

Special Issue: Turkey and European Defence

This issue of Security Matters is mostly devoted to Turkey. It carries three articles that were presented as papers at a workshop on Turkey and the European Security and Defence Policy, held in Istanbul on 12-13 June 2006 and organised by CESS in cooperation with the Istanbul Policy Center at Sabanci University. In late 2006, our programme on Governance and the Military in Turkey came to an end, and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs approved the funding for a new CESS programme, called 'Reforms in Turkish Civil-Military Relations: Measuring Progress and Building Capacities'. As before, IPC will be our main Turkish partner. Despite the difficult political climate, the Netherlands government wants to continue to provide constructive support for democratic reforms in Turkey. These are important for Turkey, for Europe, and for the successful integration of Turkey into the European Union.

Turkey Programme Approved

No doubt our new Turkey programme will be a challenge, but it is in steady hands. The former Netherlands defence attaché in Ankara, Ritske Bloemendaal, who is also a retired captain of the Royal Netherlands Navy and an old friend of CESS, has come on board to manage it (also see *People*). In the editorial of this issue, he looks back on his years in Turkey and ahead to his exciting future as an employee of a Dutch NGO.

Another new development that will benefit our Turkey programme is our collaboration with the Advanced Research and Assessment Group at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom. Professor Chris Donnelly, Dr Ann Aldis and other experts at Shrivenham will support our new programme with their work. This means that the expertise and talent available to this effort have been greatly enhanced, and we now have a UK sponsor. Consequently, the programme is now a Dutch-Turkish-UK endeavour.

Starlink on Law Enforcement



Erik Sportel participating in the Law Enforcement role-play



Baku is beautifully situated by the Caspian Sea

The other major programme that was much on our minds in the latter part of 2006 was Starlink. In the summer, we had concluded the first cycle of training courses on democratic governance in the security sector, which had an emphasis on the defence community, and begun the second cycle, which paid special attention to the law enforcement community. The first event in this cycle was held on 28-30 September in the Ukrainian city of Lviv, during the festivities to celebrate the 750th anniversary of the city. Our local host and partner was the University for Internal Affairs. The event was mainly organised by our Ukrainian partner organisation IEAC. We were happy to find that the training course, modified to suit the needs of police, customs and other law enforcement agencies, was well received, but we noted some things in the new role-play that could be improved.

These changes were applied in Gudauri, a ski resort high in the Georgian mountains, where the second training event in this cycle was held, from 12-14 October. As in the first cycle, we had bright young officials as our participants, who threw themselves into the role-play with gusto. In their desire to question an eye witness of alleged police brutality, they obliged Sami Faltas to assume the role of a nervous young student. The participants received their diplomas from the Netherlands Ambassador Onno Elderenbosch and the chairman of the Georgian parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, Konstantin Gabashvili.

page 2
News,
Calendar
page 3
Article C. Buharalı
page 5
Article T. Dokos
page 8
Article
M. Müftüler-Baç
page 10
Editorial
(R. Bloemendaal)
page 11
People
page 12
Commentary
(J. Wallage)

Next stop was Chisinau in Moldova, where CESS Research Fellow David Greenwood took over the teaching of the introductory modules, and Bauke Snoep assumed the responsibility of controlling the role-play, two jobs previously done by Sami Faltas. We were also joined by Grzegorz Polak, deputy director in the Polish Ministry of the Interior and Administration, who taught the module on integrated border management, designed and previously taught by Peter Hobbing.

The final training course in the law enforcement cycle took us back to Ukraine, this time to the eastern city of Dnipropetrovsk. Here our local host and partner was the Ukrainian Customs Academy, and the instructors were David Greenwood, Peter Hobbing, Bauke Snoep and Mark Hobbelink (also see *People*). Mark is a Groningen University student who joined CESS as an intern. He led an exercise on Police and Community with the assurance of a seasoned trainer.

