology was an historic new step which would have been unthinkable until a short time ago. Moreover, Japan, the US and Australia are currently working very closely in helping coastal nations in the South China Sea to build up their coast guard capabilities.

The latest visit to India by the Japanese prime minister was a great success. Modi and Abe agreed on civil nuclear cooperation, the introduction of Japanese high-speed bullet trains on the line between Mumbai and Ahmedabad and Japan's regular participation in Exercise Malabar involving both the Indian and American navies.

PM Abe's assiduous efforts to further deepen ties with ASEAN and other Asian nations are worthy of special attention. Soon after assuming his post, he made it a top priority to visit the capitals of all 10 ASEAN member states. In fact, according to a recent public opinion poll conducted in major ASEAN nations, Japan has been ranked as ASEAN's most trusted partner, surpassing China and even the US.<sup>26</sup>

His bond of trust with Prime Minister Hasina of Bangladesh was instrumental in realizing the return of Japan to the UN Security Council. In an extremely gracious gesture of friendship and respect toward Japan, Bangladesh stood down as a promising candidate for non-permanent membership in the UNSC even though they announced their candidacy before Japan did.<sup>27</sup> This marked Japan's 11<sup>th</sup> election as a non-permanent member of the UNSC, underscoring the confidence of Asia and

the international community and establishing a Guinness World Record.<sup>28</sup>

Recent enhancement of the bilateral relationship between Turkey and Japan has a special significance beyond efforts by the Japanese government to expand its diplomatic horizon. Building upon historical ties, both nations perceive great potential for promoting bilateral cooperation in such fields as civil nuclear energy and science and technology. Further, in light of Turkey's geopolitical location and increasingly assertive role in the region as well as its bonds with a number of countries in Central Asia, Japan could find it useful to seriously explore specific modes of strengthening cooperation, including intelligence sharing and humanitarian assistance to refugees. Steady and consistent efforts are required of the two nations, which make up the two wings of the Eurasian continent.

The third aspect of current Japanese diplomacy is its emphasis on values such as democracy, market economy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. PM Abe's keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May 2014 is a case in point. In response to mounting unilateral attempts to challenge the status quo in both the South and East China Seas, he proposed three principles on the rule of law at sea.<sup>29</sup> While all the principles of common sense promoted in his speech are yet to prevail in the increasingly rough waters of East Asia, he highlighted the importance of speaking up and speaking with one voice at challenging times for the sake of ensuring the stability and prosperity of the regions as well as the world as a whole. This approach reinforces Japan's view that focusing on what kind of regional and international order is sought is far more preferable to merely urging others to take particular sides on specific disputes.

### Relations with China

What about relations with China? Turkey knows that every nation has issues with its

proximate neighbors. Japan and China are no exceptions.

A cursory look at the current ties between the two economic giants of East Asia is more than eye-opening. Total bilateral trade amounted to US\$309 billion in 2014, making China the largest trading partner for Japan and Japan the second largest partner for China after the US.<sup>30</sup> The number of Japanese businesses in China has reached more than 31,000.<sup>31</sup> This is the largest number from any single country. Japan's foreign direct investment in China is \$4.33 billion (2014), which shows that Japan is the second largest investor in China, second only to Singapore.<sup>32</sup>

If we look back in history, there is no question that, since the 1970s, Japan has been the staunchest supporter of China's Reform and Open Policy. A number of Chinese intellectuals privately admit that, if it had not been for economic aid, direct investment, and both technology- and business-know-how transfer from Japan, the Chinese economy would never have been able to grow this fast and this big. A great example of the economic interdependence of the two nations can be found in the development of global supply chains. Look at smart-phones. While an overwhelming number of them are produced in China as final products, important components such as cameras, liquid display panels, sensors and lithium-ion batteries are provided by Japan.

What has become a matter of concern to promoters of closer economic ties is the significant decrease of Japanese FDI in China in the past few years, which dropped by 48% in 2013 compared with the previous year and by 35% in 2014.<sup>33</sup> Reasons include rising Chinese labor costs, lack of transparency in China, especially on the protection of intellectual property rights and political risks, as has been pointed out by various analysts. The buzzword for Japanese business now is 'China-Plus One'. In response to these problems, numerous Japanese companies have been diversify-



ing their investment destinations, as evidenced by Japan's FDI in ASEAN increasing by 55% in 2013.<sup>34</sup>

Despite huge economic transactions and close interdependence, the waves in the East China Sea separating the Japanese archipelago from the Chinese mainland continue to be turbulent. Two issues merit particular mention.

First, there are continuing incursions by Chinese government vessels into territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands under the control of Japan. The position of the Japanese government is that the Senkaku islands are indisputably an inherent part of the territory of Japan in light of historical facts and based upon international law.<sup>35</sup> Japan does not agree that there exists a territorial dispute between the two countries regarding the Senkakus.

In simpler terms, the Chinese claim is regarded as preposterous and legal nonsense. In order to gain a serious audience for its claim, China needs to do a lot of explaining and convincing, particularly on two questions. Why did China keep silent and make no objection at all vis-à-vis Japan's sovereignty over the Senkakus for more than 75 years, from 1895, when Japan incorporated those islands into its territory to 1971, when China made its claim for the first time in history?

The second question for which they have yet to come up with a persuasive explanation is why China did not make any protest when the US forces stationed in Japan used two of the Senkaku Islands as shooting and bombing ranges before they returned administration rights for those islands to Japan in early 1970s.<sup>36</sup> Now Beijing refers to the Senkakus as the sacred territory of China. If they are so sacred, why did they let a foreign military use them so nonchalantly? That is a curious enigma which needs to be cleared up.

Unless these two questions are answered, China cannot present a legal case in a serious manner. While the total absence of those answers is troubling, a more fundamental and grave concern is why Beijing keeps on sending armed boats rather than diplomats. Even after the two summit meetings between PM Shinzo Abe and President Xi Jinping, Chinese official vessels continue to intrude into the territorial waters around those islands at a frequency of three times a month.<sup>37</sup> Given the total lack of legal explanations, one would naturally wonder whether this might very well be an attempt to accumulate *faits-accomplis* with a view to challenging the status quo by intimidation rather than by reason or international law.

China's unilateral development of natural resources in the East China Sea is another key issue that needs to be addressed. Already 16 China-built structures, including jackets and maritime platforms, have been noted by aerial photos.<sup>38</sup> What concerns the Japanese side here is that, even though Japan and China agreed in June 2008 to cooperate on the development of those resources, why did China unilaterally go ahead to engage in activities which could very well damage resources on the Japanese side? Here again, as in the South China Sea, sensitivity and consideration to the rights and interests of neighboring countries are urgently required.

Such aggressive actions at sea, along with the incessant use of a spurious history card for ostensibly political purposes, have led to a significant dry-up of Japan's reservoir of goodwill toward China. A recent opinion poll indicated that more than 80% of the Japanese surveyed feel no affinity for China.<sup>39</sup> This stands in stark contrast with earlier times when chants of Japan-China friendship filled streets and conference halls.

A glimmer of hope, albeit a faint one, is the increasing flow of tourists from China

to Japan. Last year tourists from China accounted for about 5 million out of 19 million incoming tourists.<sup>40</sup> Many of them, after having a close look at contemporary Japan and thereby being emancipated somewhat from the stereotypes and dogmatic propaganda from China's state-controlled media, seem to hold much warmer feelings than before toward Japan.

### Japan as a Global Player

These are some snap shots of Japan in 2016.

Some often say, "Japan is struggling, yet it is still the third largest economy in the world"; whereas a number of Japanese and non-Japanese residents in the country might say, "Japan is the second largest advanced economy and we are really enjoying the fruits of stable politics and a mature economy." It is certainly for objective observers to make a call with the golden maxim that seeing is believing.

If Turkey would like to play a more significant role in both regional and international contexts, however, it would be useful for its policymakers to obtain an accurate grasp of Japan that neither overrates nor underrates the country, and to seriously and realistically consider what Turkey and Japan can do together.

Indeed, Japan's economic prowess is yet to be fully tapped. As any observer can tell, Japanese direct investment has dramatically changed the landscape of manufacturing in various destinations, including the US, the UK, ASEAN, China, and India.

The time is ripe for the image of a politically reticent Japan to be replaced. Not necessarily playing the role of loudspeaker in espousing the values it upholds, Japan could continue to provide an example through its post-WWII track record and the tireless efforts of its highly educated

people. The nation is second to none in terms of its determination and capability to contribute positively to the stability and prosperity of the international community.

In security, the roles being played by Japan's Self Defense Forces have never been larger and wider. From a UN PKO in Cambodia, a refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, and maintenance of operation facilities in Djibouti to engineering activities in South Sudan, their footprints are beginning to cover vast and divergent regions and areas.<sup>41</sup> Under the new national security legislation which took effect on 29 March 2016, Japan will be able to participate in a broader range of UN PKOs and other internationally coordinated efforts, on top of the exercise of the right of collective self-defense. The transfer of advanced defense equipment and technology could be pursued vigorously with Turkey.

The Turkish people do not need to be told about the soft power of Japan. The steps Japan has taken in its process of modernization have been met with sympathy and compassion from aspiring Turks.

A closer examination would certainly be indispensable when Turkey tries to establish even closer partnerships. Japan, as a major power with global reach, would be a natural partner.

### Conclusion

This year Japan chairs the G7 Summit<sup>42</sup> and for the two years starting from January 2016, Japan will be a member of the UN Security Council. Japan will co-host TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development) outside of Japan for the first time in history, in Kenya in August.<sup>43</sup> Under a stable government, Japan's diplomatic fronts have been expanding.



Japan is back. Now is the time for Turkey, which has traditionally enjoyed special bonds, to see Japan with its own eyes, without borrowing someone else's clouded lenses, and start building anew a variety of blocks of specific cooperation.

Throughout our mutual history, Turkey and Japan have proven to each other that during "black days", you can see who is a real friend. Indeed, rain or shine, the two countries should and will continue to forge a closer relationship.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Amb., Director General (Acting) at the Japan Institute of International Affairs. Views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of any organization he may be associated with.
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## IV. PANEL PRESENTATIONS

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### PANEL 1

#### TURKEY-JAPAN RELATIONS AND APPROACHES TO CENTRAL ASIA

##### 1. Tetsuji TANAKA

*(Central Asia Research Institute, Japan)*

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#### Japan-Central Asia Relations

It is a great honor for me to have an opportunity to speak in front of distinguished persons from the Turkish government and academia and students. Today my duty is to explain the situation of relations between Central Asia and Japan now, which are very good diplomatically. So I prepared eight items that are a part of this issue, but since the time is limited, I will focus on two or three items and skip the rest.

First one is my experience in Central Asia. I am going to briefly speak about my involvement in Central Asia. In 1993, I was sent to a newly independent country in Central Asia, Azerbaijan, by an economic sponsorship of IMF and from Bank of Japan. For the past 20 years, following my 3 years of being in the region, I have frequently visited the region as an advisor to the many governmental organizations and bilateral economic committees, and also as a university professor. As a result, I have worked in the eight countries among the nine countries of Central Asia, and South Caucuses. I was an economy advisor, for instance, to the government of Kyrgyzstan, both for the president and the central bank. And also to Kazakhstan as advisor to the minister of education and science, and also the minister of economy and budget planning and, so on so forth. In Central Asia I had many duties to the

governments and functioned as governmental advisor to their respective institutions. I had the chance to closely witness the nation building process of most Central Asian countries and their relationship with Japan.

Item two is; countries in Central Asia have very strong pro-Japan feelings. The background of this is their belief that we belong to the same ethnic group of Ural-Altai. Of the people in the world, Central Asians have the strongest facial resemblance to the Japanese. Secondly, there is a strong interest in the Bushido culture of Japan. It is a strong feeling within the nomadic culture. Third, there is the historical fact that Japan as a small country in Asia defeated the powerful Romanov dynasty during the Russo-Japanese War. Also no country in Central Asia has a memory of confrontation with Japan in their history. Fourth, Japan, becoming famous after the Second World War, have a very good image as serious hard workers. Especially Japanese careful work is appreciated by the example of Navoi Opera House in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, built by Japanese prisoners of war, which did not collapse even in the big earthquake in 1966. Fifth, there was the Japanese economic development model, which enabled Japan to be the second largest economy in terms of GDP in the world. This has created interest in Japan

in other parts of the world as exemplified in Malaysia's "Look East" policy, driven by high evaluation of Japanese high level of industrial technology and official cooperative management. And there is also the expectation of Japanese ODA. In the middle and the other half of 1990s, Japan actively implemented the ODA policy, which has made Japan the largest donor country in this region.

Item three is, three stages of Japan's positive diplomacy for Central Asia. Since the independence of the Central Asian countries in 1991, the Japanese government has taken a positive policy towards the region in three stages. The first one is the Diplomatic Guideline for Central Asian Region policy. It was introduced by Prime Minister Hashimoto in July in 1997. It had a great emphasis on the Central Asia and the Caucasus area from the perspective of its geopolitical importance, management of energy resources, its historical and cultural bonds with Japan, and aimed to positively expand the relations. Based on the guidelines, the Japanese government opened up embassies in all of the countries in Central Asia, actively providing ODA. And as a result, Japan stayed as the biggest donor to these countries through the latter half of the 1990s. The step two, Central Asia-Japan dialogue was initiated by calling former Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, in August 2004. This process has two objectives of restoring the bilateral relations between Japan and each Central Asian country and to foster dialogue between Central Asian countries themselves, especially to promote the latter objective of providing necessary funds to steer projects in the region. Already, five historical meetings of foreign ministers and ten senior official meetings have been held to discuss multilayered issues such as agricultural problems. However further progress and focus is necessary in order to promote the intraregional cooperative projects aimed at the Central Asia community. And step three is the visit to the five Central Asian countries by the Prime

Minister Abe in October 2015, last year, only last year. Prime Minister Abe realized an epoch making visit to the whole of Central Asia as first Japanese prime minister who ever made such a visit and he was able to meet with each of the top of Central Asian countries. Companies also accompanied Mr.Abe and they signed agreements on the development mainly of the energy and mineral resources, and the renewal of the transportation and electricity facilities. This clearly showed the priority in diplomacy of natural resources (Shigen Gaiko). Looking ahead, it will be necessary to expand bilateral exchanges, rising from environmental provision to technology, education, medical care, tourism, admission of immigrant labor, as well as various cultural exchanges.

Item four is Japanese role in Central Asia. Although Japanese diplomacy tend to be oriented towards diplomacy on resources as I call it, it is extremely important in the longer run and on the global perspective to contribute to the peaceful development of Eurasia. For the stability and peace building in Eurasia, it is essential for the ten countries on the border of China and Russia, Central Asian countries plus Mongolia, and your country Turkey, to grow into a softly united community, which is politically and economically stable as buffer zone countries that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, will also work to minimize the conflict along the border of the two bigger powers of China and Russia.

From the beginning it is known in Central Asia that Japan, independent of selfish or direct national interest, could contribute to stable growth of these buffer zone countries through economic assistance centering on ODA, and as a supporter in such areas as environmental provision, technology, education, medical care, tourism, etc. Stability and peace in Central Eurasia are quite influential to East Asia, and even to Japan too.

Item five: My advice on economic development methods. After the independence in Central Asia, countries have the option to choose on their method of economic development. As you know the first choice can be the Anglo-Saxon economic model, which is complete reliance on the market economy. And the second one is the Japanese Eastern Asian model; that is temporary allowance of government intervention in the market and gradual economic reform in the long term. Many countries have followed the first model. It means accepting the IMF conditionality as a means to get international fund support. But in Central Asia, where the market economy was not developed, the formal method was not suitable. Especially in the resource limited countries like Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Georgia, and Armenia the confusion of national economy increased with no gains. As a Japanese economic advisor, myself, I remember that it would be the best scenario that in the initial stage of the transitioning economy, they had better followed the Japanese East Asian development model first, and the other model should be taken in the latter stage when the market functions come to work. There were complicated occasions where I supported the adaption of the IMF model in the daytime meetings that included the IMF and World Bank executives, while in the bilateral meetings with the presidents and the economic ministers in the evening, I presented an honest advice to consider the adoption of the Japan East Asian model. Can you understand? I had a two-face model like Janus face. My position was very complicated at that time.

Another important issue is China's economic inroad into Central Asia, and the Japanese position on it. The economies of Central Asia are experiencing considerable pressure from Russia and China for participating in the Eurasian Economic Union Initiative. It is promoted by huge industries. And new Silk Road economic belt initiative; One Belt One Road

(OBOR) policy, advanced by China: The economic venture capital, materials and human resources for gathering these economic developments are directed eastward to Siberia and Far East (from Russian perspective), and to westward Eurasia, Europe, and the Middle East (from Chinese perspective). So in other words, Central Asian economy is subject to oppression to be torn from East and West. Presently China's new OBOR initiative has a better chance of realization, given the unexpectedly smooth start up of the new idea; the new Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Last eight: Possibility of cooperation in Central Asia, Japan, and Turkey, your country. As my experience in Central Asia shows, affinity and trust of the Central Asian countries on Turkey far exceeds that of Japan. They share with Turkey a large historical base and a mutual understanding based on culture and Islamic values. So it is expected that Turkey, one of the ten buffer zone countries, will take leadership in strengthening this buffer zone. My idea is that; given the high sense of trust of business community in Turkey and Japan, the risk of direct investment in Central Asia would be minimized by joint ventures between Japanese and Turkish businesses in the region. In other words, collaboration between the Japanese technology with Turkey's management capability and the strong human networks in the region will be much meaningful for each other. The Turkish companies in the construction and distribution businesses already have the established ready presence in the societies of Central Asia. Japanese are not so familiar with the Islamic culture and the Islamic world, and we have to emulate the way that the Turkish people deal with the Islamic world. In any case, Turkey and Japan should cooperate to respond to the strong sense of community and trust of the Central Asian countries toward Turkey and Japan, that exceeds towards China, Russia and even the US.

By joining our efforts, Turkey and Japan, we have the potential to make a large contribution to the development of Central

Asia. Thank you Chairman and thank you for listening. Thank you.



## 2. *Oktay TANRISEVER* (*Middle East Technical University, METU*)

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### **Turkey's Relations with Russia and Central Asia**

In my presentation, I'd like to discuss Turkey's crisis with Russia, on its relations with Central Asian countries, and I would like to examine the dynamics in the region from this perspective, because relations between Russia and Turkey are very important for these countries. I would like to discuss the base on which these relations will be handled by the Central Asian countries.

Historically speaking, Turkey and Russia have been engaged in confrontational relations with two exceptions; first one was during the interwar years and the second one was the decade between 2004 and 2014. The downing of the Russian bombardier jet near Turkey's border with Syria marked the end of the latest period and a new confrontational period started in the bilateral relations. This crisis is likely to have far-reaching impact on other regions as well, including Central Asia. Of course, Turkey did not want to have confrontational relations with Russia, but it was Russia's choice to transform this relationship, and sacrificed this era of partnership and cooperation to its designs over Syria and its reorientation towards the international system. This is also reflected in its policy toward Central Asia.

Despite Turkey's attempts at managing this crisis and making it more local and focusing on the ways of overcoming this crisis diplomatically, Russia flatly rejected this. Even if it was not able to provide credible evidence to support its own position, it demanded apology and compensation from Turkish side which is not likely to happen because international community conformed that Turkey's position is justified and it is supported with evidence. But I think Russia's position has nothing to do with what is going on in Syria. Probably last summer Moscow has made this decision, widely strategic decision, regarding

Middle East and Central Asia regions and it believed that it could create or transform its relations with the West by using this regional conflict.