Starlink in Armenia and Azerbaijan

In november 2007 we received the news that the Netherlands Foreign Ministry had agreed to fund the extension of Starlink to Armenia and Azerbaijan. During a fact-finding mission to Baku in late October to early November, Merijn Hartog and Erik Sportel established that it was indeed feasible and desirable to take Starlink to Azerbaijan. Earlier, this had been done for Armenia.

DDR Training Course in Berlin

The second international training programme on the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of Combatants was held in Berlin during the first week of November, hosted by the Berlin-based Zentrum für internationale Friedenseinsätze, in cooperation with CESS and the Bonn International Center for Conversion. Sami Faltas was one of the chief instructors, teaching a group of practitioners from various European countries, as well as Burundi, both Congos and Sudan.

Calendar of CESS Events, January- April 2007

Starlink High-level Meeting & Starlink Training Course: Democratic Governance in the Security Sector: Defence. CESS and CNIS: Baku, Azerbaijan, 14-17 February 2007

Moldova Parliamentary Programme; Seminar I Democratic Oversight of the Security Sector: Reviewing Defence and Security Documents. CESS and EIPS, in cooperation with IPP: Chisinau, Moldova, 21 February 2007

Starlink Training Course: Democratic Governance in the Security Sector: Intelligence. CESS and IEAC: Kiev, Ukraine, 22-24 March 2007

Starlink Training Course: Democratic Governance in the Security Sector: Intelligence. CESS and CEIS: Tbilisi, Georgia, 26-28 March 2007

Starlink Training Course: Democratic Governance in the Security Sector: Defence. CESS and ICHD: Yerevan, Armenia, 29-31 March 2007

Starlink Training Course: Democratic Governance in the Security Sector: Law Enforcement. CESS and CNIS: Baku, 12-14 April 2007



DDR trainees studying small arms

Turkey's Eroding Status within the European Security Architecture

Can Buharalı, Deputy Chairman, Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies, Istanbul, Turkey

The security of Europe has been among the top priorities in world politics since the end of the Second World War. The world witnessed a division between the eastern and western blocks during the cold war years. The security of Europe has been maintained primarily by NATO and through the security and defence umbrella provided by the United States of America. Thus most western European states enjoyed security without necessarily paying for it. Indeed they had the chance to restructure their economies and pay for the social welfare of their citizens, while almost free riding on the security front.

Overall, this approach has been beneficial to all European allies. It has probably made NATO the most successful military alliance ever.



Can Buharalı (left) with Wim van Eekelen in Istanbul

However, with the end of the Cold War period, the risk of massive military confrontation in Europe was replaced by asymmetric threats such as regional conflicts, ethnic strife and terrorism. This time, the United States' appetite to confront these issues within Europe was not as strong. European allies thus felt the need to reorganise themselves so as to be able to confront the new security challenges. As such they revitalised the dormant Western European Union (WEU). The only problem was the membership profile of the WEU. Therefore, they also enlarged the WEU in a way to comprise all European member states of NATO and all members of the EU. However the enlargement of WEU did not happen through providing full membership to all. Instead, new membership categories were invented: non-EU European members of NATO were offered "associate membership" and non NATO members of the EU the "observer" status. On the other hand, members of both NATO and the EU, who were not members of the WEU, had the opportunity to become full members.

Concomitantly with revitalising the WEU in 1991, the EU decided to develop a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and made CFSP the second pillar of the temple structure created by the Maastricht Treaty. Maastricht has also created a strong link between the EU and WEU. This institutional link was indeed the reason why non-EU European allies were not offered a chance to become full members to WEU.

From NATO membership to a loose relationship with the CFSP

Turkey has been an active member of the European security family for a long time now. Her membership in NATO has been associated with a high level of contributions and acceptance as a security provider. However, with the end of the Cold War, Turkey's role in European security has started to erode. First, the associate membership to WEU was less than what Turkey had expected. This was of particular concern, since Greece was admitted as a full member to WEU. So, for the first time in the post Second World War history of Europe, Turkey and Greece were treated separately at the security arena. Hence Turkey's relationship with the new European security architecture started oddly.