Central Asia has been a more important target of Russian policy, since the beginning of Eurasian Economic Union process which became realized in 2015. With that policy, Russia first convinced Kazakhstan to join its economic zone. I do not have time to get into the details of bureaucratic structure of this organization, but one can claim that it is a fully Russian controlled organization and it is a politically motivated organization, and not quite compatible with the well-known principles of regional economic integration and globalization. It simply seeks for extending Russian influence to Central Asia. After controlling Kazakh trade policy, Moscow pressurized Kirghizstan to join the group. Kirghizstan was not really interested in joining this Russian controlled organization, but it had to join because of its very close relations with Kazakhstan. Most of the foreign direct investment in Kirgizstan belongs to Kazakh investors and Kazakhstan is central to Kirghiz economy.

But when we look at other countries, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan they flatly rejected to join this organization. I think it is a very important development in Central Asia that these republics resisted Russian pressures, which was not really likely right after the end of the Cold War period. These countries, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, are likely to orient to other countries, to the West, to China, and other countries in the region in order to counter-balance Russia.

Turkey in that sense plays a very important role for the Central Asia and that policy is also important for its own policy toward Russia, because Turkey is one of the coun-

tries that could reinforce the economic and political structures of Central Asian countries vis-à-vis Russia. It has special cultural and social ties to these republics and Turkey's investors, mostly medium and small size businesses, are quite active in Central Asia. Turkey, as I told earlier, is not interested in escalating the crisis with Russia. But given Russia's refusal to solve this crisis with Turkey it has no option other than counter-balance Russia, and also continue efforts to convince Moscow that the right approach to bilateral relations is cooperation but not confrontation. In that sense, Turkey's trade relations with Kazakhstan and Kirghizstan will be quite critical. Both countries are interested in deepening economic cooperation. I guess Turkey will use these two countries as stepping stone for entering Eurasian Economic Union area by signing special trade agreements. I do not think that Turkey will neglect other countries, as these three countries that preferred to be outside of Russian-centered Eurasian Economic Union also see Turkey as their own stepping stone for deepening their ties with the West and Europe. In that sense energy diplomacy will be quite critical with regard to Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan make considerable progress in solving their differences. Then EU support for the idea of southern energy corridor could be realized with the integration of Turkmenistan to this western route to Europe via Turkey.

When we look at these dimensions of bilateral relations between Turkey and Russia, I think Central Asia could be an important area for competition in foreseeable future. But in my opinion Turkey should concentrate on confidence building measures and de-escalating measures in Central Asia. But Turkey of course is likely to continue its military cooperation with Kazakhstan and Kirgizstan with which it has partnership for peace agreements. This is the only channel via which Turkey could strengthen these countries vis-à-vis Russia. Economically as I said,

these countries are likely to deepen energy and trade relations with Turkey, including Kazakhstan and Kirghizstan. Even if Eurasian economic union has energy as one of its mandates I do not think that oil and gas will be an element of that cooperation in the foreseeable future. So far they have been focusing on electricity cooperation. So this is the right moment for Turkey to concentrate on cooperation mainly in natural gas business.

To conclude, I would like to say that Russian approach to the crisis with Turkey, and its policy in Syria seem to be quite unsustainable in the future. Why? Because first Turkey is not interested in that confrontation. Second, Syrian crisis is not likely to be over in the foreseeable future unlike Russia's expectations and gradually there is a risk that it could be a second Afghanistan for Russia. Moscow may not really enjoy benefits of its role in Syria only with bombardments, and it may be forced to take more active role on the ground. This could be quite devastating to Russia as its economy is severely affected by the sanctions and its relations with the West over Ukraine seem to be very confrontational. Turkey as a neighbor country has the backing of NATO and it has been confirmed by many representatives that Russia's idea as Turkey being quite isolated within NATO is mistaken. So it should be expected that gradually Russia will realize its mistake and will concentrate on working with Turkey and normalizing its relations with Central Asia.

The main problem in Russia's understanding of regional issues stems from its mistaken understanding concerning the international system: Russia seems to be a so-called great power, but confronting the West in various contexts and pursuing policy of 'divide and rule' in the different regions may not work. In a globalizing world, the best approach that Russia should take is to cooperate and globalize, not to see any country in any region as its rival. So starting from Ukraine, it should

first show the world that it is a good neighbor that could solve problems diplomatically, not through these hegemonic policies. Thank you.

### 3. Kohei IMAI (JSPS Scholar, Meiji University)

#### Turkey as a Trading State and the Japanese Model

Thank You. Thank you chairmen. My name is Kohei Imai and I am happy to participate in this symposium about Japan and Turkey. I would like to express my thanks to the organizers, sponsors of the symposium and distinguished guests and audiences.

Today I will examine the similarities of Japanese and Turkish foreign policies. In my research I especially focus on two approaches; economic diplomacy or trading state diplomacy, and humanitarian diplomacy. Because of the limited time I will focus on trading state diplomacy here. Let me start by explaining the concept of trading state: First of all, according to Richard Rosecrance, the trading state outlines a state which is able to include its status in international politics and achieve the allocation of resources in its domestic politics within the functions of a trading system. In other words, a trading state promotes interdependence in world politics. So the core ideal of trading states or economic diplomacy is the expansion of interdependence to achieve stability and peace in regional and world politics. Japan is undoubtedly a role model for the trading state concept. Indeed, Japan had to become a trading state due to scarcity of its resources and a large population.

In Japan, economic diplomacy was already established as an effective diplomatic tool in the 1930s, by Kijuro Shidehara and Koki Hirota. Their economic diplomacy was major, not for expanding peace, but for rebuilding Japanese economic position after the Great Depression in 1929 and for anchoring Japan to international society after resigning from the League of Nations. After World War II, Japan tried to be a trading state again. There are two background factors for this policy. The first factor is pacifism, the avoidance of militarism as well as article 9 of the new constitution

promoted in November 1946. The second factor is Japan-US security treaty signed in September 1951. The Japanese trading state policy is called Yoshida Doctrine. The Yoshida Doctrine first emphasized an alliance with the United States, secondly focused on the economics to develop the domestic economy, while keeping a limited military force called Self Defense Forces. Shigeru Yoshida is only regarded as realist due to the long-lasting achievement of the Japanese economic prosperity and the US security. The Yoshida Doctrine had successfully matched the US containment policy vis-à-vis Cold War, especially after the Korean War. Japan had expanded its trade during the 1960s and 1970s, and during the 1980s it became a potential rival of the United States in international trade. Today Japanese military expenditure has generally been kept down to 1 percent and Japanese government has never abandoned the Yoshida Doctrine, and it is still at the center of its economic diplomacy.

Next, Turkish case: But first I have to mention two important things; the first person who applied this trading state concept to Turkish foreign policy is Asoc. Prof.Şaban Kardeş, and well known Prof. Kemal Kirişçi, who is now in Brookings Institute. Kirişçi is known with an influential article on Turkey and trading state. Ex-prime Minister and President Turgut Özal in 1980s and 1990s paid attention to trading state behavior for instance by establishing the BSEC in the Black Sea region. But maybe the most successful and dedicated foreign economic policy is led by AK Party. AK Party governments, especially now Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, understands that economic interdependence is likely to contribute to achieving peace and stability especially in the Middle Eastern region. Based on this understanding, Turkey took the initiative

for various regional cooperation activities based on its economic success. One of the very good examples is the Levant Quartet. The Levant Quartet was established in December 2010 as a regional economic cooperation project among Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan in offshore and business level. *Levant Quartet* aimed to increase the volume of trade to \$1.5 trillion between Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan by 2015. However unfortunately the Levant project did not develop further because of the Syrian Civil War. Turkish economic diplomacy is based on Turkey's economic success and Turkish economic success was a model for countries which experienced the Arab Spring. Turkey put focus on free trade agreements, FTAs, and it signed FTA with 18 countries and one organization. Now Turkey's trading policy is only partly working because of the tough situation in the Middle East region. The second concept is humanitarian diplomacy, but unfortunately I have no time here so I skip this part. But if you are interested in humanitarian diplomacy comparison of Japan and Turkey, you can find my speech of one and half years ago made in the first symposium organized by ORSAM and published in the previous symposium report.

So as conclusion; trading state diplomacy and humanitarian diplomacy are important for Turkey to show its soft power to international society. Japan can be a model or provide advice for Turkey's trading state diplomacy and humanitarian diplomacy as a predecessor. Historically relations between Japan and Turkey are also characterized by trading state diplomacy and humanitarian diplomacy. Japan and Turkey have maintained good relations since Ertugrul Frigate incident of 1890. Japan and Turkey helped each other when there was a crisis such as Tehran escape in 1980s and Izmit Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake, and also mutual humanitarian assistances through TIKA and JICA. Japan and Turkey has formally established diplomatic relations in 1924. Since then economy is a main topic for each country. For example in 1926 Japan and Turkey had a Near East Trade Conference in Istanbul and recently in July 2012 Japan and Turkey decided to promote the negotiations for the Economic Partnership Agreement EPA. I think Japan can pose as a model for Turkey. After Syrian crisis, Turkish foreign policy based on liberalism has faced difficulties. For Turkey strengthening relations with Japan can be an opportunity to regain soft power in regional and world politics. Thank you very much.

#### 4. *Ali AKKEMIK* (*Kadir Has University*)

### On Turkish-Japanese Economic Relations<sup>1</sup>

#### Abstract

The economic relations between Turkey and Japan have recently been on the decline. This is partly a reflection of the ongoing economic transformation in the East Asian region, where China and Korea have caught up with Japanese industries and technology in most sectors. Korean and Chinese firms have gained competitive power over Japanese firms, which have traditionally been champions of manufacturing. Partly as a consequence of the ailing Japanese economy, Turkish industry has recently turned to Korea and China as sources of industrial supplies. This paper shows the extent to which the Turkish economy has become more dependent on industrial inputs from Korea and China at the expense of the declining importance of Japan. This is discussed in conjunction with the ongoing free trade negotiations between Turkey and Japan.

**Keywords:** Turkey, Japan, free trade agreement, import dependence, foreign direct investment

#### Introduction

The expansion of trade has been a policy priority for successive Turkish governments since the opening up of the economy in 1980. The liberal governments of the 1980s and the 1990s improved trade but not industrialization. The economic transformation of the last two decades of the 20th century also resulted in trade liberalization as well as the liberalization of capital flows. Unlike the successful forerunners in East Asia few decades ago, however, the Turkish government was not selective in its industrial development strategy and failed to enhance the development of an industrial base that would sustain further industrialization. That is to say, Turkish governments were not able to devise appropriate policies to reduce the dependence

of domestic industries on imported inputs and intermediate products as well as investment goods. The export-oriented growth strategy of successive Turkish governments resulted in increased dependence of Turkish industries on foreign-produced inputs. A desirable solution to this case could be attracting foreign firms to invest in manufacturing industries in Turkey; however this opportunity was not materialized. While this is largely attributable to an inferior macroeconomic performance of the Turkish economy, characterized by high inflation rates and high interest rates stemming from a very large public sector borrowing requirement, the governments' lack of an industrial development vision is also responsible. At present, the Turkish economy is able to produce and export intermediate products and finished manufactured items with medium-level technological sophistication but is highly dependent on upper-end, technologically more sophisticated manufacturers. Partially attributable to this structural deficit, Turkey has consistently run trade and current account deficits in its balance of payments.

Turkey has actively sought to increase trade relations with her partners by signing a series of Free Trade Agreements (FTA), the most significant of which is the Customs Union Agreement with the European Union (EU), which became effective in January 1996. Recently, Turkey signed an FTA with South Korea in May 2013.<sup>2</sup> Economists expect FTAs and moves towards free trade to bear important benefits for involved parties such as improved competition, technology transfer, and improved efficiency for domestic trading firms.<sup>3</sup> While theoretical studies assume that freer trade leads to higher economic efficiency, it is well known that theoretical models with strong assumptions do not necessarily warrant beneficial results for the trading countries.

Along with Turkey's opening up, Japan has remained an important trading partner of Turkey for the past three decades. Economic relations between the two countries have undergone significant changes over the last decade or so. Trade relations improved remarkably during the 1980s, and by the 1990s Japan had become a major trading partner for Turkey. Japanese firms have also undertaken significant investments in Turkey during the course of improving economic relations between the two countries. However, it is observed that since China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in November 2001, Japan's importance for Turkish trade has deteriorated. To make things worse, trade volume between Japan and Turkey shrank considerably in recent years. On the other hand, the share of China, together with Korea, has increased drastically during the same period. The rise of China in the world economy has also been reflected in China's increasing share in Turkey's trade, with China recently becoming an important supplier of industrial materials and intermediate inputs for Turkish industries. Since 2001, Korea and China have taken over from Japan the role of important Asian economic partners for Turkey.

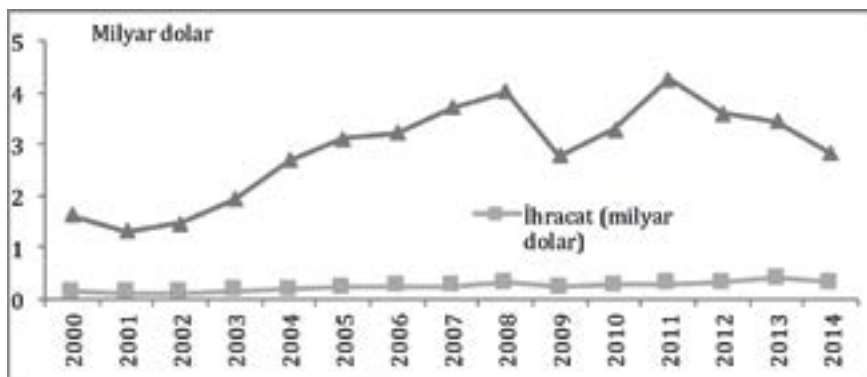
Turkey and Japan have recently started negotiations to sign an FTA. The most important reason that necessitated an FTA between the two countries is that Japan is preparing for an FTA with the EU. Recent developments in trade and investment relations between

Turkey and Japan need to be reviewed critically for the prospective FTA to bear fruitful results for both countries.<sup>4</sup> This paper provides a stocktaking exercise, laying down an empirical inventory of Turkey's economic relations with Japan, displaying recent changes and trends.

### Economic Relations between Turkey and Japan

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkstat), Turkey's trade with Japan has been declining since 2011. Figure 1 presents the trends in total Turkish exports to and total imports from Japan during the period 2000-2014. It is evident from the figure that Turkey has steadily run a large trade deficit against Japan. Turkish exports to Japan have never reached even the one billion dollar mark while Japanese exports to Turkey have risen from 1.5 billion dollars in 2000 to 4 billion dollars in 2008. Following the drop during the global financial crisis, Japanese exports fell to less than 3 billion dollars in 2009 but recovered back to 4 billion dollars in 2011. Since 2011, however, Japanese exports have exhibited a steady decline, shrinking to 2.8 billion dollars in 2014. In other words, Japanese exports to Turkey have withdrawn to the level recorded during the unfavorable global trading conditions arising from the global financial crisis in 2009.

Figure 1. Turkey-Japan trade relations (2000-2014)



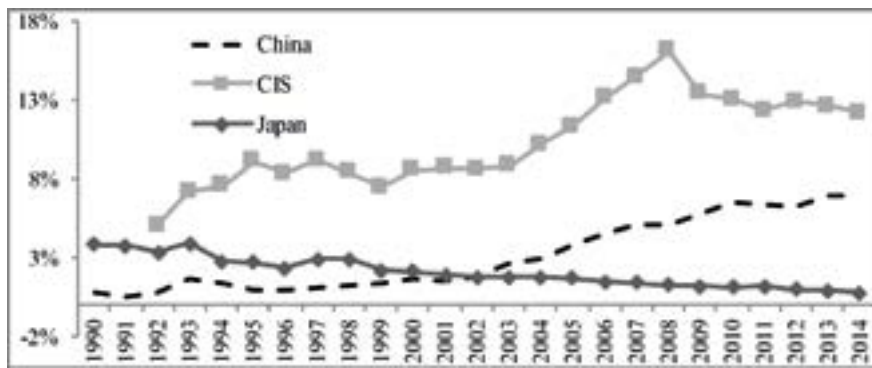
Data source: Turkstat



It is evident that the trade relations between Japan and Turkey have been deteriorating recently. To put it in perspective, Figure 2 presents the shares of various trading partners in Turkey's total imports over the period 1990-2014. China's share in Turkey's total trade has increased from under 1% during the early 1990s to almost 7% in twenty years. Much of this increase took place after China joined the WTO in 2001. Japan's share in Turkey's total trade was about 3.4% in 1992, more than four times that of China, but in 2014

its share fell to 0.8%, the value for China in 1992. The reversal in the shares of Japan and China in Turkey's trade marks a significant compositional change in Turkey's trade with East Asia. It is important to bear in mind that the share of the EU, Turkey's traditionally largest trading partner, has generally remained at about the 50% level throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, but it has recently come down to levels below 40% along with the increasing share of China and some Middle Eastern countries.

**Figure 2. Percentage shares of Japan, China and CIS countries in Turkey's total trade (1990-2014)**



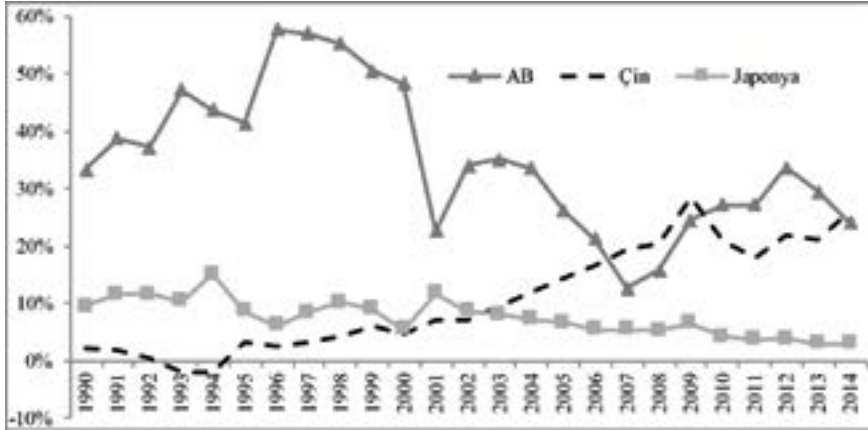
Data source: Turkstat

Figure 3 presents the shares of the EU, China, and Japan in Turkey's total trade deficit for the period 1990-2014. In conjunction with its declining share in Turkey's trade, Japan's share in Turkey's total trade deficit decreased over the years. China accounted for a larger share of Turkey's trade deficit since her accession to the WTO. During the period 2009-2014, the EU and China each have accounted for about a quarter of Turkey's trade deficit.

Japan's share, however, averaged only 4% during the same period. China's share in Turkey's trade deficit passed 10% in 2004, and 20% in 2008, reaching its peak at 29% in 2009, second only to the CIS (43%), which is mainly due to large energy imports to Turkey from the CIS countries (basically, Russia). Japan's share in Turkey's trade deficit peaked at 15% in 1994 and has remained below 10% since 2001, below 5% after 2009 in particular.



**Figure 3. Percentage shares of Japan, China and EU countries in Turkey's total trade deficit (1990-2014)**

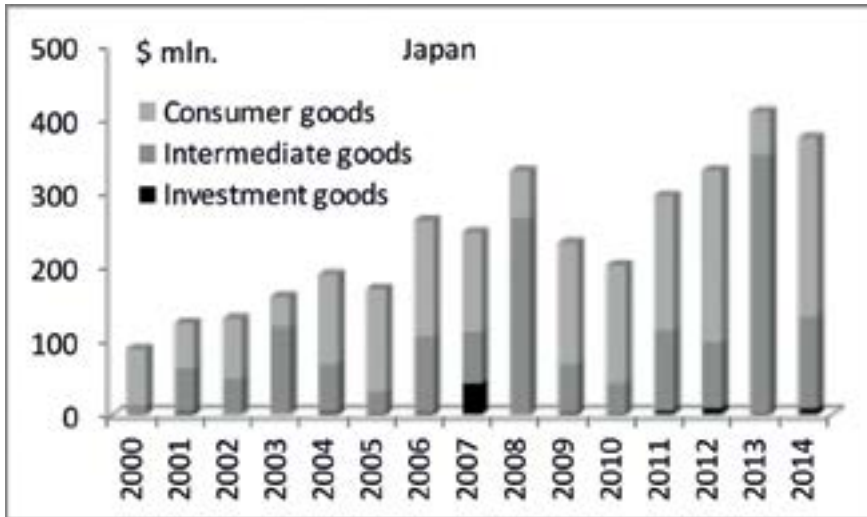


Data source: Turkstat

The abovementioned trends in trade relations imply that Japan has lost its importance for Turkey as a major trading partner and that gap has been filled exceedingly by China, the rising powerhouse of the world economy. The analysis of trade relations is not complete without a thorough analysis of the product composition of trade. Figures 4 and 5 demonstrate the composition of trade between Turkey and Japan with respect to broad economic classifications, i.e., investment goods, intermediate goods, and consumer goods. Figure 4 reveals that while the shares show variety over the years, Turkey has generally exported consumer goods to Japan. Figure 5 shows that Turkey has mostly imported investment goods, which are generally heavy industry products, as well as intermediate products. In other words, Turkey has imported necessary invest-

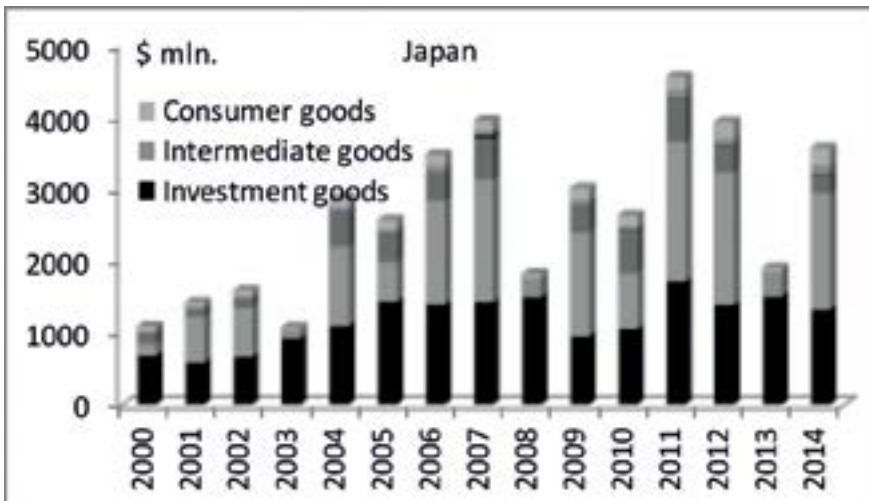
ment goods and inputs from Japan to be able to add to its production capacity and hence to produce in the future. Japanese imports, on the other hand, have been limited to lower-end products. While one may argue that this is the result of differing industrialization levels and productivities between the two countries, it can be interpreted from a political economy viewpoint as a case recalling Marxist dependency theory. Dependency theory postulates that foreign trade and foreign direct investments from “core” countries towards the countries in the “periphery” cause less developed market economies to remain underdeveloped. This is because the international division of labor and specialization patterns between the periphery and the core lead to specialization of the periphery in industries with less technological sophistication.

**Figure 4. Turkey’s exports to Japan, broad economic classification (2000-2014)**



Data source: Turkstat

**Figure 5. Turkey’s imports from Japan, broad economic classification (2000-2014)**



Data source: Turkstat

A detailed product-level decomposition at a higher level of disaggregation is available in the Appendix, but for convenience, we only refer to products whose recent shares have been more than 5%. Major Turkish exports to Japan are agricultural products, food manufactures, textiles, clothing and

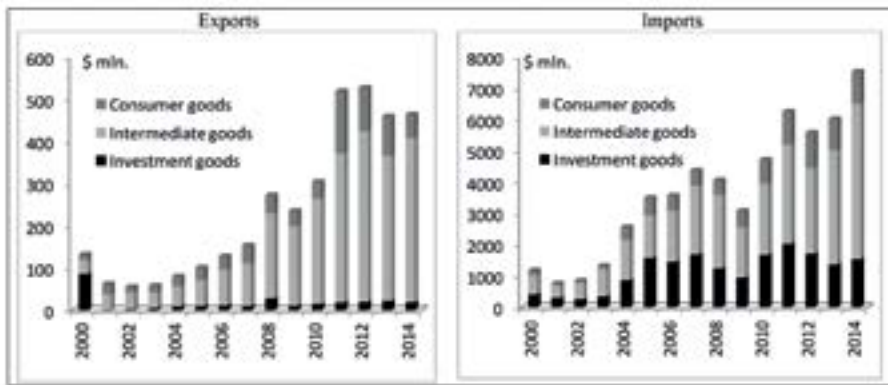
automotive products, the last of which are most likely to be re-imports of Japanese car manufacturers back to their homeland. Turkey’s major imports from Japan are heavy industry products including iron and steel, industrial chemicals, fin-

ished motor vehicles and parts, and electronic machines.

To put the structure of Turkey's trade with Japan into perspective, Figures 6 and 7 present the structure of Turkey's export to and imports from the other two industrial giants of East Asia, namely Korea and Chi-

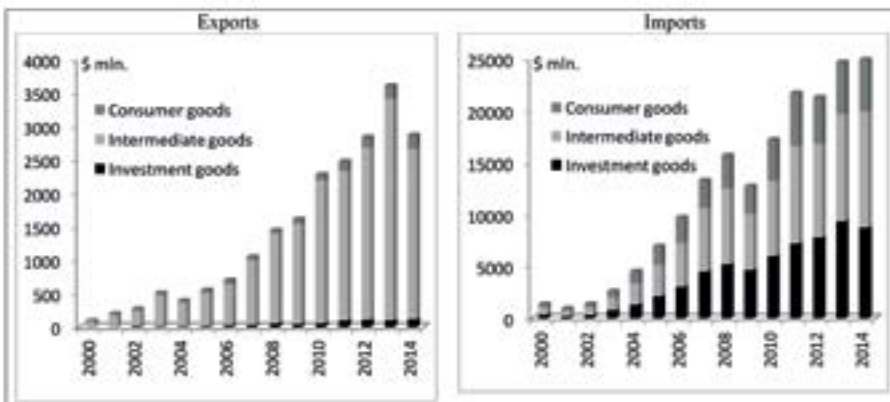
na, for the period 2000-2014. Unlike its exports to Japan, Turkey basically exports intermediate goods to Korea and China and imports intermediate inputs and investment goods from these two countries. The structure of Turkish imports from all three Asian countries, Japan, Korea, and China exhibit quite a similarity.

**Figure 6. Turkey's trade with Korea, broad economic classification (2000-2014)**



Data source: Turkstat

**Figure 7. Turkey's trade with China, broad economic classification (2000-2014)**



Data source: Turkstat

The detailed statistics explained so far indicate that Turkey developed trade relations with East Asian economies that made her dependent on imported intermediate products, i.e., industrial inputs from these countries. Turkey sells low-value-added manufactured items to these countries

and purchases higher-value-added products. Considering the high dependence of Turkey on imported inputs and the government's recent economic growth strategy, it is important to examine Turkey's dependence on foreign intermediate inputs. A comparison of dependence on Ja-

pan with other major countries, including Korea and China, yields important policy implications. The following section elaborates on this subject.

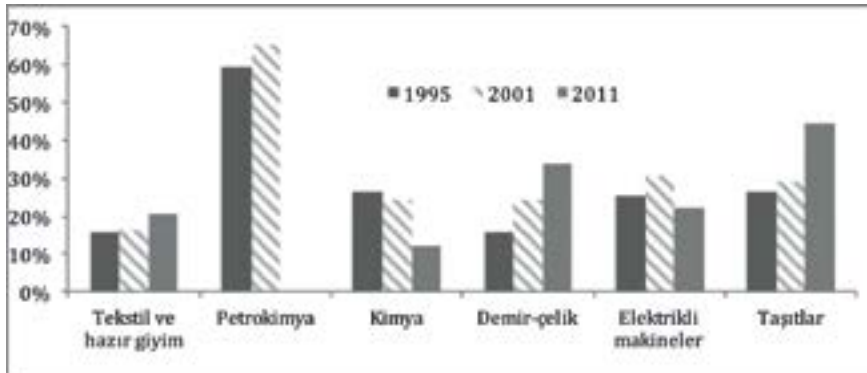
### Dependence of the Turkish Economy on Japan: Cross-Country Comparison

The Turkish economy has become dependent on imported intermediate products over the years. To trace the degree of this dependence, we make use of data provided by the World Input Output Database<sup>5</sup> (WIOD). Using these data, it is possible to compute the shares of foreign-provided (imported) intermediate inputs used in production activities by each sector, as well as by trade partners. To economize on space and abstain from unnecessary details, we refer the reader to WIOD related materials online about the technical details on how the database has been prepared.<sup>6</sup> We take the five most important countries that have been major sources of intermediate inputs for Turkey: Japan, Korea, China, the USA, and Germany.

The WIOD database spans the period 1995-2011. We take the initial and terminal years 1995 and 2011 and the year 2001 for the purpose of intertemporal comparison. 2001 is an important year since China joined the WTO in November of that year. It is also this year after which China's share in Turkey's trade rose remarkably. A detailed analysis of Turkey's import dependence is available elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 8 shows trends in the import dependence of major Turkish industries and Figure 9 presents the decomposition by five countries. Figure 8 reveals that the import dependence of Turkish industries has remained high and increased in iron and steel, petrochemicals, textiles, and vehicles industries. There is a decline in import dependence of intermediate inputs in the chemicals industry. There is also a modest decline in the electrical machines industry. Overall, it can be concluded that the import dependence of Turkish industries was high during the period 1995-2011 and the degree of dependence exhibits large variety.

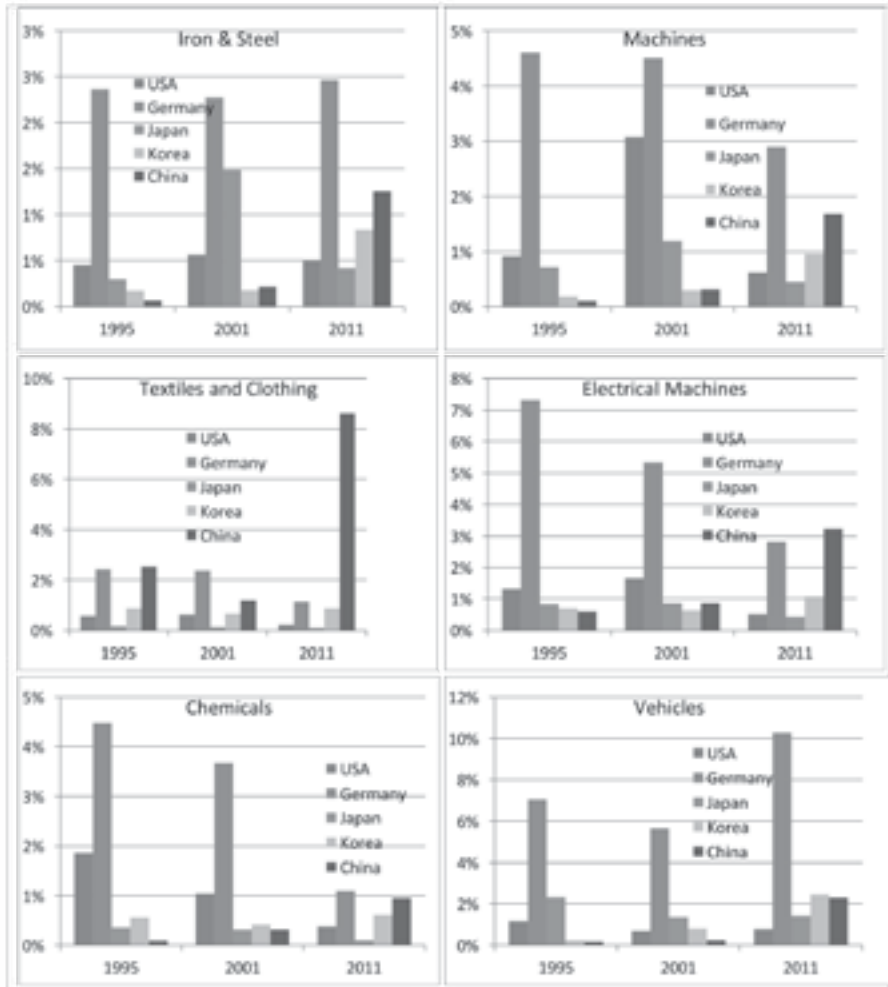
**Figure 8. Import dependence of major Turkish industries (1995-2011)**



Source: Akkemik (2015).

Data source: WIOD Database.

Figure 9. Import dependence of Turkish industries by countries (1995, 2001, 2011)



Source: Akkemik (2015).

Data source: WIOD Database.

Figure 9 shows the import dependence of intermediate inputs for each industry by country of origin. The figure shows that Turkey's dependence for intermediate inputs has increased largely for China from 1995 to 2011, but remarkably after 2001 in textiles, chemicals, iron and steel, electrical machines, vehicles, and machine industries. The dependence on Korea has also increased contemporaneously over the same period. The declining dependence on Japan is visible from the declining share of imported intermediate inputs

from Japan in total intermediate input use in all industries. This finding implies that there has been a shift away from Japan towards China and Korea for supply of intermediate inputs.

The trends in trade in commodities and intermediate inputs imply that Japan is no more an important partner for Turkey, compared with Korea and China. The demise of Japanese industries in the world markets is also reflected in the abovementioned transformation in Turkey's trade

relations with East Asia. This should be interpreted in conjunction with the recent problems surrounding Japan's ailing industries. China and Korea adapted to the changes in production technologies and new ways of doing business while Japanese firms lagged behind. China and Korea materialized their comparative ad-

vantages in the supply of intermediate industrial products in the global supply chains.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, compared to Japan, these two economies made better use of globalization of production. Declining shares of Japanese firms in global markets are remarkable, as seen in these figures:

Lithium-ion batteries:	from 90% in 2000 to 50% in 2008
LCD panels:	from 80% in 1997 to 10% in 2005
DVD players:	from 90% in 1997 to 20% in 2006
Car navigation device:	from 100% in 2003 to 20% in 2007
DRAM memory:	from 40% in 1997 to 10% in 2004

**Japanese FDI to Turkey**

Table 1 presents the trends in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow to Turkey by country of origin. Much of the FDI inflows have traditionally come from European countries and the US. FDI from East Asia has generally been negligibly small. According to the official statistics, Korean and Chinese FDI has not yet reached levels of Japanese FDI. Therefore, it can be safely

argued that Japan has established itself as an investor in Turkey, with its long history of investments, including the intercontinental bridge on the Bosphorus, and the recent investments including the Marmaray Tunnel, Izmit Bridge and the nuclear power plant in Sinop. This high investment performance by Japanese firms in Turkey, however, is yet to be materialized for trade between the two countries.

**Table 1. Foreign direct inflows to Turkey by country of origin (2001-2012)**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Japan	58	6	32	1	2	11	3	347	231	106
US	52	36	88	848	4212	868	260	323	1402	439
Korea	1	-	1	3	74	57	169	20	52	58
China + Hong Kong	-	-	2	4	33	30	3	21	163	48
Germany	142	73	391	357	954	1237	498	597	665	491
France	121	34	2107	439	367	679	617	623	999	86
Netherlands	51	568	383	5069	5442	1343	718	486	1425	1222
UK	141	126	166	628	703	1335	350	245	904	2004
Austria	-	1	9	1108	370	586	1019	1584	2418	1519

Source: UNCTAD Bilateral FDI Statistics Database

## Expectations from the Turkey-Japan FTA

Turkey and Japan have recently started negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the preceding step before signing the FTA.<sup>9</sup> One major reason for this FTA is to compensate for any potential trade diversion effects that would arise from the Customs Union Agreement between Turkey and the EU when Japan signs the FTA with the EU. This was also the rationale behind the signing of the FTA between Korea and Turkey in 2013. The FTA negotiations between Japan and the EU started in 2013 and the talks between Turkey and Japan for the EPA started right afterwards. The two parties met in Tokyo in 2014 and in Ankara in 2015. The next round of talks is scheduled to take place in Tokyo in 2016. The governments in both countries expressed positive sentiments towards the development of trade relations as well as investments.

Japanese investments in Turkey are a matter of concern not only for Turkey. The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) in Japan recently announced the government's interest in investing overseas as a policy priority. Three of the major pillars of the recent New Growth Strategy of Japan as stated by METI are (i) maintaining the competitiveness of Japanese industries through active investment and employment policies, (ii) increasing overseas investments by Japanese firms in order to enlarge the Japanese firms' shares in overseas markets, and (iii) easing international business operations through policy actions such as stabilization of electricity supply, reducing corporate tax rate, providing support for investments in Japan, and economic partnership agreements.<sup>10</sup> Turkey offers an opportunity to realize these expectations of the Japanese government.

## Conclusion

For a long time, Japan has been an important trading partner and source of industrial inputs for Turkey. Recently, with the rise of China and South Korea as the new powerhouses of the world economy, Turkey's trade with these countries has increased, largely to the detriment of trade relations with Japan. In this paper, it is shown that the shift in Turkey's trade with East Asian countries away from Japan and towards South Korea and China has already reached a degree that can be interpreted as a serious transformation. The decline of Japan and the rise of China and South Korea took place not only in the trade of final products but also in the trade of industrial inputs and materials.

The remarkable transformation in the trade and intermediate input relations between the three Asian powerhouses and Turkey will necessarily stimulate changes in the relations between these countries and Turkey in the near future. Turkey's trade relations with the East Asian region are still limited compared to those with her historical trade partner, the EU. However, we showed in this paper that China has become an important source of industrial inputs for Turkey, recently exceeding the US and Germany in particular.

The declining importance of Japan for Turkey in the trade of final products and inputs show that economic relations between two countries can worsen when there are emerging regional rivals for one of these countries. To compensate for that, the recent FTA talks between Turkey and Japan are important. It is expected that the FTA will bear benefits for Turkey and Japan in the coming years.<sup>11</sup> This study brought forth some recent trends, which should be of concern to policymakers in both countries, and should be addressed in the upcoming FTA talks.

**Appendix: Percentage decomposition of Turkish exports to and imports from Japan (2000-2014)**Note: The figures refer to annual averages for each respective period.