The associate membership status in WEU first created disenchantment in Turkey towards the new European security architecture. After all, while Greece was benefiting from the strong Article 5 commitment of the WEU Treaty, Turkey as an associate member did not have a recourse to this umbrella which on paper was a stronger commitment than the famous Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty. Secondly, Turkey and Greece were not going to be treated on an equal footing at the WEU Council, with the latter one acquiring veto rights and the former one only a seat somehow conditional to Greece's acceptance. Their participation to the work of the secretariat and the planning cell were also uneven.

However, in time, despite the difficulties, Turkey managed to regain its profile within the WEU. The fact that she was an associate member remained valid on paper, but thanks to her participation and her contributions, Turkey started to be treated almost as a full member within the WEU council. As an example Turkey's contributions to the WEU police mission in Albania were stronger than most full members, including Greece. One must admit that the operational link created between NATO and WEU helped Turkey regain its status, with the powers it transferred from NATO. Nevertheless, these intermediary days did not last long. The pivotal role of the WEU came to an end at St. Malo in December 1998, when the British and French agreed on how to develop a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) within the EU rather than within NATO as had been expected earlier. While this was a historic and joyful moment for the EU, it left a bitter aftertaste in Turkey.

Indeed Turkey had supported the development of CFSP and ESDP. Moreover she has always been ready to contribute to the development of European security through her operational capabilities. With this understanding she had not only contributed to the NATO peace operation in Bosnia but also substantively to all WEU police missions in South-Eastern Europe during the 1990s. However, with the WEU finishing its mission, Turkey was offered even less than what was expected. Instead, Turkey was willing to extend the WEU arrangements to the new ESDP created within the EU. In other words, Turkey was willing to take part and able to voice her priorities and concerns in a domain where she contributed tremendously throughout the difficult Cold War period and even the 10 years that followed. Often this Turkish request is considered as the country's back door entry to the EU. However, Turkey's considerations were purely pertaining to security and the arrangements she required were far from requesting a veto right or membership. Turkey was looking for an institutional link to the ESDP within the EU. In contrast, the EU and particularly a group led by the French were willing to reserve this domain purely to EU member states and in a way willing to replace NATO's functions other than territorial defence.

The new EU setup needed to be supported with NATO's operational capabilities, for expensive duplications and time loss to be avoided. For this purpose Turkey's consent was necessary. This led to negotiations between Turkey and the EU. The United States of America had to mediate as well, since there were no quick fixes. After long and difficult negotiations Turkey and the EU finally agreed on a number of issues with the so called "ESDP Brussels Document" on October 2002. The document described the consultation mechanisms between Turkey and the EU and Turkey's operational participation to the EU peace missions. However, despite the understanding created with the mentioned document, the institutional fragility of the EU leaves Turkey quite on the edge of developments. In reality, the actual institutional setup has created a slow disengagement of Turkey from the European security structures.

Since the Maastricht Convention, the EU has come a long way in security matters. With the Nice Treaty, a Political and Security Committee, a Military Committee and a small military staff have been created. These institutional developments were later supported with operational ones such as the establishment of combat troops, the European gendarmerie and the European Defence Agency (EDA). Overall the EU has managed to advance on a difficult issue such as security and defence in the beginning of the third millennium. Moreover, the EU has been able to advance in a complex issue such as security despite the institutional difficulties she is going through. Therefore the answer to the question whether the EU will achieve a deeper cooperation on security is no longer a matter of "if" but rather a matter of "when" and "how".

What is more, bomb blasts in Madrid and London demonstrated to Western Europeans the imminence of asymmetric dangers. Security in the airports have increased, drastic measures have been taken by some EU member states despite criticism saying the measures run against freedoms and human rights. It seems now that Europe feels it has to increase its contributions to security in a geography which goes beyond its boundaries. This does not mean yet that EU member states are interested in, for instance, North Korea, which is too far away, but at least the Middle East is on the radar screen. European contributions to the peace keeping mission in Lebanon (enlarged UNIFIL) will provide to be a test case in this regard.