Unit: %	Exports			Imports				
	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2000-2014	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2000-2014
Agriculture	14.4	6.8	6.1	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Forestry	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fisheries	6.0	22.5	11.6	13.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Coal	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Metal ores	5.6	5.5	1.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other mining	6.8	3.2	3.4	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Food and beverages	24.7	22.6	22.4	23.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
Tobacco	4.7	0.0	0.9	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Textiles	13.4	10.9	15.9	13.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5
Clothing	6.3	4.4	6.3	5.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Leather	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wood products	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Paper products	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2
Printing products	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.3
Coal and refined oil	0.6	0.0	1.3	0.7	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2
Chemicals	1.6	1.7	5.4	2.9	11.4	10.4	10.2	10.7
Rubber and plastic	1.1	2.3	1.1	1.5	2.4	3.6	4.7	3.6
Non-metallic minerals	3.3	2.2	1.4	2.3	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4
Iron and steel	0.5	1.4	2.1	1.3	7.4	2.3	7.4	5.7
Fabricated metal products	0.4	0.2	0.7	0.5	1.9	2.6	2.3	2.3
Basic machines	2.1	1.9	3.1	2.4	29.6	27.6	30.9	29.4
Office equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	3.6	3.6	3.9
Electrical equipment	0.7	1.2	2.8	1.6	5.9	8.0	5.4	6.4
Telecom, radio, TV	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.3	4.8	5.6	2.7	4.4
Medical equipment	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	6.3	7.0	7.0	6.8
Motor vehicles	2.2	6.1	7.8	5.4	18.9	22.2	17.5	19.6
Other transp. equip.	0.4	3.3	0.1	1.3	4.0	3.9	4.6	4.2
Furniture	3.3	2.1	3.9	3.1	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Waste	0.2	0.2	1.2	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Data source: Turkstat.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 A modified version of this article was published previously in *PERCEPTIONS: Journal of International Affairs*, Spring 2016 issue: Akkemik, K. Ali. "Is Turkey Turning Its Face Away From Japan to China and Korea? Evidence from Trade Relations." *Perceptions* 21, no. 1 (2016): 45. It is printed here with permission from Center For Strategic Research (SAM).
- 2 For a detailed analysis of Turkey-Korea FTA, see Akkemik, K. Ali and Utku Ören, "Kore-Türkiye Serbest Ticaret Anlaşması'nın Genel Denge Analizi", K. Ali Akkemik and Sadık Ünay (eds.), "Doğu Asya'nın Politik Ekonomisi: Japonya, Çin ve Güney Kore'de Kalkınma, Siyaset ve Jeostrateji", (Istanbul: Bogazici University Press, 2015), pp. 238-262.
- 3 Reviews are available at S. Edwards, "Openness, Productivity and Growth: What Do We Really Know?" *Economic Journal*, vol. 108 (1998), pp. 383-398; J. D. Sachs and A.M. Warner, "Economic Reform and the Process of Global Integration", *Brookings Papers in Economic Activity*, vol. 1 (1995), pp. 1-118.
- 4 Recall that Turkey is not a member of the EU, but did sign a Customs Union Agreement with the EU in 1996, effectively forcing Turkey to sign an FTA with any third party country signing an FTA with the EU.
- 5 The WIOD Database is available at <http://www.wiod.org>
- 6 See <http://www.wiod.org> for the technical details.
- 7 See, for instance, Ali Eşiyok "Türkiye Ekonomisinde Üretimin ve İhracatın İthalata Bağımlılığı, Dış Ticaretin Yapısı: Girdi-Çıktı Modeline Dayalı Bir Analiz", *Uluslararası Ekonomi ve Dış Ticaret Politikaları*, vol. 3, no. 1-2 (2008), pp. 117-160; Gülay Günlük-Şenesen and Ümit Şenesen "Reconsidering Import Dependency in Turkey: The Breakdown of Sectoral Demands with Respect to Suppliers", *Economic Systems Research*, 13, no. 4 (2001), pp. 417-428; Ş. Saygılı, C. Yalçın and T. Hamsıcı, "Türkiye İmalat Sanayii İthalat Yapısı", *Türkiye Cumhuriyet Merkez Bankası Çalışma Tebliği No 10/02* (2010).
- 8 Details about Japan's declining industrial power is available at K. Ali Akkemik "Recent Industrial Policies in Japan", Murat Yülek (ed.), "National Strategic Planning and Industrial Policy in the Globalizing Economy: Revisiting Concepts and Experience" (Springer, 2015), pp. 181-206.
- 9 The developments in Turkey-Japan FTA talks can be followed in the press: "Turkey, Japan take important step toward reaching free trade accord", *Hürriyet Daily News*, 12 August 2013; "Japanese bosses to visit Turkey to explore ties", *Hürriyet Daily News*, 12 February 2014; "Japan, Turkey foreign ministers eye working for free trade talks", *Kyodo*, 13 April 2014; "Babacan: Japonya ile paralel serbest ticaret anlaşması istiyoruz", *Hürriyet*, 26 November, 2014.
- 10 See <http://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/economy/growth/report20100618.pdf> for details (Accessed April 18, 106)
- 11 See Scott Morrison, "Japan and Turkey: The Contours and Current Status of an Economic Partnership/Free Trade Agreement", *Insight Turkey*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2014), pp. 183-195. Morrison is quite optimistic about the future of trade and investment relations between Turkey and Japan.

## PANEL 2

### TURKISH AND JAPANESE PERSPECTIVES ON MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRS

#### 1. Koichiro Tanaka

*(Managing Director of The Institute of Energy Economics [IEEJ],  
President of Japanese Institute of Middle Eastern Economies [JIME  
Center])*

#### Japanese Perspectives towards the Middle East

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am very delighted to be here today. I would like to thank the organizers, the Turkish and the Japanese, for arranging this opportunity to come to Ankara, the capital city. And initially I will have to apologize from deviating from my original title which was focused on Japanese and also Turkish perspective on foreign policy issues. Since I thought I would be more of a use if I deal with more specific issues rather than general terms or ideas about how our policies work, I decided to base my speech on two most recent incidents that have been took place here in the Middle East, namely the Iranian elections that only took place the week before and the Saudi-Iranian tensions that have been lingering on for quite a while that have also reached its lowest point at the turn of 2016.

As you may know, in the region there are issues that have been lingering for a while, and there is a sense of uneasiness among the major states especially among the ones that have been in close contact with the United States in the last decades. First of all, simply because the Arab Spring has caused an instability and uneasiness for governments who have been ruling comfortably for decades. All of a sudden they see that there is a challenge emanating from their own society, not an external threat, but a domestic, an internal threat. And then they see that their closest ally the United States is not paying attention as it was used to in the previous years. Simultaneously they are seeing that the

G5+1, which includes the United States, have tried to negotiate with the Iranians on the nuclear deal, and eventually they did get a deal and Iran is reemerging as a regional power.

So putting these all together, the Arab states in general terms, but especially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is now facing sort of a challenge in the region that they are trying to find a way out. Furthermore, there were the elections in Iran over the week. We hear in the news reports that the “so called” reformists have won. I have a great doubt about that. I would just like to point out that it’s more about the reformists taking over in certain seats in the parliament and also that an assembly of experts would deal in determining the future leadership of the country. Of course at this moment Ali Khamenei is still in power. It is not the right moment to talk about who is going to succeed him, but at least we know that the former president, ex-president Hashemi Rafsanjani has gained a huge boost by securing a seat once again in the assembly of experts, which could have an impact in moderating the Iranian behavior inside and also out of the country. Will that lead to a total moderation of the Iranian foreign policy of the region, I still have a doubt because the moderates may have won, but there are strong hardliners within the Iranian society and power centers that are not going to let things happen as the moderates would like to see. So there will be challenges coming for the future.

Now, the differences between the Iranian government and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: There are issues that have been separating the two regional states. There are certain characteristics that are quite natural and could not be changed by policy; these are the sects. These two countries belong to two different sects of Islam. And there are linguistic groups that divide them against each other as well. But more importantly there are certain political and strategic elements that they have been fighting against each other in the past five years. These are the issue of Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, the issue of Iraq, and the nuclear issue. Now, all this combined together, the uneasiness of the Saudi Arabians or the house of Saud has caused some impact on their own foreign policy towards Iran. Also Iran has reacted in various ways. The terrorist threats emanate from two different sects, two different angles and forms. For the Iranians mostly it is the al-Qaeda and also it's sub-shoots such as ISIS. But for the Saudis, it has always been the Lebanese Hezbollah or the Shia elements that could destabilize their own society. Now, put this together, the Saudis usually claim, or the Arab states usually claim that the Iranians are looking for hegemony in the region. There are territorial disputes. There are pan-Shia movements that have been supported by Iran. The Iranians sometimes long for a personal dominance or superiority over the others, and the Arab states more frequently condemn them of undermining security and stability in their own country or beyond. So all of these combined together, we see what is usually referred to as the export of revolution by the Iranian state.

In recent years, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been feeling heat coming from Tehran in various corners and issues. This might not be a recent issue, as in 1996 there was this Khobar Towers incident that that resulted in the death of American servicemen. The Saudi government along with the FBI and the United States alleged that this was done in the hands of Hezbol-

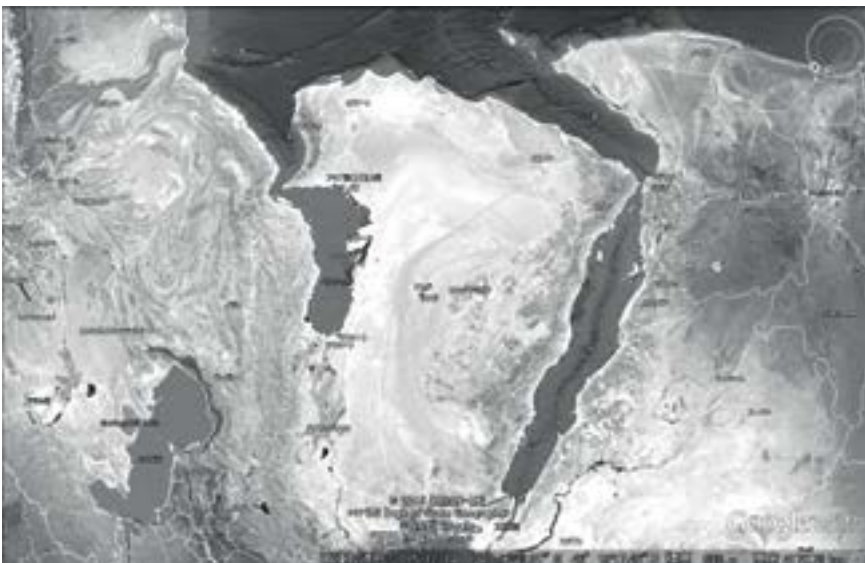
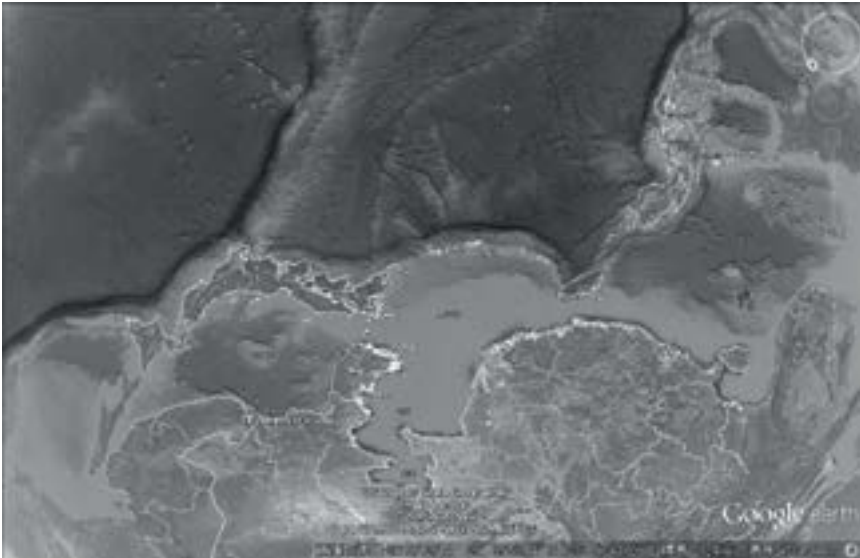
lah of Hicaz, which was considered to be under the influence of the Iranian government or the Iranian military arms.

Following that we have witnessed the Iraqi war of 2003, which resulted in the dismantlement of the Saddam Hussein regime that also brought in a lot of Hezbollah elements or Shia elements from Lebanon into Iraq and also other Iranian elements. The quasi-Iranian presences in the southern Iraqi areas are also contested frequently since there is an on-going battle between ISIS and the Shia-led Iraqi government. And in 2011 and up until today we have seen of the spread of the Arab Spring into areas where Saudi Arabia feels very threatened by its presence and one is Bahrain as early as 2011. But followed by that we now see the issue of Yemen. Which could be and I believe is now the main cause for the differences between Iran and Saudi Arabia. In Yemen, there is another issue that we usually tend to forget. This is the Bab el-Mandeb Strait that nobody really talks about or less talked about as opposed to the Strait of Hormuz. The Strait of Bab el-Mandeb in itself, is another choke point as equal to that of the Strait of Hormuz. In recent months, immediately after the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced severing of diplomatic relations with Iran, with Tehran, there have been certain states that followed suit. Amongst them were Djibouti, Sudan, and Somalia. And all this combined, within the OIC, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's extraordinary foreign ministers meeting, the Iranians were condemned of interfering in states such as Bahrain, Syria, but not only that, but in Yemen and also Somalia.

So the common issue here is not only about Iranian influence and Iranian intervention, it's more about where the Iranian intervention or influence is expanding to, and this is towards the Red Sea, the surrounding states and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. What does this mean in the context of the threat perception of each state? Let me explain the reality of how the Saudis

perceive the Iranian influence expanding to their immediate neighborhood. The civil wars in Yemen and Syria are often referred to as a sort of a war of proxies between Iran and Saudi Arabia. That may be true. But there are differences. Saudis believe, or at least should believe, that Yemen is a war that they cannot lose. While for the Iranians it is more about Syria than Yemen. And there are strategic differences

on how security threats that may destabilize or even destroy their country. On the one hand the Iranians consider the United States, despite the nuclear agreement that they have reached, as constituting the single biggest threat to their security. While for the Saudi Arabians, it is more about Iran itself. So there are these differences of perception that causes a huge difference



in how these countries look at each other across the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

We can draw an analogy here with the geopolitics of East Asia, especially from the perspective of the PRC, the People's Republic of China, and the Gulf Region. Of course, China is an importer of energy. So there are differences between China's perception and that of Saudi Arabia's. China is surrounded by an island chain. From North there are Kuril islands, the northern territories of Japan and the Japan archipelago and then Ryukyu Islands, and then goes down to Taiwan and the Philippines and Kalimantan, encircling the Chinese mainland. If I employ a similar perspective here in the Arabian Peninsula, in the Persian Gulf as well as the Red Sea, you can see that there are similarities. Regarding the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, their main export is oil from the Persian Gulf, exported through the Strait of Hormuz to the Asian states and also to the North American continent. All together combined, this constitutes about 80% of their oil exports. But they do also have a substitute way of exporting their oil, even if it is not in its full capacity, they have a way to export it through Bab el-Mandeb in the Red Sea. North-wise, it could also reach the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal and also through pipelines into the Mediterranean Sea, but that is less than 20% of their to-

tal exports. But at least they do have their substitute or alternative ways to export oil. But if you see what is happening there, they are facing the Houthi insurgency and the government is unstable there. And besides that, they have also been facing challenges from their northern neighbors like Iraq and sometimes Syria and Lebanon as they claim, as there is a Shia crescent that encircles Saudi Arabia. So all of these combined, you can see that first of all that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is encircled by Shia states or Shia proxies, and also now that the Houthis are in control to a certain degree of the Straits of Bab el-Mandeb, or at least are now controlling certain land territories on that straits. So not only that of Strait of Hormuz is already under a strong influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but they now see one of its proxies taking control over the Bab el-Mandeb as well. So what does that mean? It means that they could lose 80% of their capacity to export oil, and that is a serious threat.

So I would just like to conclude here that there are implications of what is happening between Iran and Saudi Arabia and the Middle East that would make an impact on regional security in a very negative way. The civil wars in Yemen and Syria are likely to continue, as well as the invigoration of terrorist organizations. Thank you.

## 2. Yutaka TAKAOKA

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### **Analysis of the Resource Mobilization of the Islamic State<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Abstract**

This article examines the structure of resource mobilization for the Islamic State by focusing on its recruitment mechanism. This mechanism consists of several actors, and their relationships and interactions are quite important for successful recruitment. Since Islamic extremist organizations need to avoid unreliable members, their resource mobilization in general and recruitment in particular have to be conducted through personal networks, such as kinship networks of each activist. Following the Islamic extremists' success in agitations and propaganda done in cyber space, changes have appeared in the recruitment mechanism as well. Thus, nowadays, the mechanism is formed by "Muhajirun", "recruiters", "coordinators", "temporary and real accepters", and "disseminators". Detailed observations of each actor and their nature, function, and even location reveals several important findings. Furthermore, these findings provide valuable insights about the threat potential of the Islamic State, and of providing counter measures against it. As a consequence, it is possible to say that an effective obstruction of the Islamic State's resource mobilization is as important as direct military actions or police measures against it.

#### **Key Words**

Islamic Extremism, The Islamic State (IS, ISIS, ISIL, Daesh), Resource Mobilization, Mujahidun, Muhajirun, Cross Border Migration, Terrorism.

#### **Introduction**

This study aims to explore the mechanism of resource mobilization of the Islamic State, and provide some insights to facilitate formulation of counter measures

against this mobilization. To achieve this purpose, it focuses on the group's recruitment methods. Nowadays, expansion of the Islamic State's influence and their possible terrorist attacks around the world have become a central concern for international security. Particularly after attacks in Paris (January and November 2015), Jakarta (January 2016), and Brussels (March 2016), concern has increased worldwide. Meanwhile, what kind of counter measures are to be taken remains unclear. The questions of what kind of policies should be employed to curb the Islamic State's resource mobilization ability, or how to conduct new operations around the world, have also not been answered sufficiently. As a result of the absence of concrete policies on this issue, the estimated number of foreigners who joined the Islamic State or other extremist organizations in Iraq or Syria increased from 12,000 to 31,000 between 2014 and 2015.<sup>2</sup> The difficulty of managing such policies stems from the complex activities and the organizational structure of the Islamic State. Therefore, revealing their resource mobilization mechanism and analyzing various actors taking part in the process will contribute to our knowledge of this complex structure.

There are already numerous research studies and publications about resource mobilization by the Islamic State, such as its fundraising, logistics or armament, and recruitment.<sup>3</sup> Taking this literature into consideration, this article will look mainly at the recruitment process and migration of foreigners into the Islamic State. Since this study focuses on the mechanism of resource mobilization of the Islamic State, it will not provide details on the motivations or social statuses of various actors taking part in the mechanism. These are so diverse that portraying a general image of the people involved is quite difficult.<sup>4</sup>



This article first examines the traditional model of recruitment by Islamic extremists<sup>5</sup>. However, under the present circumstances, this model needs to be modified because of the existence and importance of the *Muhajirun* (migrants for Jihad), who are inspired by the internet, especially by SNS (Social Networking Services such as twitter, etc.). Hence after giving consideration to the role of SNS by Islamic extremists, this study provides a modified model of recruitment. As a result of examinations of the mechanism of recruitment, it also points out some findings and implications for deterrence of the Islamic State.

### The traditional model of recruitment

When Islamic extremists began to mobilize resources for their activities in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the process of recruitment mainly relied on social relationships, such as the extended family of each activist. This tendency seemed to be a result of the relative primitiveness of the Islamic extremists' recruitment techniques. As leaders like Abdullah Azzam (1941-1989, a major leader of the Arab fighters against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan) or Usama bin Ladin (1957-2011) made journeys around the world to mobilize resources, Islamic extremists of those days ran resource mobilization based on direct personal relationships, and did not have a highly organized character. The nature of their activities probably determined the way of recruitment. The activities of Islamic extremists were sometimes illegal or criminal and thus they needed trustworthy persons for recruitment. It was natural therefore, for them to seek trustworthy individuals among their relatives. In other words, face-to-face communication between recruiters and recruited was essential.<sup>6</sup> Even after Islamic extremists began to use the internet for their agitations at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, communications via internet were believed to be

monitored by state security apparatuses, and therefore they preferred to avoid on-line resource mobilization. This tendency has continued from the end of the Jihad against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan to the present. However, there was a minor change in the expanded base, as they added their colleagues in Afghanistan as a source of recruitment as well. Islamic extremists' recruitment further developed through the experiences of al-Qaida and the infiltration of foreign fighters (*Mujahidun*) into Iraq.

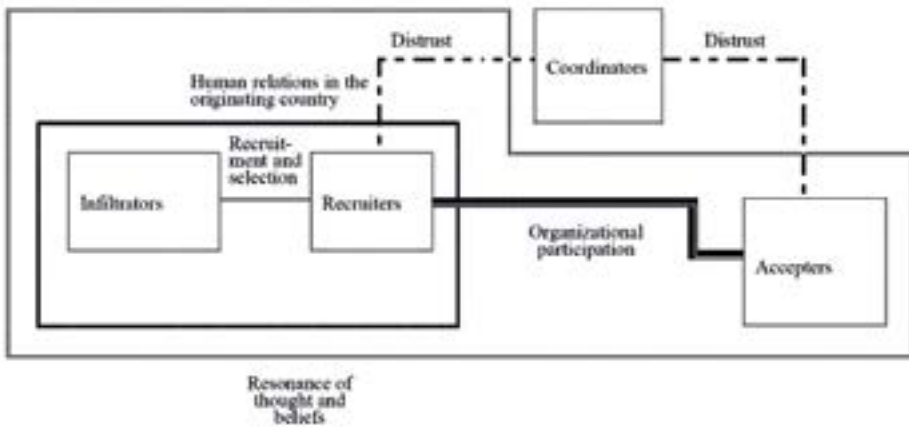
Many research studies done by academics and state apparatuses have analyzed this issue, and have revealed important points about the mechanism of recruitment or cross-border migration of *Mujahidun*.<sup>7</sup> In addition to these studies, some supporters of Islamic extremists themselves provided useful information on the internet to potential recruits about how to enter into Iraq via Syria.<sup>8</sup> They eagerly recommended to those who wanted to go Iraq to fight, that they find credible guides before their departure. They also provided technical and logistic advice for their journey. According to previous research and such sources of information given above, it is possible to classify four actors participating in the mechanism of recruitment and infiltration:

1. The Infiltrators: Individuals who actually try to take part in Islamic extremist organizations;
2. The Recruiters: Actors who recruit and select the 'infiltrators', and train them ideologically;
3. The Coordinators: Actors who assist 'infiltrators' in cross border migration;
4. The Accepters: Actors who absorb 'infiltrators' into Islamic extremist organizations.

It is important that the key factor in successful infiltration is not the ability of the infiltrators but the establishment of good relations and cooperation among the “recruiters”, the “coordinators” and the “acceptors”. Several case studies have shown that prior to the departure of the “infiltrators”, “recruiters” select and indoctrinate them. “Coordinators” then determine their route and/or accommodations, and their access to the “acceptors”, who will be the ones to decide to take in the “infiltrators”. Guidebook like information for the “infiltrators” warns them to find trustworthy coordinators in advance to begin the journey. Interestingly, studies have shown that there is little ideological sympathy be-

tween the “coordinators” and other actors. For instance, Felter and Fishman stressed a deep distrust on the part of the organization [i.e. “acceptors”] towards the “coordinators”.<sup>9</sup> Thus, it is assumed that “infiltrators”, “recruiters”, and “acceptors” share a radical religious ideology, in contrast to the “coordinators”, who do not always share such an outlook. Consequently, previous research has pointed to local tribal people or smugglers playing the role of the “coordinators” for economic incentives. The relationship between actors, the recruitment mechanism, and the cross border migration of *Mujahidun*, is summarized in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Conventional model of recruitment by Islamic extremists**



When considering the correlation between the solicitation by Islamic extremists and the actors involved in the cross border migration of Mujahidun, the “infiltrators” and “recruiters” are located in the originating country of the “infiltrators”, and the “acceptors” exist in the conflict regions. Meanwhile, “coordinators” are believed to be local dwellers of transit countries (tribal people and local smugglers for instance). “Infiltrators” are recruited and selected in their origin country by the “recruiters”, who also give ideological training to the “infiltrators”. The “recruiters” generally seem to be affiliated with certain Islamic extremist organizations (i.e. the

“acceptors”), or at least, they have personal ties with some members of the “acceptors”. Overall, successful infiltration depends on cooperation between “recruiters”, “coordinators”, and “acceptors”.

The “infiltrators”, “recruiters” and “acceptors” share religious and ideological thoughts and beliefs. “Coordinators” on the other hand, although they assist “infiltrators” to join “acceptors”, do not necessarily have an ideological sympathy with the other actors in the mechanism, and seek rather to maximize their own economic benefits. Therefore, there seems to



be a deep distrust between the “coordinators” and other actors.<sup>10</sup>

### Modified Model of recruitment

Since 2011, with expansion of the Islamic State on the ground and their heavy exploitation of SNS, they managed to attract more than 30,000 people from around 100 countries. Based on this phenomenon, two derivations can be made. The first concerns the case of those “infiltrators” who did not experience face-to-face communications with the “recruiters” and “coordinators”. It is considered that these infiltrators have radicalized themselves based on agitations or propaganda distributed via SNS, and made the journey to the areas occupied by the Islamic State depending on the guidance they found through SNS. The second concerns non-combatant infiltrators, such as the families of *Mujahidun* or female infiltrators who aim to provide sexual services for *Mujahidun* under the excuse of “Jihad al-Nikah” (Jihad for marriage). To comprehend these new kinds of infiltrators into the mechanism of recruitment, this article calls all infiltrators as *Muhajirun*,<sup>11</sup> and argues that the above mentioned model should be modified.

With regard to the first group, even though the Islamic State makes its agitations and propaganda mainly in Arabic, it is believed that some of these infiltrators cannot read, write or speak Arabic. Thus, the question is; how did they get the necessary information, or how did they become familiar with the ideology of Islamic extremism? Normally these are serious obstacles, but the fact that such infiltrators still exist means that there are important individuals who gather articles and movies on Jihad, and then summarize and translate them into different languages on SNS. The literature on this issue points out that these people’s accounts on social media are more popular than the official accounts of Islamic extremist organizations (Carter, Maher, and. Neumann.

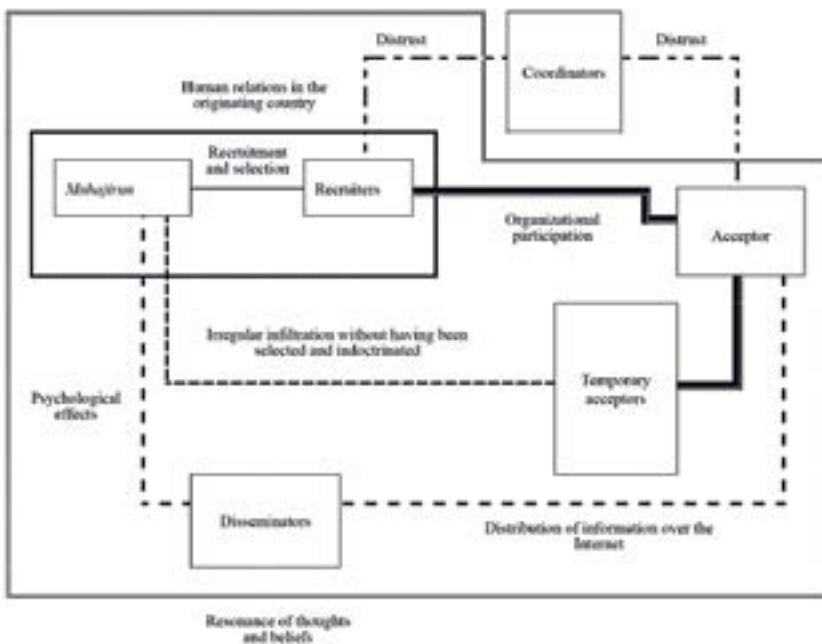
2014:15-18). And it is also noteworthy that these persons have knowledge about Arabic language and religious literature, but are not necessarily affiliated with any particular Islamic extremist organization. Furthermore, they do not seem to have organizational or personal ties with Islamic extremists. Therefore, it is necessary to add these persons into the model of recruitment as new actors. This article will call them the “disseminators”, providing information and inspiration to candidate “infiltrators”. Several religious intellectuals or activists have been known as fitting in to the category of “disseminators” (Carter, Maher, and. Neumann 2014:18-28).

However, the journey of infiltration and the process of joining the Islamic State cannot be easy, and the numbers of fighters who join via recruitment that is inspired solely by such “disseminators” is not likely to be a majority among members of the Islamic State. Indeed, this sort of recruitment may be considered as an irregular one. Certainly, on SNS, there are many narratives of *Muhajirun* who joined the Islamic State without organized recruitment.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, because these narratives (particularly stories on motivation, journey, the “coordinators”, “an ideal life” in the Islamic State...etc.) may be a part of the Islamic State’s propaganda, analysts should not depend on them completely as their source for research. As Neumann revealed in his study on the narratives of defectors from the Islamic State, that ideal life is not always secured under the Islamic State. The defectors witnessed injustice, corruption, and poor quality of life in the “Caliphate”.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the Islamic State has its own circumstances. For instance, it needs some specific skills to run its organization and activities (bureaucrats, IT engineers, doctors or medical workers, engineers for oil or gas fields, and experienced fighters and specialists for explosives in particular). In addition to these, the Islamic State is seriously required to screen out spies among its members. To secure the credibility of

*Muhajirun* or to train them adequately, the Islamic State attaches them to training facilities or the lowest combat units.<sup>14</sup> These *Muhajirun* can join the formal organization of the Islamic State only after confirmation of their credibility and skill by several other members. Leaked personal data of numerous fighters of the Islamic State has revealed that the Islamic State actually requires the declaration of candidates' recommenders to the organization

for accountability.<sup>15</sup> Thus, this process has to be taken into consideration when dealing with the mechanism of recruitment. In other words, the Islamic state has introduced what could be called 'temporary acceptors', as a tool to avoid penetration by unreliable or unskilled individuals into the organization. Taking the above mentioned changes into consideration, the model of recruitment can be modified as in Figure. 2.

**Figure 2: Modified model of recruitment by Islamic extremists.**



In this revised model, all infiltrators are referred to as *Muhajirun*, since among those who want to join the Islamic State, there are a considerable number of non-combatants or females, children and elders. The model also takes into consideration the fact that, although face-to-face communications remains a core factor for recruitment, a number of irregular infiltrations cannot be ignored. To avoid penetration by spies from hostile entities and unskilled infiltrators emanating from irregular infiltration, the model also adds to the category of "acceptors" a new

actor, the "temporary acceptors". Those *Muhajirun* who infiltrate through irregular means became official members of the "acceptors" only after screening and training under "temporary acceptors". The "temporary acceptors" seem to be loosely organized under the "acceptors" within the conflict region. Another new actor, the "disseminators," also is shown in this revised model as it plays important role to prompt irregular infiltration by distributing information over the internet about the Islamic State or the journey to join it. While the "disseminators" share thoughts

and beliefs with the “infiltrators”, “recruiters”, and “accepters”, they do not have direct organizational or personal connections to any of the “accepters”. Finally, the “disseminators” do not need to conduct illegal or criminal acts at their locations.<sup>16</sup>

## Findings

This examination on the mechanism of recruitment revealed various important points and led to the above revised model. This model may be applicable not only to *Mujahidun* and other human resources mobilization, but also to the mobilization of other resources such as money and weapons. Therefore, this part of the study will discuss the characteristics of resources mobilization for Islamic extremists in general, and the Islamic State in particular.

It is evident that Islamic extremists (the Islamic State in particular) inevitably mobilize resources from outside of the conflict region. According to their view, the conflict in Syria and Iraq is not a problem for these two states, but a problem for the Islamic Community (Umma) as a whole. Thus all Muslims should contribute to win the strife in accordance with each individual's capacity in various fields (i.e. not only on the battleground, but also, for example, in fundraising or propaganda spreading). This approach towards world jihad is assumed to prompt irregular infiltration and to mobilize the efforts of “disseminators”, who contribute to the Islamic State outside of its organizational frameworks and personal relationships.

To secure trustworthy supporters, the Islamic extremists prefer to mobilize resources through their personal networks such as kinship networks or territorial connections. Consequently, face-to-face communication between the recruiter and the recruited plays an essential role in resource mobilization. This tendency did not change in principal even after recruitment via SNS became conspicuous. Thus leading class or skilled *Muhajirun* are sup-

posed to be recruited through face-to-face recruitment.

From the view-point of each actor's location, it is natural to believe in the existence of a well-organized network within the originating countries of the *Muhajirun* and other resources to a certain extent. Therefore, such attacks as those in Paris (November 2015), Jakarta (January 2016), or Brussels (March 2016), for which the Islamic State claimed responsibility, do not reveal so much a problem about its expansion or “globalization”, but show how the Islamic State uses its capacity and resources in these arenas. In these countries there are already organized networks to mobilize resources for the Islamic State, and the attacks show that it has capability to conduct attacks at any location into which its network extends. From this point of view, there is a high probability of further attacks by the Islamic State in the countries where it has already developed its capacity to mobilize resources.

Concerning the “coordinators”, these actors can be located around the routes between the origin countries of the *Muhajirun* and the conflict zone. In this case, Turkey can be considered as a main route for the cross border migration of *Muhajirun*. As stressed above, although the “coordinators” play a crucial role for successful infiltration, the “coordinators” do not have to share religious ideology or political aims of other actors in the mechanism of resource mobilizations. Therefore, the relationship between the “coordinators” and other actors seems to be tense and vulnerable. Nevertheless, since the infiltration of Islamic extremists into Iraq or Syria has been continuing for at least five years, the “accepters” have had enough time to establish and develop their own activities to provide assistance for the *Muhajirun*.

Meanwhile, although the effects of the “disseminators” are not necessary to be limited within a specific geographic area,

their location seems to be quite important. Certainly the “disseminators” are active in cyber space and they may therefore be free from some real world restrictions, however, when a person wants to act as a “disseminator”, it is still more convenient for him to be in a country or society with a culture of tolerance, freedom of expression and religious freedoms. If the “disseminator” is located in an oppressive regime or one with poor internet infrastructure, it becomes virtually impossible to act effectively.

Ultimately, only the “accepters” actually exist in the conflict zone. They seem to be quite skeptical toward *Muhajirun* who reach Syria or Iraq by irregular means. Therefore the layer of “temporary acceptors” has been established as a proxy to impose screening on *Muhajirun* and to train them. There have been several reports on difficulties experienced by *Muhajirun* under the “acceptors”.<sup>17</sup>

### Implications and Conclusion

This part discusses implications of the threat from the Islamic State in the future, and counter measure policies against its activities. The potential threat of the Islamic State against a certain country can be estimated by the actual results of its resource mobilization. Some European and South Asian countries act as resource sources for the Islamic State, and several hundred of the *Muhajirun* have been recruited from these countries. This fact means that there is an organized base of the Islamic State within these countries, and this organized base can easily turn into aggressors against their host countries. Therefore, it is important to see the motive of the Islamic State to change its organized base’s activities there from resource mobilization to aggressive operations. As one intelligence agency stated, it is important for the Islamic State to maintain its image as a “strong” group attracting streams of new recruits, thus it needs to continuously achieve brilliant

war results.<sup>18</sup> In addition to this motivation, increasing pressure on resource mobilization activities by the Islamic State in resource supplying countries may increase the possibility of attacks within these countries, because it is natural that an increase in state scrutiny against resource mobilization would let “recruiters” consider a counterattack.

As several resolutions by the U.N Security Council have demonstrated, cutting resource supplies for the Islamic State is considered as a key counter measure against it. Thus further analysis of the structure of resource mobilization and the model of recruitment, which this research aimed to provide in particular, is useful to deal with the issue. According to this model, countries involved in this issue can be grouped into three categories according to their place in the recruitment mechanism. The first consists of the “supply side,” such as European countries, countries of the former Soviet Union, South Asian countries, China, and Arab countries. The *Muhajirun*, the “recruiters”, and in many case, the “disseminators” are active there. The Islamic State (the “acceptors”) exploits these countries for resource mobilization. As the “acceptors” rely for an essential part of their recruitment on face-to-face communications, it is highly probable that the “recruiters” are coordinating closely with the “acceptors”. Furthermore, the “recruiters” may be organized under the direction of the “acceptors” to a certain extent. Although these “supply side” countries should concentrate their efforts to prevent “recruiters” from carrying out their activities, this effort may increase the possibility of attacks in these countries, at least in the short term. Attacks in Paris and Brussels may be considered as a result of this. In accordance with this point of view, the possibility of a large scale attack by the Islamic State in, for example, Japan, is not high. Even though there was a case of a Japanese infiltrator detained in Turkey in the end of March 2016, this seems to be an exception and there are only mi-

nor resource mobilization activities for the Islamic State in Japan.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, in addition to keeping guard on the ground, checking for the possible activities or the presence of “recruiters” is important for countries like Japan to avoid such an attack.

The second group of countries is the “transit route” countries, such as Turkey. The “coordinators” here are assumed to use smuggling routes or pasture fields to assist the journeys of the “infiltrators,” in exchange for economic incentives. In addition to the activities of the “coordinators,” “accepters” may develop their organizational base in this category of countries. Countries in this category are assumed to have difficulties in controlling their border areas, or seem to have specific circumstances including social, economic, political, or tribal divisions. At least some of latest attacks in Turkey reflect its nature as a “transit route” used by thousands of *Muhajirun* going to the Islamic State.

The third group consists of the “demand side” countries, such as Iraq, Syria, and possibly Libya, where the “accepters” and “temporary accepters” are active. In these countries, there are power vacuums, which allow the “accepters” or the “temporary accepters” to act freely to a certain extent. Since the “accepters” have their own circumstances, they prefer to absorb trustworthy, trained, skilled fighters or professionals and even their wives. Moreover, the “accepters” are in need of various economic and military resources, and these actors are necessary to develop infrastructure to train or screen *Muhajirun*. Furthermore, these countries will possibly export trained and experienced fighters abroad as returnees in the future.

By looking at this picture one can conclude that counter measures should differ in accordance to these categories. In “supply side” countries, it is necessary to check “recruiters” and their network as the top priority, because this network may turn

into a base from which major attacks can be launched. EU countries have already expressed their concern about possible threats that emanate from returnees of Islamic extremist organizations. Nevertheless, these countries should remember that when there are returnees, they can be a source of recruitment themselves. In this context, it is worth emphasizing that the conventional tendency is to recruit fighters through kinship, local community ties or by relationship to Jihadi colleagues. When these Islamic extremists form an organization they tend to include several members from same family. The militant composition in the latest attacks in Paris and Brussels support this argument. This experience must to be a lesson for “supply side” countries.

For “transit route” countries, taking measures against the “coordinators” is the most important step. In addition to border control and police measures, a kind of political, economic, and social conciliation for tribes or rural dwellers might be required as well. Although imposing visa restrictions is considered as the most effective measure for a country to avoid being a “transit route” for *Muhajirun*, this measure may sometimes contradict with goals of economic development, as it might discourage foreign investors or tourists. Therefore, conciliation seems to be the most preferable measure against would be “coordinators”. Moreover, conciliation with the “coordinators” may also prompt disputes between them and other actors taking part in the resource mobilization mechanism. “Coordinators” who do not always share similar religious ideologies with other actors is an important vulnerability for resource mobilization of the Islamic State.