Extending European security to Turkey?

If we go back for a moment to Turkey's particular situation and contributions to European security, we must first state that despite her eroding status since the 1990s Turkey is still willing to contribute. Turkey is also keen in conducting a foreign policy compatible with her membership prospects to the EU. A study conducted by Turkey's Foreign Ministry indicated that Turkey aligned herself with 87 percent of EU statements, draft conclusions or declarations during the first half of 2003¹. This number is remarkable considering the fact that Turkey did not even start the accession negotiations at the time.

The European Security Strategy Document prepared by CFSP High Representative Javier Solana and adopted by the EU Council in December 2003 states the strategic foreign policy priorities of the EU and makes a threat analysis. Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organised crime are listed as key threats. These match very much the threat perceptions of Turkey. Alignment with the CFSP will therefore be quite natural for Turkey. Moreover Solana states that the EU need to be active in addressing the threats, need to develop cooperative relations with neighbouring regions and need to act

in a multilateral framework and thus argues that the EU need to be more active, more capable and more coherent. Turkey's contributions in the security field would help the EU to achieve these goals.

With the end of the Cold War, Turkey's role in European security began to change. While at first the change in the threat perceptions—from massive military confrontation to asymmetric threats—seemed to diminish Turkey's role, it quickly became apparent that instead Turkey's central role strengthened. The Iraq war and the developments regarding Lebanon reiterated the importance of Turkey's contributions. Yet, the EU has so far failed to respond to these developments in a way to embrace Turkey's security needs.

In the same vein, the development of an ESDI within NATO, which aims for the use of NATO assets and capabilities by the EU, is also suffering from this "EU caucus" approach and thus in the longer run is risking NATO's credibility and harmony. NATO will continue to be the primary defence instrument of the continent. Therefore, any effort should aim to maintain harmony between all European actors.

The erosion of Turkey's status deepened after the WEU era, and reached a different magnitude with Cyprus joining the Union as a full member. Cyprus's membership harmed European security relations in a direct and an indirect fashion. First, it blocked Turkey's involvement in the security structures such as European Defence Agency (EDA). Second, it became a divisive issue between the parties and hence undermined the trust between them.

EDA has so far been an unfortunate example, where a separation between non-EU European NATO Allies occurred for a first time when Norway was admitted to EDA, but Turkey was not. Indeed EDA replaces functions that formerly come from NATO (then passed to the WEU, with full membership rights for all European Allies including Turkey and Norway) and aiming to coordinate procurement efforts. Turkey's contributions in that domain normally would be expected to be much larger than most EU member states.

The second indirect effect will be seen over time but it is difficult for instance to argue that the EU and Turkey fully coordinated their efforts in providing peace keeping troops to UNIFIL in Lebanon. The EU plans to contribute with close to 7000 troops and Turkey plans another 1000. Even during such a large scale and politically sensitive exercise it is difficult to consider that the parties made recourse to the consultation mechanisms between Turkey and the EU. Turkey (along with other candidate countries) was not even invited to the EU Foreign Ministers meeting held on the Lebanon crisis, whereas in the past and customarily candidate countries have been invited to the Ministerial meetings of this kind. It is true that Presidents or Ministers of some member countries did exchange their opinions with Turkey and thus encouraged a Turkish contribution to the UNIFIL mission, but these attempts are far from institutional. Turkey's long time contributions to European security require at least more coordinated efforts and recourse to institutional consultation mechanisms. What we mean by that is not necessarily that Turkey should be given a right over the EU's decisions, but rather that the sound way would be at least towards keeping Turkey in the security loop and trying to accommodate her views as well. It is of course not fair to attribute all the problems to the issue of Cyprus, nevertheless we must admit that it plays a role. Should Turkey's membership negotiations face difficulties due to problems on the Cypriot axis (which is not unlikely considering

a settlement of the dispute is still remote) one can easily expect further difficulties in political and security consultations between Turkey and the EU.