As for the “demand side” countries, enacting countermeasure policies against facilities and infrastructures used to receive *Muhajirun* is necessary. Within these measures, the option of utilizing various military means should be open as well.

In addition to policies aiming to dissolve functions and facilities of the “acceptors”, determined efforts to find rational and sustainable solutions for the conflicts in Iraq and Syria should be pursued. It is the incessant political disputes that have justified the existence of Islamic extremists in the first place. In addition, harmful discourse and analysis have provided convenient excuses for the Islamic extremists, especially the Islamic State, to mobilize resources around the world. Hence a combination of military measures to destroy the infrastructures of the “acceptors” on the one hand, and the introducing of political initiatives to deprive justifications for Islamic extremists on the other, should be considered as a single integrated measure in “demand side” countries.

Finally, obstructing the effectiveness of the “disseminators” is a very important challenge for all countries in their countering efforts against the Islamic State. Although the “disseminators” do not necessarily have personal or organizational ties with other actors in the resource mobilization mechanism, they significantly contribute to the effectiveness of the propaganda and messages of the Islamic State on SNS. Regarding this characteristic of the “disseminators”, they thus prefer to locate in those places that guarantee freedom of speech as well as full access to the Internet. In other words, some Western countries have become a hot bed for the “disseminators”. Consequently, close monitoring and

elaborate counter measures against the “disseminators” in industrialized countries and their allies is seriously required. However, keeping the balance between the need to restrain the “disseminators” and defending civil rights and freedom is a very complicated issue. As the restriction of civil rights is closely related to the rise of terrorism or extremism, over-restrictions of these rights and freedoms harbors the danger of facilitating the further growth of Islamic extremism.

While, the Islamic State ostensibly denies all un-Islamic value systems in the world, it does not hesitate to mobilize essential resources for its activities from these infidel systems. At the same time it also exploits perceived “un-Islamic” civil rights and freedom in Western societies. The key point of carrying out counter measures against the Islamic State may be hidden in this contradiction. Therefore, understanding its mechanism of resource mobilization in general and recruitment in particular is necessary for developing an effective fusion of military and civil counter measures against the Islamic State’s activities.

Finally, it should be emphasized that revealing the complex structures of Islamic extremist organizations is essential to take any countermeasure, and observations on the mechanism for resource mobilization are an important step in that direction.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 A modified version of this article was published previously in *PERCEPTIONS: Journal of International Affairs*, Spring 2016 issue: Takaoka, Yutaka. "Analysis of the Resource Mobilization Mechanism of the Islamic State." *Perceptions* 21, no. 1 (2016): 11. It is printed here with permission from Center For Strategic Research (SAM).
- 2 (Barrett, Richard, *Foreign Fighters in Syria*, New York, The Soufan Group, 2014, p.33.) and (The Soufan Group, *Foreign Fighters An updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq*, New York, The Soufan Group, 2015, p25.).
- 3 On the fundraising, (Di Giovanni, Janine and Leah Mcgrath Goodman and Damien Sharikov, "How does ISIS Fund Its Reign of Terror?", *Newsweek*, 6 November 2014.) and (Dickinson, Elizabeth, *Playing with Fire: Why Private Gulf Financing for Syria's Extremist Rebels Risks Igniting Sectarian Conflict at Home* Washington, The SABAN Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, 2013.), (The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), *Financing of the Terrorist Organisation Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)* Paris, The Financial Action Task Force, 2015.), (Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed and Aaron Y. Zalin, *Uncharitable Organizations*, *Foreign Policy*, 26 February 2013.), (Solomon, Erika and Guy Chazan and Sam Joe, "ISIS Inc: how oil fuels the jihadi terrorists", *Financial Times*, 14 October 2015.), (Weinberg, David Andrew, *Qatar and Terror Finance Part I: Negligence*, Washington, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, 2014.) analyze sources of revenue for the Islamic State such as oil, smuggling and donations from Gulf States, and even "taxation". On the aspect of armament, Conflict Armament Research, *Islamic State Ammunition in Iraq and Syria*, London, Conflict Armament Research (2014) conducted field research and provided very important analysis.
- 4 Major literatures which shed light on the motivation and social statuses of recruited members are (Barrett *ibid.* 2014.), (Carter, Joseph A., Shiraz Maher and Peter R. Neumann, *Measuring Importance and influence in Syrian Foreign Fighter Network*, London, The International Centre for The Study of Radicalization and Political Violence, 2014.), (Obe, Briggs Rachel and Tanya Silverman, *Western Foreign Fighters Innovations in Responding to the Threat*, London, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2015). Neumann summarized members' diverse motivations into three: the Syrian conflict; faith and ideology; and personal and material needs. Nevertheless, he also pointed out that narratives of recruitment by the Islamic State are complex and multifaceted (Neumann, Peter R, *Victims, Perpetrators, Assets: The Narratives of Islamic State Defectors*, London, The International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence, 2015, p.9). Dodwell provides important considerations on social statuses (education levels, job history, experiences of Jihad...etc.) of foreign fighters in the Islamic State, examining leaked personal files of foreign fighters, and pointing out this diversity (Dodwell, Brian and Daniel Milton and Don Rassel, *The Caliphate's Global Workforce: An Inside Look at the Islamic State's Foreign Fighter Paper Trail*, New York, Combating Terrorism Center, 2016.).
- 5 There is no clear definition of the sorts of individuals and groups that the term 'Islamic extremists' refers to, and there are cases where different names, such as 'Islamic radicals', are used to describe the same phenomenon. In this paper, the discussion is advanced by provisionally defining the following individuals and groups as Islamic extremists: (1) those who, in addition to analyzing the current situation and considering problem-solving based upon Islamic logic and its logical claims, justify their own actions by their own version of Islam; (2) those who have a negative attitude toward existing states, country borders, and political systems (such as monarchies and republics); and (3) those who have adopted terrorism as a political style of action and try to achieve their objectives through activities that are illegal within the framework of existing nations and institutions.
- 6 (Hegghammer "The Recruiter's Dilemma: Signaling and Rebel Recruitment Tactics", *Journal of Peace Research*, 50(3), 2013, pp.3-16.)
- 7 (Obaid, Nawaf and Anthony Cordesman, *Saudi Militants in Iraq: Assessment and Kingdom's Response*, Washington DC, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2005.) and (Felter, Joseph and Brian Fishman, *Al-Qa'ida's Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records*, New York, Combating Terrorism Centre, US Military Academy, 2007) are typical examples of this literature.

- 8 Although credibility is not confirmed, the articles below are examples of such information: Hādhihi Hiyā al-Ṭariq ilā al-‘Irāq <http://www.hkmah.net/showthread.php?t=8953>, (“This is the way to Iraq” in Arabic. Accessed 4 June, 2005); Ṭariq ilā Bilād al-Rāfidayn al-Jadid <http://alfirdaws.org/forums/showthread.php?t=2821> (“New way to land of two rivers” in Arabic. Accessed 11 September, 2005).
- 9 In this case the “acceptors” – the Islamic State in Iraq or al-Qaida in the land of Two Rivers—asked the “infiltrators” to declare the amount of money paid for the “coordinators”, and filed it as an organized document. The document suggested that there were no fixed or regular fees for coordination, and suggested the existence of a dispute about the amount of fee the “coordinators” should get (Felter and Fishman *ibid.* 2008 p.23–27).
- 10 Takaoka, Yutaka and Masaki Mizobuchi, “How does Muhajiroun Get to Go to Jihad? Foreign Fighters and the Geopolitics of the Conflict in Syria”, in Hinnebusch, Raymond and Omar Imady, eds., *The Syrian Uprising: roots and trajectories*, London, Routledge, 2016 (forthcoming).
- 11 UNSC: United Nations Security Council, Letter dated 19 May 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/2015/358, 15 May 2015, defined *Muhajirun* as follows: “Nationals who travel or attempt to travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality, and other individuals who travel or attempt to travel from their territories to a State other than their States of residence or nationality, for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts, or the providing or receiving of terrorist training.” (UNSC *ibid.* 2015 p.5-6.)
- 12 Supporters of the Islamic state have compiled several narratives of *Muhajirun* as E-Books, for example, *Hijrah (migration) to the Islamic State 2015*, <https://thejihadproject.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/hijrah-to-the-islamic-state.pdf#search=%27Hijrah+to+the+Islamic+State%27> (accessed 11, September, 2015). Although the narratives in this E-Book stress the “grace of Allah” or “the will of Allah” for successful journeys, it provides few details of infiltration processes.
- 13 Neumann *ibid.* 2015, p.10-11.
- 14 An article in the Arabic newspaper *al-Sharq al-Awsat* November 6, 2014 ‘Kaifa Yanndamm al-Shābb fi Miṣr ilā ‘Dā ‘ish?’ (How do Egyptian youth join into Da’ish?) reported some examples of this reality.
- 15 Personal data of 122 ISIS suicide bombers, *Zaman Al Wasl* <https://en.zamanalwsl.net/news/14563.html> (accessed April 15, 2016), showed leaked forms with the personal data of fighters. In addition to name, date of birth and citizenship...etc. the form contains fields of ‘recommendation and recommender.’
- 16 Takaoka, and Mizobuchi. *Ibid.* 2016 (forthcoming).
- 17 (General Intelligence and Security Service Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations *ibid.* 2016, p. 5-13.)
- 18 (General Intelligence and Security Service Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations *ibid.* 2016, p.14.)
- 19 The Soufan Group estimated that there were only nine Japanese infiltrators into the Islamic State between 2011 and 2015. This fact strongly indicates that there are weak recruitment activities, thus there is only a minor organizational base of the Islamic State in Japan (The Soufan Group *ibid.* 2015, p.8.).



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#### **Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and Turkey<sup>1</sup>**

As the conflicts in Syria and Iraq have been continuing for more than four years, the role of Turkey as a potential transit route for the movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) has been a subject of intensive debate. Although the issue of FTF travels encompasses many dimensions, the lack of sufficient data on the FTF phenomenon complicates our understanding of that complex problem. Simply put, we lack reliable and accountable resources to analyze this phenomenon. With these caveats, this policy brief analyses the efforts of Turkey to prevent FTF travels based on available data.

This review firstly outlines the current standing of the FTF phenomenon in international arena, with reference to the United Nations Security Council's report, released in summer 2015. Secondly, the issue of FTFs from Turkish perspective and the position of Turkey on this challenge will be examined. Within this framework, three subjects will be analyzed: The position of Turkey in the international efforts against FTFs, the developments regarding international cooperation to limit FTF travels to Turkey and the efforts of Turkey to bolster its border security to prevent FTF travels through Turkey. Lastly, the review will analyze what Turkey and the international community have done to address FTF travels through Turkey so far. This assessment will highlight what needs to be done in the future toward the solution of this problem.

#### **1. The Current Status of Foreign Travel Fighters Phenomenon in the International Arena and their travels**

Essentially, there are three institutional fora for international efforts against FTFs and, by implication, against ISIS: Anti-ISIS Coalition, the Global Counter Ter-

rorism Forum (GCTF) and the United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee (UN CTC). Anti-ISIS Coalition takes hard power measures against ISIS. GCTF creates a platform to decide principles against the threat, as well as paving the way for international cooperation. And, the UN CTC aims to establish internationally harmonized national regulations. It needs to be noted that the conceptualization process of the FTF phenomenon is an on-going process, and the international community seeks to understand the phenomenon to tackle it. Therefore, the efforts of GCTF and UN CTC encompass some theoretical attempts, such as defining and regulating international travel standards, etc.

Theoretically, although the efforts of GCTF and UN CTC may overlap, these two organisations act in different ways. GCTF does not act as an international organisation and that allows eliminating the red tape to some extent, for one. Moreover, the UN CTC has been acting beyond a typical international organisation. GCTF and UN CTC currently form the skeleton of the international efforts.

Admittedly, ISIS has the initiative and it can easily abuse the liberal international systems, especially the travel regulations. In other words, the international efforts are only responsive to the actions of terrorist organisations, and these organisations have the upper hand in setting the terms of the debate. The effectiveness of the international efforts is another question and so far, they have not proven capable of controlling this challenge.

Currently, we have only a few reports published by the United Nations,<sup>2</sup> in addition to some academic assessments of the subject. Surely, the real time media releases including social media sources give us some

hints to conceptualize this phenomenon. In September 2014, The United Nations Security Council adopted the Resolution 2178, which defined foreign fighters, under specific circumstances, as terrorists and provided a road map for its members to deal with the phenomenon. Essentially, the UNSCR 2178 is the cornerstone to deal with the problem and has created a capacity for leading the international co-operation to become more effective. Before the resolution, the international co-operation as well as national mechanisms did not have a reference point to deal with the problem. The UNSCR 2178 has since then paved the way for the global response to the FTF challenge. Previously, even, the lack of a definition for FTFs itself was an obstacle for efforts to address this problem. We now have tangible criteria and a roadmap at the national and international levels for tackling FTFs, which used to be a huge gap for international coordination, cooperation, or even collaboration.

The UN CTC Executive Directorate released a report entitled “*Implementation of Security Council 2178 (2014) by States affected by foreign terrorist fighters*” on 14 May 2015.<sup>3</sup> The report underlines that the FTFs are a growing threat against their states of origin, the states they transit and the states where they are active, as well as their neighbouring zones. In particular, in the long-term, FTFs pose a risk for their home countries or third countries, where they decide to reside in, as they become returnees, named as “alumni” in the report. UN CTC identifies 67 most affected member states and mentions the presence of up to 30.000 FTFs in the region. Previously, we had some reports, which relied on limited sources, such as interviews, Social Network Analyses, estimations or gatherings through media. With this UN report, we, for the first time, have a report relying on extensive data based on the accumulation of member states’ official approvals. At this point, it needs to be

pointed out that previous analyses and the UN CTC report are in accordance with each other and the direction of the international community is on the right path to conceptualize this phenomenon.

Essentially, the UN CTC report identifies five urgent measures that need to be taken by member states.

1. Preventing inter-state travel of FTFs.
2. Law enforcement.
3. Countering incitement to terrorism, including through the Internet.
4. Criminalization.
5. Financing of Foreign Terrorist Fighters.

These five points pass “what needs to be done” instructions on the international community to prevent FTF travels. Therefore, we can use these five points to not only assess the current status of FTF travels but also to create a road map to prevent FTF travels.

In a nutshell, the UN CTC states that the world had been caught unprepared to prevent FTF travels. Moreover, effective international cooperation is urgently needed to overcome it. Essentially, the globalization has been encouraging individuals to travel around the world. The global system, which reflected this understanding, lacks effective instruments to prevent mobility of individuals. Hence, that principle let the FTFs travel around the world easily. Now, it is high time to think about regulating the individual mobility, with an aim to drain FTFs without mitigating the freedom of travel. Admittedly, it is a big challenge and needs significant mechanisms, such as real time international cooperation, bolstering border security or an automated Advanced Passenger Information/Passenger Name Record (API/PNR) systems.

## 2. Turkey and the Challenges of Foreign Terrorist Fighters

As I argued elsewhere, Turkey is highly vulnerable to the threats posed by FTFs fighting for terrorist organisations such as ISIS and other groups in Syria and Iraq.<sup>4</sup> In many ways, Turkey's challenges are bigger than other countries participating in the international coalition against ISIS. Most states are concerned about "alumni" FTFs, whereas Turkey's concerns encompass not only returnees but also their travels and the possibility of their residence in Turkey as they decide to leave the conflict zone. Moreover, Turkey's proximity to the region as well as around two million refugees from the conflict zone increases the potential risks for the country.

Turkey is an active member of the international coalition against ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Institutionally, both at the national and international levels, Turkey has been fulfilling its responsibilities to fight against violent extremism and terrorism. The experience of Turkey in fighting against PKK terrorist organisation for more than 30 years makes it an active contributor to the efforts against terrorism around the world, such as Turkey's role in Afghanistan soon after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In fact, traditionally, Turkish citizens' participation in the militant Salafi movements, especially al-Qaida, was limited, especially considering the percentage, 98 per cent, of Muslim population in Turkish society. Turkey's Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*) has been an important mechanism to prevent extremism in the country. Nevertheless, 2,100 Turkish FTFs have joined terrorist organisations in Syria and Iraq, who are either alive, dead or alumni. It is an enormous increase of Turkish FTFs compared to former violent extremist movements, motivated by religious reasons. In other words, the current FTF wave has changed the tendency in Turkey so it has surely created a high-risk threat to Turkey.

Turkey has been performing a major humanitarian operation for refugees from Syria and Iraq. As a neighbouring country, Turkey has accepted almost two million refugees ever since the Syrian civil war began in 2011. Especially, Syrians escaping the regime's repression fled to Turkey even before terrorist activities of ISIS. Later, Syrian people fleeing from ISIS also took shelter in Turkey. In some crises, states are forced to choose whether to intervene with military means or perform humanitarian operations. If Turkey had chosen the military action in the Syrian crisis, it would have confronted serious legal and political obstacles, as well as military complications on the ground. Turkey opted for humanitarian operation and opened its borders to Syrian citizens.

The other dilemma of Turkey began after ISIS threat to the Syrian and Iraqi people became more visible. Involving in a military operation, in other words opening a ground front against ISIS, was out of question because of difficulty of performing military and humanitarian operations simultaneously. Almost two million refugees increased vulnerabilities of Turkey for several reasons, not to mention potential infiltration of terrorist organisations. According to official statements, Turkey spent over USD 7 billion for the refugee operations. Admittedly, the scale of the operation is no less than a military one. In essence, with its humanitarian operation, Turkey focused on saving 2 million people fleeing from Assad regime and ISIS. The alternative would have been fighting against Assad regime and ISIS. The public opinion of Turkey should also be taken into account, especially the Turkish society's sensitivity toward military casualties. The loss of almost 30,000 people in 30 years, caused by PKK terrorism, still shapes public's perceptions. It is safe to assume that, the public would not tolerate more deaths caused by terrorism, including by ISIS terrorism. The Turkish public would not support ground operations against ISIS. In contrast, the Turkish pub-

lic, interestingly, has not reacted openly against the USD 7 billion, spent for Syrian refugees, or in other words humanitarian operation.

The FTFs are a growing threat against their states of origin, the states they transit, and the states they are active in, as well as their neighbouring zones. Turkey falls under all these categories. While 159 individuals lost their lives in Turkey between March 2014 and March 2016 because of terror attacks executed mostly by returnee FTFs, the DAESH terror attacks in Europe and, in one case, the USA, were mostly executed by sympathizers in Europe and in the USA. This has meant that Turkey has been facing more fatal terror attacks compared to the West. I would argue it was because of Turkey's proximity to the conflict zone and one might expect the wave would spread to other regions.

Having analysed the attacks of ISIS against Turkey, it is safe to argue that the FTFs and their travels create a big threat to Turkey. Having stated the threat of ISIS to Turkey, now we can turn to the Turkish position against the FTF travel problem. As stated in the introduction, this review aims to explain the status of Turkey's efforts to prevent FTF travels to and from Turkey.

#### **a. The position of Turkey in the international efforts against FTFs**

As discussed earlier, the anti-ISIL coalition, GCTF and UN CTC are main pillars of the international efforts against ISIS, as well as FTFs. Turkey is a member of anti-ISIL coalition and the co-chair of GCTF. Moreover, it has actively been making contributions to these organisations. Turkey has also recently opened its air bases to anti-ISIL coalition and begun taking hard power measures against ISIS, in addition to the ongoing humanitarian operation sheltering almost two million refugees in the country. This improvement raises the vulnerabilities of Turkey and the possibil-

ity of terrorist engagement risk is at the top level, compared to any other member of the coalition.

Activities of Turkey in GCTF, as co-chair, have been remarkable and led to the establishment of some tangible mechanisms relying on international cooperation, such as no-entry list or programs for countering radicalism. At the same time, as a member of the United Nations, Turkey has been making contributions to UN CTC at state or society level. The report of UN CTC, released in May 2015, defined Turkey as one of the most-affected countries and released some data provided by the country.

#### **b. Developments in the efforts to counter FTF travels to Turkey**

Preventing FTFs' travel through Turkey is one of Turkey's priorities. There are two pillars of this policy: the no-entry list, based on information sharing obtained through international cooperation, either via bilateral channels or multilateral platforms; and Risk Analysis Units established at passport control points.

Turkey has regularly underlined the necessity of information sharing to establish a reliable no-entry list, the first pillar, to prevent the FTFs' entrance to Turkey. The UNSCR 2178 has paved the way to accelerate work toward improving the no-entry list, although it is far behind the critical level to achieve its objectives. Our previous brief has analysed some information, covering only the data available as of February 2015. The recent updates to the statistics since then allow us to elaborate the progress in international cooperation.

While the number of people on the no-entry list was 9,915 in January 2015, it has reached almost 19,000 people in March 2015, which enables us to conclude that the international cooperation has improved so far. Compared to the previous years, it could be safely argued that the



international community's awareness has been increasing. The acceleration of international cooperation is welcome, but the graph also explains failures of the past, which explains the estimated amount, up to 30,000, of the FTFs in the conflict zone. It needs to be stated, at this point, that every FTF travel to Turkey, in addition to other neighbouring countries, is a failure of international cooperation regarding information sharing. The increase in the amount of the persons on the no-entry list raises the possibility of success for preventing FTF travels.

As for the Risk Analysis Units, they had interviewed 1400 individuals and described 344 of them as inadmissible as of January 2015. In September 2015, these figures have reached 4156 and 1109, respectively. Therefore, the Risk Analysis Groups have been functioning to a great extent, and they are an effective mechanism and an innovative tool to address possible shortfalls of the no-entry list.

### **c. The standing of the measures to counter FTF travels from Turkey**

The other pillar of the FTF travels through Turkey is the *FTF travels from Turkey* to the conflict zone. Turkey's efforts to improve security on its borders to Syria and Iraq are necessary to analyse. The prevailing discourse on the issue is that the border is porous. In any serious analysis of this issue, however, several points need to be taken into account. Historically, the Syrian border of Turkey was a subject of illegal crossings and smuggling. Moreover, the superficial demarcation of border cut tribes and towns during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century while the Ottoman Empire was disintegrated. Hence, the divided families and tribes traditionally have been crossing borders, which have been hard to prevent and control because of its very nature.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the necessities of the humanitarian operation of Turkey, hosting almost 2 million refugees, result-

ed in Turkey not sealing its borders completely.

The Turkish Armed Forces, which is entrusted the responsibility to protect the land borders of Turkey by the law Number 3497, released detailed data, in July 2015, regarding their measures to increase control along the Syrian border of Turkey.<sup>6</sup> In fact, the data does not necessarily mean that illegal border crosses are prevented altogether. However, it helps us analyse the extent of Turkey's efforts to prevent FTF travels through the country. Turkish Land Forces has deployed its troops and utilized most of its Unmanned Aerial Systems / Unmanned Reconnaissance Planes along the Syrian border. In addition to them, as physical security measures, the Turkish Army constructed 363 km ditch, 90 km barbed wire, 68 km soil block, 7 km wall, illuminated 270 km of roads, and renewed 1210 km roads along the Syria border in 2015.

Higher number of border incidents suggests more individuals crossing borders. As Turkish authorities have been constructing ditches, barbed wires, soil blocks, lightings and road to forge the porous borders, the number of individuals who attempt to cross border illegally has been increasing. Consequently, there is an increase of caught individuals over years. As of July 2015, the total amount of caught individuals has reached 175,120 since 2011, which is equal to 10 per cent of refugees. Not all these people are FTFs, since many of them may be ordinary refugees, smugglers or others trying to cross borders. Nonetheless, these numbers tell us something about the FTF phenomenon. From optimistic perspective, every caught individual is meant just another brick to prevent potential FTF travels. From pessimistic perspective, it suggests more individuals, potentially some of them FTFs, attempt to cross border illegally. In other words, by and large, border crossings necessitate more efforts to prevent them.

## Conclusion

On the issue of FTF travels, Turkey is largely an end-user of this network and, surely, every failure at prevention of travels is yet another threat to Turkey's security. Turkey perceives high threat from the FTFs, violent extremists and terrorist organisations in Syria and Iraq. The FTFs are a growing threat against their states of origin, the states they transit and the states where they are active, as well as their neighbouring zones. Turkey falls under all these categories. As of Spring 2016, as a result of terrorist attacks by ISIS against Turkey, 159 people were killed

and more than 800 people were wounded. These casualties show the level of threat perception of Turkey.

It is obvious that the UNSCR 2178 defined FTFs of ISIS, al-Nusra and similar terrorist organizations as illegal and authorized all measures against them. However, there are other "foreign fighters" who go to the other organizations in Syria and Iraq to fight against ISIS, al-Nusra and other terrorist organizations.<sup>7</sup> Undoubtedly, these fighters create confusion for security agencies and they create another shortfall in the international system against FTF travels.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 This is an abridged version of the article published previously as [Yalçınkaya, Haldun, *ORSAM Review of Regional Affairs series*, «Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Turkey: An Assessment at the First Year of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178», No.31, October 2015].
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### Iran and Turkey Relations After the Nuclear Deal: A Case for Compartmentalization<sup>1</sup>

#### Abstract

Contrary to the expectations of many observers, Turkey adopted a 'cautious' stand with regard to the nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1, finalized in July 2015, which aimed at a political solution to the long-lasting controversy over Iran's nuclear program. Relations between Turkey and Iran worsened considerably soon after the nuclear deal, arguably for geopolitical reasons. While the two countries quickly reinstated their relations, as signified by high-level visits between Ankara and Tehran, they have not overcome their differences and geopolitical concerns. This article draws attention to the two simultaneously working but contrasting trends in Iran-Turkey relations; one working for conflict and competition and the other for cooperation and dialogue. In order to explain the seemingly rapid changes in relations between Ankara and Tehran through the simultaneous operation of these two contrasting trends, this study offers the concept of compartmentalization.

#### Key Words

Turkish-Iranian Relations, Nuclear Deal, Middle East, Erdoğan, Rouhani, Compartmentalization, Syrian Crisis, Sectarianism.

#### Introduction

Iran and Turkey are two neighboring countries that have experienced a complicated relationship for a long time. As underlined by Gökhan Çetinsaya, a well-known Turkish scholar on the history of Iranian-Turkish relations, a survey of the history of relations between Iran and Turkey displays two contrasting, but virtually simultaneous trends.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand,

there is a trend of cooperation and dialogue on certain political, economic and security issues. On the other hand, there is a trend of competition and conflict that may be derived from some geopolitical and ideological factors. Despite the profound differences and disagreements on many issues, the two countries have managed to maintain their relations at a certain level. Pragmatism, conflict and cooperation are inherent parts of this relationship. Hence, we cannot talk about an all-out friendship or hostility between Iran and Turkey.

The complicated nature of bilateral relations between the two countries has become very clear over the last decade. Ankara and Tehran achieved an unprecedented period of improvement in their economic and political relations between 2001-2011. But even then, Turkish-Iranian relations did not evolve into a strategic partnership because of fundamental differences between the two countries in their alliances, political strategies and regional perspectives.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, a number of regional developments, including the uprising in Syria and competition over Iraq, have stirred disagreement and tension between the two countries. Their differences on regional issues did not, however, cease the existence of cooperation and dialogue between Iran and Turkey on bilateral political and economic issues. Indeed, in order to promote their relations, Ankara and Tehran agreed to establish High-Level Cooperation Council and signed preferential trade agreement in January 2014.

Likewise, Turkey's relations with Iran after the nuclear deal (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA) have illustrated the complicated nature of their

relations. The aspect of competition and conflict prevailed over Ankara-Tehran relations for a while after the deal. Turkey was branded by some as the “lawyer” of the Iranian nuclear program because of its vocal support for Iran’s “peaceful nuclear program”, and its criticism of the sanctions imposed on that country.<sup>4</sup> It was estimated in many circles, therefore, that Turkey would welcome the deal between Iran and the P5+1, which achieved a diplomatic solution for the long time controversy over the Iranian nuclear program.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, Turkey was estimated to be one of the major winners of the deal both because of the removal of sanctions in the neighboring country and because of the resilient Turkish-Iranian friendship. Contrary to the expectation that Turkey would welcome the deal between Iran and the P5+1, statements by Turkish officials with regard to implications of the deal were extremely cautious. Though welcoming the deal, they asked Iran to revise its regional policies. Moreover, relations between Ankara and Tehran worsened soon after the nuclear deal, as shown in the last minute cancelation of Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif’s visit to Turkey in August 2015. After that, relations between Ankara and Tehran worsened still further because of continuous mutual accusations, mostly voiced by official and pro-government media in Iran and Turkey respectively. Against this background, the trend of cooperation and dialogue resurfaced with a visit paid by then Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu to Tehran on March 4, 2016. Soon after this visit, Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani went to Ankara and, together with his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, co-chaired the third meeting of the High Level Cooperation Council on April 16, 2016.

This article aims to analyze the interplay between the competing trends of conflict and cooperation between Iran and Turkey. It argues that the two neighbors have compartmentalized their relations particularly after 2002, which has allowed them

to keep their differences at a certain point, and to be able to improve bilateral relations. The compartmentalization of relations between Ankara and Tehran could be observed after the nuclear deal that helped Iran and Turkey to develop bilateral relations despite their differences on a number of regional issues.

### **Compartmentalization of Relations between Ankara and Tehran**

The competing trends have raised two different difficulties when trying to understand the complicated nature of Iran-Turkey relations. First, the competing trends lead to a perception of an apparent rise and fall of friendly or contentious relations between Ankara and Tehran. Then, a considerable part of the relevant literature attempts to explain one of the rising trends, either conflict or cooperation.<sup>6</sup> However, despite the perception of swift changes in relations between the two countries, neither the competition and conflict, nor the cooperation and dialogue decisively prevail over bilateral relations between the two countries. Turkey’s relations with post-deal Iran, first worsening and then improving in a short span of time, prove this conclusion. This situation raises the second question in addressing Turkey-Iran relations: how can we explain the existence of virtually simultaneous but contrasting trends in Iranian-Turkish relations? In other words, how can one explain Turkey’s cautious optimism to the deal that was ensued by a worsening of bilateral relations with Iran, and the later improvements in bilateral ties under the same ruling governments in a short period?

Most analysts were tempted to explain the complicated nature of bilateral relations as pragmatism. This view assumes that Iran-Turkey relations are centered on a historical rivalry that was accompanied by interwoven geopolitical and ideological considerations. However, given their

economic and political settings, the two countries found it pragmatic to enhance their bilateral political and economic relations.<sup>7</sup> Actually, this is a common tendency in the literature to explain improvements in Iranian-Turkish relations through pragmatism, and conflicts through geopolitical and ideological reasons. However, this perspective falls short of explaining the reasons for change between pragmatism and rivalry. It also underestimates the simultaneous operation of the two trends of conflict and cooperation.

In order to overcome these questions, this article offers the concept of “compartmentalization” to explain the complicated nature of bilateral relations between Iran and Turkey.<sup>8</sup> Actually, it is a foreign policy behavior that has been practiced by many governments to cope with complex interactions in contemporary world affairs.<sup>9</sup> When they cannot afford abandoning dividends of cooperation, the acting governments tend to compartmentalize their relations in order to differentiate sources of conflict and possible forms of cooperation. The compartmentalization of foreign policy issues may be built on common concerns, shared interests and issues of divergence. It does not mean elimination of disagreements and conflictual issues between the states; however, the acting governments are willing and careful to keep potentially adverse effects of their disagreements on overall relations at a minimum level. In other words, they do not allow their differences, the trend of conflict and competition, to spoil and dominate over spheres of cooperation.

The compartmentalization of relations between Iran and Turkey could be observed particularly after 2002, when Turkish President Ahmet N. Sezer paid an official visit to Tehran. This visit paved the ground for a “rationalization” of Iran-Turkey relations, that is, keeping their ideological differences aside and focusing on common interests and cooperation.<sup>10</sup> Subsequently, political, economic, and se-

curity relations between Ankara and Tehran improved considerably. The AK Party government that came to power in Turkey in November 2002 boosted this process. Once regarded as a threat among the Turkish elites, Iran came to be viewed as a partner in Ankara on regional security issues and fighting against PKK terrorism.<sup>11</sup> The volume of bilateral trade between the two countries increased from its level of 1.2 billion USD in 2001 to 15 billion USD in 2011,<sup>12</sup> and 2009 was designated “Turkey-Iran Culture Year.” Meanwhile, Turkey lent support to Iran’s peaceful nuclear activities.

However, the rationalization and compartmentalization of relations between Iran and Turkey did not evolve into a “strategic partnership.” A number of factors limited further progress in Iran-Turkey relations. In other words, the trend of competition and conflict continued to affect relations between the two countries.<sup>13</sup> First of all, fundamental political differences between Iran and Turkey shaped their foreign policy orientations towards contradictory ways. Despite moderation in its internal and external policies, still “revolutionary” Iran has a particular vision on international relations and perspectives on regional issues that differ from those of liberal and Western-oriented Turkey. As an extension of their different worldviews, Iran and Turkey have developed strategic relations and alliances confronting each other. Additionally, the rationalized and compartmentalized relations between Ankara and Tehran have been challenged by the regional implications of the Arab Spring.<sup>14</sup> The two countries’ regional policies greatly diverged particularly over the crisis in Syria, where Turkey staunchly supported the opposition that fights against the Assad administration, who has been resolutely backed by Iran.

Despite their divergence on regional issues and disagreements on the Syrian issue, Ankara and Tehran maintained good relations on a bilateral level.<sup>15</sup> Mutual

high-level visits at the level of prime minister and president continued. Moreover, the two countries signed a Preferential Trade Agreement and established a High-level Cooperation Council in 2014. Thus, the two neighbors managed to keep the effects of their regional differences contained and they improved their bilateral relations.

### Turkey and Iran's Nuclear Program

Iranian nuclear program turned into a controversial issue between Iran and the West after the revelation of undeclared nuclear facilities in Natanz and Arak in August 2002. Accordingly, Iran was building a uranium enrichment facility and a heavy-water reactor, which arguably accelerated the weaponization of Iran's nuclear program. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also raised some concerns about the Iranian government's failure to conform to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regulations and the existence of undeclared nuclear material in Iran. Some officials and security elite in Turkey, including the Chief of the General Staff, voiced their concerns with the nuclear program of Iran, describing it as a threat to regional security and to Turkey's national interests. However, the ruling AK Party government, which was keen on improving economic relations with Iran, remained almost indifferent to the issue and adopted a wait-and-see policy. Additionally, Turkey acknowledged Iran's right to have peaceful nuclear technology, provided that it was operated under international agreements and the NPT, and advocated a diplomatic solution to the issue.<sup>16</sup>

The initial attempts by the EU-3 (Britain, France and Germany) to find a peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue had failed by mid-2005, when hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became the new president of Iran. At that point, the Iranian nuclear file was transferred by the IAEA to the UN Security Council. Conse-

quently, Turkey was forced by its Western allies to clarify its position with regard to the nuclear issue. US officials in particular asked for precise Turkish cooperation against Iran's nuclear program. The ensuing conflict and the rise of the tension between Iran and the United States further disturbed Turkey. The Turkish government was anxious about a possible American military operation to destroy Iranian nuclear facilities, or heavy sanctions aimed at isolating Iran, which, they feared, would worsen regional instability. On the other hand, Turkey wished to preserve good neighborly relations with Iran, which is a promising worthwhile market for Turkish goods and provides for a remarkable proportion of Turkish demand for oil and natural gas.

Consequently Turkey abandoned its passive policy and decided to play the role of facilitator in order to achieve a political solution to the nuclear controversy. A diplomatic solution for the issue would relieve Turkey from the difficult task of balancing between its close allies and its warm relations with its neighbor, and would prevent the potential adverse effects of a growing confrontation between Iran and the West. In this regard, Turkey hosted a meeting between Javier Solana, then High Commissioner of the EU in charge of negotiations with Iran, and Ali Laricani, then chief negotiator of Iran, in Ankara in April 2007. Having repeated the recognition of Iranian nuclear rights, Turkish officials asked their Iranian counterparts to play an affirmative role during the negotiations and to increase Iran's cooperation with the IAEA in order to allay various Western concerns. However, several rounds of negotiations remained inconclusive and the UN Security Council took a number of resolutions [Resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008)], which asked Iran to halt its uranium enrichment program, to have complete cooperation with the IAEA, and envisaged limited sanctions against Iran for its nuclear and missile programs.

After the failure of negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 (the permanent five states sitting in the UN Security Council plus Germany, which replaced the EU-3 to negotiate with Iran in June 2006, also called EU3+3),<sup>17</sup> Turkey took a further step and attempted to mediate officially between the parties, in order to prevent the rise of tensions and to solve the conflict through diplomatic channels. In a visit to Washington D.C. in November 2008, then Prime Minister Erdoğan stated that Turkey, relying on its previous experiences, could officially mediate between the United States and Iran.<sup>18</sup> Although Hillary Clinton, then Secretary of State of the United States, welcomed the Turkish bid for the mediation, Iran publicly rejected it, with President Ahmadinejad stating that there was no need for Turkey's mediation.<sup>19</sup> Despite the rejection of its mediation attempt, the Turkish government adopted an apparently pro-Iranian stand. Prime Minister Erdoğan admonished the West on several occasions of being hypocritical by having nuclear weapons themselves and remaining silent towards some other nuclear countries that are not a party to the NPT, and stated that no one has the right to threaten Iran for its peaceful nuclear program.<sup>20</sup> It was statements like these that had some pundits criticizing Erdoğan of playing the "lawyer" of Iran role.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, Turkey actually became a mediator following the failure of negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 on a proposition to provide the Tehran Research Reactor with uranium fuel in return for Iran shipping its enriched uranium stockpile abroad. Then, Mohamad El-Baradei, Director of the IAEA at the time, put forward the idea of placing Iran's low-enriched uranium in the custody of neighboring Turkey, until the Vienna group – Britain, United States and France – could supply Iran with uranium fuel. The idea was immediately accepted by Turkey and backed by the United States and Russia. Iran, however, was cautious towards Bara-

dei's suggestion and announced that it would not ship its low-enriched uranium outside the country. Nevertheless, Turkey continued to press Iran to make a compromise to accept the uranium swap agreement, and continuously talked to officials of the United States, the EU countries, and the IAEA.<sup>22</sup> In April 2010, upon the request of President Obama, Brazil also got involved in Turkey's mediation efforts. Finally, Brazil and Turkey persuaded Iran to sign the Tehran Declaration in May 2010 as a framework for the swap deal between the Vienna group and Iran. However, the Vienna group found the declaration inadequate and rejected it, which ensued a new round of UN Security Council resolution (RES 1929) against Iran. Turkey, then occupying one of the temporary seats on the UN Security Council, voted against Resolution 1929, which imposed heavy sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program.