Security is a domain that does not allow vacuums to happen. Turkey's eroding status within the European security architecture and the difficulties and tensions created in her relations with the EU around the Cypriot question raise a number of serious questions. This institutional decoupling is artificially undermining Europe's capabilities.

¹ Oğuz Demiralp, "The added value of Turkish membership to European Foreign Policy", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol 2, No. 4.

Turkey and European Security

Thanos Dokos, Director-General, Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Athens, Greece

This article was written for an unofficial seminar, but it is in essence part of an informal consultation between the EU and a prospective member of the Union. Although it is quite normal to have regular exchanges of views, at various levels, between allies and partners, to the best of the author's knowledge, there has not been any such dialogue with any other country aspiring to become a full member of the EU.



Thanos Dokos (left) speaking at the seminar in Istanbul in June of last year

Turkey should expect to be scrutinised on many issues (including Home Affairs and Justice), more than any other country wishing to join the EU has ever been, or will be, with the possible exception of Russia. Understandably, many Turks are irritated by this degree of critical attention, but let us not forget its good side. It means that Turkey is being recognised as an important country, especially from a geographical and geostrategic point of view. It seems to me that this will be Turkey's strongest card in its effort to join the Union or, should negotiations fail, to develop a privileged relationship with the EU.

As the negotiations between Turkey and the EU continue, informal discussions such as ours will be taking place on a regular basis, as part of an exercise in mutual learning or, better, mutual understanding. This is desirable, because although most EU countries and Turkey have been allies and partners in NATO, Europe clearly is and will remain for some time in a transitional phase. The Union is still trying to define its borders and identity, and searching for a regional and global role in a new security environment. In this context, it is trying to strengthen its capabilities in the fields of foreign and security policy.

The Turkish researcher Oğuzlu argues that "there is still a certain lack of cohesion among EU members with regard to the geopolitical and strategic priorities of the Union. In geopolitical terms, it seems that the members, particularly those with an imperial legacy, have more actor-ness than the EU itself as an institution."¹

It is gradually and slowly evolving into an international actor with a military logic. It is also trying to redefine its relationship with the United States of America. Furthermore, it wants to help stabilise its wider neighbourhood. Finally, cooperation between the EU and Turkey, a candidate country unlike any other, is essential for a number of obvious reasons.

This cooperation is underway. As Kirsty Hughes points out, "Turkey has aligned itself with many of the EU's common foreign and security policy positions, and it has developed a considerable dialogue with the EU since the mid-1990s on the EU's security and defence policy, including resolving through the Berlin Plus agreement the question of how non-EU European NATO members would participate in European security and defence operations. Turkey has participated in international peacekeeping in the Balkans and elsewhere, including in Afghanistan. All this means that Turkey is not an unknown quantity for the EU and suggests that its integration into CFSP and ESDP structures could be relatively straightforward."²

The European Security Strategy (ESS) and the New Neighbourhood Policy (NNP) put great emphasis on the importance of the southern periphery for European security, stressing the need to project stability into the continent's neighbourhood. Proponents of Turkey's accession argue that due to its geostrategic position, Turkey would add new dimensions to the Union's foreign policy efforts in such vitally important regions as the Middle East, the Mediterranean, Central Asia and the southern Caucasus. Furthermore, they argue, Turkey entertains good relations with both the EU and the USA, and enjoys credibility in Israel and the Arab world alike. Its membership in the EU would no doubt increase the Union's weight in the Middle East, which could be put to good use in common efforts towards peacemaking and stabilisation in this strategically critical region.³

The arguments usually put forward by Turkish officials and analysts are:

- 1) The proximity of Turkish military bases to potential crisis areas and its military infrastructure would be assets for the EU;
- 2) Turkish armed forces have had considerable experience in peacekeeping in several countries, ranging from Somalia to Bosnia; and
- 3) Unlike most European armies, the Turkish army has actively been engaged in warfare for extended periods.