Having been disappointed by both the rejection of the Tehran Declaration and the adoption of new sanctions against Iran, Turkey publicly criticized the West. Foreign Minister Davutoğlu stated that the rejection of the declaration that accomplished nearly everything demanded by Western officials meant that the West wished to keep its monopoly over nuclear technology.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, Turkey blamed the Western countries for acting hypocritical because they did not recognize Iran's peaceful nuclear rights, while at the same time they ignored Israel's undeclared nuclear weapons. Moreover, Turkey became critical of the sanctions that were arguably drafted by a few countries and forced on the remaining members of the UN to adopt them. Turkey also criticized the sanctions themselves, arguing that they would be inconclusive, but would result in further radicalization of an isolated Iran. Although it followed suit in adopting the sanctions designated by the UN Security Council, the Turkish government publicly challenged and criticized the unilateral US and EU sanctions on Iran.



Turkey's active mediation attempts ceased after the rejection of the Tehran declaration and it returned to the role of facilitator. In order to facilitate a diplomatic solution, Turkey willingly hosted a new round of negotiations in Istanbul, on January 21-22, 2011, between Catherine Ashton, then High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and representing the P5+1, and Said Jalili, then chief nuclear negotiator for Iran.<sup>24</sup> The parties met again in Istanbul in April 2012. However, because of simmering tensions between Ankara and Tehran as a result of their differences on regional policies, particularly with regard to Syria, the venue for the later negotiations was changed.<sup>25</sup> Still, Turkey hosted low-level talks between the P5+1 and Iran in Istanbul in July 2012.

Hassan Rouhani was inaugurated as the new president of Iran in August 2013, and promised to reach a diplomatic solution over the nuclear controversy. Turkish President Abdullah Gül met his Iranian counterpart in New York, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, in September 2013. Then Foreign Minister Davutoğlu also met with Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif. Turkey asked Iran to assume a constructive role to reach a solution in Syria and declared its readiness to facilitate negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran, which were expected to restart within a short time.<sup>26</sup> The talks between the P5+1 and Iran started in November 2013 in Geneva, alongside secret talks between Iran and the United States. But this time, Turkey did not play a considerable role in the negotiation process other than encouraging the parties to reach a peaceful solution.

Despite the high-level visits between Ankara and Tehran, the nuclear issue lost its prominent place in Turkey-Iran relations. However, both Turkish and Iranian officials declared their happiness with the initial achievements in the talks on Iran's nuclear program and their joint opposition to the existence of WMDs in the

region. Iranian officials also thanked Turkey for its support for the Iranian nuclear program, and its efforts to find a political solution and the removal of sanctions against Iran.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Zarif stated that Turkey provided a good model for neighborly relations between Iran and the surrounding countries.<sup>28</sup>

### **Turkish Reactions to the Deal: “Cautious Optimism”**

After twenty-months of negotiations, Iran agreed with the P5+1 on JCPOA in Vienna on July 14, 2014. Thus, the long-standing controversy between Iran and the West was resolved through diplomatic channels. Accordingly, Iran agreed to limit its enrichment activities and open all nuclear facilities to verification of the IAEA under the Additional Protocol, in return for removal of all sanctions related to the Iranian nuclear program.<sup>29</sup>

The deal between Iran and the West stirred widespread interest around the world. However, Turkish public opinion and the elite were divided in their view of the potential effects of the deal on Turkey. A great part of the elite were concerned with the implications of the deal on Turkey-Iran relations and regional affairs, anxious that the deal would give Iran a free hand in regional politics, which would make it more powerful and aggressive.<sup>30</sup> The removal of sanctions and the transfer of frozen Iranian assets estimated at around 100 billion USD might embolden Iran to pursue an aggressive agenda in the Middle East. Additionally, they were concerned with the idea of a 'grand bargain' between Iran and the United States, and fears that growing cooperation between Iran and the United States in the region could eventually work against Turkey's interests.<sup>31</sup> In addition to the bombastic statements of some Iranian politicians claiming the rise of Iranian power in the region to “control four Arab capitals”<sup>32</sup>, the spread of views arguing that the United States decided to

side with “Shiite Iran” in regional politics contributed to a negative presentation in Turkey of the deal.<sup>33</sup> Given the highly polarized situation in the Middle East, an ‘implicit alignment’ between the two former enemies would upset the regional balances not only against Saudi Arabia and Israel, but also against Turkey.<sup>34</sup>

A considerable number of Turkish elites were, however, optimistic with regard to the outcomes of the nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1.<sup>35</sup> First of all, the deal would decrease the tension over the nuclear program and relieve Turkey of having to balance its relations with Iran and the West. Moreover, the deal would end – at least temporarily – potential risks for Turkish security deriving from a nuclear Iran.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, Iran’s political and economic reintegration into the international system with the removal of sanctions would improve overall security and economic conditions around the region. Finally, the removal of the sanctions as part of the deal would help to boost Turkey-Iran trade relations. Iran has been a promising market for Turkish exports. Rıza Eser, Chair of the Turkish-Iranian Business Council, estimated that Turkish exports to Iran could reach 8-10 billion USD from its current level of 4 billion USD.<sup>37</sup> Iran was also regarded by some parts of the Turkish elite as a viable source of oil and gas. Furthermore, considering the fact that Turkey has been trying to be an energy hub in the region, the improvement of relations between Iran and the West would facilitate Iranian participation in transnational gas pipelines. Finally, if the current process should result in Iranian membership in the WTO, then commercial standards would be set up, and tariffs would be decreased, which would boost Turkey-Iran economic relations.

The Turkish government’s approach to the deal was indecisive, and was dubbed by some analysts as “cautious optimism.”<sup>38</sup> For instance, the then Finance Minister Mehmet Şimşek shared his views imme-

diately via Twitter, where he wrote, “the Iran nuclear deal is great news for the Turkish economy and will boost bilateral trade and investments.”<sup>39</sup> Likewise, Taner Yıldız, then Energy Minister, also welcomed the deal, anticipating that it would help energy relations between Turkey and Iran.<sup>40</sup> In the same vein, Nihat Zeybekçi, then Minister of Economy, called Iran “a country for opportunities.”<sup>41</sup> According to these figures, the removal of sanctions would be important for the flow of foreign investments into Iran, as well as for the price of oil. Prime Minister Davutoğlu expressed his pleasure with the deal and called the removal of sanctions a positive development. Reminding people of the similarities between the recent deal and the Tehran declaration that had been mediated by Turkey and Brazil, he added, “I wish this agreement had been reached earlier.”<sup>42</sup> President Erdoğan congratulated his Iranian counterpart on a phone call. The uncertain effects of the deal on Iran’s regional policies, however, fueled Turkey’s concerns. The official statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs congratulated the parties for achieving a diplomatic solution, and underlined that “full implementation of the deal is vital for regional security, stability, and peace.” Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Foreign Minister, stated that he welcomed the deal, but asked Iran to “review its role particularly in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen” and asked to “give up sectarian-driven policies.”<sup>43</sup>

In fact, Turkey was accusing Iran for some time of seeking domination in the region, destabilizing regional countries, and pursuing a sectarian agenda. On one occasion, President Erdoğan, just before his visit to Tehran in April 2015, blamed Iran for “seeking hegemony” in the region and asked Iran to withdraw its forces and advisors from Syria, Iraq and Yemen. He asked Iran to respect the territorial integrity of those countries.<sup>44</sup> Various Turkish officials have also raised similar concerns with regard to Iran’s regional policies on different accounts.



On the occasion of the deal's 'implementation day' in January 2016, welcoming the removal of sanctions imposed on Iran, Prime Minister Davutoğlu asked Iran for "constructive contribution" on regional politics. He expressed hope that the development paved the way for "a perspective for joint efforts aimed at ending destruction and violence in the region."<sup>45</sup> The Turkish call for Iran to "help reestablish security and stability in the region" was repeated in a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which added that Iran should act "responsibly in a manner that does not encourage disintegration."<sup>46</sup> While addressing Turkish ambassadors currently serving in different countries, in January 2016, President Erdoğan reiterated his criticisms of Iranian foreign policy towards the region. He stated that Iran has been "using conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen in order to expand its sphere of influence in the region," and blamed Iran for "turning sectarian divisions into conflicts by lighting the fuse of a new and dangerous course."<sup>47</sup>

### **The Competing Trends in Iran-Turkey Relations after the Deal: A Showcase of Compartmentalization**

Surprisingly, relations between Iran and Turkey worsened in the aftermath of the deal. In other words, the trend of conflict and competition dominated Ankara-Tehran relations—at least for a while. Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif cancelled his planned visit to Ankara in August 2015 at the last minute. He stated that the visit was cancelled because there wasn't enough time to meet Turkish officials--President Erdoğan being in İstanbul while Prime Minister Davutoğlu and Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu were in Ankara. However, it was reported that President Erdoğan has not accepted to receive Zarif in reaction to some inappropriate news about his family that had appeared in official Iranian media.<sup>48</sup> This political tension coincided with the rise of terror attacks perpetrated

by the PKK. Some analysts claimed that it was not surprising that terror events in Turkey escalated after the nuclear-deal and pointed out increasing Iranian support for the PKK.<sup>49</sup> This was followed by mutual accusations between the high-level officials in Ankara and Tehran and severe critiques of each other in official or pro-government media.<sup>50</sup>

The sudden and unexpected deterioration in Turkey-Iran relations can be mostly attributed to and explained by the resurfacing of an historical rivalry between the two countries, which was accelerated by the rise of Iran's regional power.<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, the two countries are destined to compete with each other either on religious/ideological or geopolitical grounds. Indeed, the nuclear deal has contributed to Iran's regional status in two ways. First, it has ended the international campaign to isolate Iran from regional and international affairs. Moreover, Iran has started to be seen as a partner in the solution of regional issues such as the Syrian crisis and the fight against violent extremism represented by ISIS. For example, Iran became a member of the International Syria Support Group, a number of countries brought together by Russia and the United States. Second, with the removal of sanctions, Iran has become able to reach its frozen assets outside the country, which have been estimated to be tens of billions of dollars, adding the prospect of a flourishing Iranian economy.

Yet, one can hardly conceive that the decline in Turkish-Iranian relations stemmed from the rise of Iranian regional power. First of all, the deal did solve a lasting issue, but did not suddenly change regional settings. If the Iranian economy really booms, Turkey is most likely to benefit from such a development. As for treating Iran as a partner in the solution of regional issues, it has been a long-time call of Turkey. Then, how can we explain the cautious optimism on the Turkish side

towards the deal and the worsening relations between Ankara and Tehran?

Above all else, contrary to Turkey's expectations, Iran did not revise its regional policies. In other words, Iranian policy of so-called 'constructive interaction' was not reflected in the Middle East. Whatever the reasons for the failure of a policy change on the Iranian side, Tehran increased its strategic cooperation with Russia. After the cancellation of his visit to Ankara, Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif went to Beirut, Damascus and Moscow. The strategic partnership between Iran and Russia covering economic and military cooperation was consolidated by Putin's visit to Tehran in November 2015. Russian involvement in the Syrian crisis in September 2015, and the Russian-Iranian cooperation to support the Assad administration, turned balances on the ground against the allies of Turkey, which was followed by a rise in hostilities between Turkey and Russia. Thus, Turkey became very anxious with growing Russian and Iranian cooperation in Syria. In the meantime, Turkey fostered its relations with Saudi Arabia, to the dismay of Tehran. Given the polarization of the region over the last decade across the two camps led by Iran and Saudi Arabia, the growing relations between Ankara and Riyadh led to some concerns on the Iranian side.

In fact, Turkey has been wary of that polarization that has led to a deepening of sectarian cleavages in the region. According to Turkish officials, Iran has played a major role in this process. The culminating geopolitical challenges increased Turkish concerns. First, Turkish officials thought that the sectarian policies pursued by Iran have led to regional instability and the rise of extremist groups that are regarded as threats to regional peace and Turkish security. Additionally, Iran was regarded to be exploiting regional crises and sectarian divisions in order to increase its regional power. Moreover, Turkey felt surrounded by Iran-led sectarian forces in Iraq and

the PKK affiliated Kurds in Syria, arguably supported by Iran throughout its southern borders. Under these conditions, the pro-government media both in Turkey and in Iran severely criticized and attacked each other. The baseless reports in the Iranian media claiming the involvement of President Erdoğan's family in some activities allegedly supporting ISIS further increased the tensions between Ankara and Tehran.<sup>52</sup> Consequently, the growing geopolitical concerns in Ankara with regard to Iran's regional policies and media wars between the two countries led to a decline in Turkish-Iranian relations.

Against the rising trend of conflict and competition in the aftermath of the nuclear deal, a simultaneous trend of cooperation and dialogue also continued to affect Iran-Turkey relations.<sup>53</sup> Despite the worsening political relations between Ankara and Tehran, a growing number of Turkish businessmen turned towards Iran after the deal. Besides small and medium-sized companies that had a long-time interest in the Iranian market, Turkish conglomerates also started to show their interest in Iran. Additionally, new regional developments, including the consolidation of Kurdish autonomy in the north of Syria, alerted both Ankara and Tehran. Meanwhile the growing great-power involvement in the Syrian crisis lessened the roles of Iran and Turkey on the ground, which led to resentment against the United States and Russia in the two capitals. Eventually, Prime Minister Davutoğlu paid a visit to Tehran on March 4, 2016. On his way to Tehran, he talked on the significance of cooperation with Iran, particularly on economic issues. Davutoğlu also underscored the importance of dialogue between Iran and Turkey, even on issues of disagreement. He stated that disagreements between the countries on regional issues are quite natural, but the lack of interaction is unusual. While in Tehran, Davutoğlu publicly stated that they "should not leave the fate of the region to extra-regional powers," illus-

trating the resentment against the United States and Russia.

Davutoğlu's visit to Tehran gave a new momentum to Iran-Turkey relations, and was followed by the visit of President Rouhani to Ankara on April 16, 2016. It is noteworthy that, this visit realized right after the OIC Summit held in İstanbul that heavily criticized Iran for the attacks against the Saudi diplomatic missions in Iran, and for its alleged support for terrorism and its interference in internal affairs of other Muslim countries. Against those critiques, Rouhani went to Ankara for official bilateral meetings. President Erdoğan and President Rouhani chaired the third meeting of the High Level Cooperation Council, which brought together various ministers from each country to review overall relations. At the end of the meeting, eight memorandums of understanding and agreements on various issues were signed. The parties also renewed their commitment to increase the total amount of bilateral economic transactions to the level of 30 billion USD in a short time. Admitting the existence of disagreements on "certain issues" President Erdoğan stated that the two countries should minimize differences and maximize commonalities between them.<sup>54</sup> Rouhani called the differences between Iran and Turkey on some regional issues as "minor differences of opinion" and underlined the commitment of both countries "to bolster their relations in all fields". In addition to boosting bilateral relations on economic and energy issues, Rouhani and his Turkish colleagues talked on converging interests on preserving the territorial integrity of regional countries, putting an end to war in the region, and fighting against terrorism.<sup>55</sup>

## Conclusion

A survey of the history of Iran-Turkey relations and an analysis of contemporary relations between the two countries shows that it is difficult to talk about a long-term, structural conflict or coopera-

tion between the two countries. Instead, there are two competing trends that simultaneously lead to both competition and dialogue between Ankara and Tehran. There is no structural foundation for conflict and competition between Iran and Turkey, the two countries sharing a common border that has rarely changed for almost four centuries. There is no historical and territorial disagreement that prevents the two countries from developing good neighborly relations. However, ideological differences, geopolitical concerns and regional rivalry between the two countries can occasionally turn into crises. Notwithstanding ideological and regional differences, Turkey and Iran have managed to develop their relations, particularly since 2002, on the grounds of rationalization and compartmentalization, when they implicitly agreed to put their differences aside and focus on common interests and threats. Additionally, there has been an implicit understanding between Ankara and Tehran to minimize the potential adverse effects of regional differences on bilateral issues and cooperation.

Since the Iranian nuclear program turned into a crisis between Tehran and the West, Turkey was stuck between good neighborly relations with Iran and maintaining its alliance with the United States. In order to ease the tensions and prevent the emergence of another conflict in its region, Turkey attempted to facilitate and mediate nuclear negotiations between Iran and the P5+1. However, after the conclusion of the deal between the parties, Turkey became cautious with its geopolitical implications. Its caution is not drawn by the deal itself, but related to the deal's potential impact on Iran's regional policies. Criticisms that were raised by Turkish officials, led by President Erdoğan, towards Iran's regional policies preceded the finalization of the deal. However, post-deal developments in the Middle East against the interests of Turkey, the rise of PKK terrorism, and baseless claims in respective official and pro-government media, resulted in de-

terioration of Ankara-Tehran relations. In other words, the trend of conflict and competition has prevailed over cooperative relations between the two countries.

In the meantime, however, there have been some factors that have forced dialogue and cooperation between Ankara and Tehran. On the one hand, Turkey has been increasingly concerned with Iranian regional ambitions and policies; on the other hand the removal of sanctions made Iran a favorable destination for Turkish businesses and a reliable source of energy. Additionally, geopolitical developments such as the rise of religious extremism, consolidation of Kurdish autonomy in the north of Syria, and growing involvement of extra-regional great powers in regional issues, pushed the two countries to manage their differences and focus on common interests. Under these conditions, the Iranian and Turkish governments agreed to put their differences and sources of contention aside, and focus on common interests and shared concerns. Thus, they have compartmentalized their relations into different sectors in order to contain differences, and controversies. In

other words, Turkey and Iran have learned to manage regional differences by placing them in different compartments. However, it does not mean the complete elimination of differences and disagreements, but managing the conflicts to facilitate cooperation and dialogue. With regard to the recent developments in Iran-Turkey relations, geopolitical concerns and regional issues denote the trend of conflict and competition; however, economic opportunities and some other geopolitical developments signify cooperation and dialogue. The ensuing compartmentalization of relations explains the simultaneous existence of two contrasting trends.

The complicated nature of bilateral relations and the simultaneous existence of contrasting trends of cooperation and conflict are by no means peculiar to Iran-Turkey relations. Likewise, the policy of compartmentalization of relations is not limited to the Iran-Turkey case. Thus, the concept of compartmentalization could be employed in other cases in order to explain contrasting trends in bilateral relations.

## ENDNOTES

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## V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

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Major global trends at the onset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century pose fundamental strategic challenges to both Japan and Turkey. While Japan needs to adjust to the rise of an increasingly assertive China and an openly hostile North Korea, Turkey is challenged by the repercussions from the worsening civil wars in Syria and Iraq, which threaten to engulf the entire Middle East, while another conflict across the Black Sea pitting the Ukraine against an assertive Russia destabilizes the Eurasian landscape. In a globalizing world, no issue can be isolated.

In an era of global transformation, a robust partnership between actors such as Japan and Turkey, important in their respective regions and committed to play larger international roles, is critical not only to maintain these countries' national interests but also to create bilateral platforms to facilitate cooperation for regional and global peace and stability. Toward that end, there is need for sustained dialogue on how they can cooperate to contribute toward peace and prosperity in their re-

spective regional environments and enhance their security.

This symposium aimed at supporting bilateral cooperation from an intellectual point of view and to help create a platform for Japanese and Turkish strategic thinkers to gain firsthand experience about the other country. It also aimed to open an avenue for the creation of organic bonds on which future cooperation can be built. Through the organization of this joint symposiums and workshops, we believe that the visibility of each country in the political debates in the other country is enhanced.

This symposium will shortly be followed by a third symposium aiming at more specific issues, and it is hoped that it will be also followed by further events and exchanges between both parties. We believe that these are the first steps for a needed Japanese-Turkish partnership to reduce uncertainty in an increasingly precarious world.