For these reasons, technically and politically, it would be useful to integrate Turkey into the mechanisms of ESDP.⁴

As it has been rightly argued, the question of whether Turkey's EU membership will be a foreign policy asset for the EU will depend on a number of developments that will either precede Turkey's entry into the EU or that are partly independent of the latter.⁵ If and when it accedes to the EU, Turkey's domestic and foreign policies, as well as those of the Union, will have changed in unpredictable ways. Moreover, conditions in various regions of interest, such as the Middle East, are bound to change as well.⁶

Any effort to compare the threat assessment of the EU and Turkey is a rather complicated exercise. When it comes to the EU threat assessment, there are disagreements between member states. In addition, there are different national perceptions (one could identify several sub-divisions: big and small countries, North, West, East and South, “old” and “new” Europe) In some member states, we also note a lack of candour, more alarmist unofficial threat assessments and very carefully worded official national positions.

To the extent, however, that there is a common threat assessment, the main logic is described in the European Security Strategy. Threats to European security include regional conflicts, international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trans-national organised crime and failed or failing states.

Most of the regional conflicts (with the exception of Kosovo) are found outside Europe. In this respect, the EU and Turkey have rather similar positions and concerns.

A quick tour d’ horizon might be useful here. Turkey is geographically close to a number of important and unstable regions. In the Black Sea region, regional concerns shared by the two sides include the “frozen conflicts” (Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya) where the common objective is to prevent further destabilisation and resolve these conflicts in a peaceful manner. There may be a degree of divergence in the Caucasus, due to Turkey’s relations with Armenia and Azerbaijan. There are also concerns about organised crime (especially the trafficking of people, drugs and weapons), and terrorism. On relations with Russia and energy security, it is not clear whether the sides currently have converging views.

Energy security is quickly increasing in importance. It is already an issue of high priority for Europe. According to Roberts, “Turkey’s role as a gateway through which gas can enter the EU is becoming increasingly important as the EU grapples with the interrelated problems of ensuring energy security and the provision of energy supplies from multiple sources at competitive prices.”⁷

In the Middle East, both sides share a general interest to contain and reduce instability. In the case of Syria, both argue against a destabilisation campaign and a forced regime change. Regarding Iraq, both sides support the need to preserve the territorial integrity of that country, to avoid further destabilisation of the Gulf region and to contain the spread of Islamic terrorism.

In the Balkans, there is good cooperation between the EU and the United States of America, with common efforts to further stabilise the region. There are no major problems or disagreements. Both sides wish to avoid any changing of borders through the use of force.

Europe is concerned about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), not necessarily as a direct threat. Rather, the Europeans fear a domino effect and the erosion of the international non-proliferation regime. They are also very concerned about non-state actors acquiring WMD. Turkey is also concerned about WMD proliferation, as she is actually bordering regions where proliferation is taking place. Both sides share the preference for a diplomatic solution of the crisis caused by the Iranian nuclear programme.

On international terrorism, the two sides do not see eye to eye on all aspects of the issue. Europe is concerned about Islamic terrorism. Turkey is worried about two types of terrorism. First,

Islamic terrorism, especially the Al-Qaida network, which may have links with local Turkish organizations, as well as Hezbollah. Second, the activities of separatist organizations, namely the Kurdish movement PKK.⁸ There is extensive cooperation in the former field. Disagreements have been observed on the latter, as many Europeans view this as an issue of human or minority rights, etc. There is rather frequent criticism, from the side of the EU, of the policies of the Turkish government. Europeans are not sympathetic to PKK methods, but neither are they happy with Turkey’s handling of the Kurds. On the other hand, according to a moderate Turkish view, “if the Turkish policy-makers failed to distinguish between the PKK separatists and supporters of Kurdish cultural rights, EU policymakers in many capitals failed to see or acknowledge the difference between terrorists on the one hand, and activist supporters of human rights in Turkey on the other.”⁹

There are shared concerns about organised crime in the Balkans and the Black Sea, as well as about failed, failing or weak states in Africa and other parts of the world. Turkey is to some extent a source of organised crime, but it is mainly a transit route. Cooperation is essential for all sides involved. Now that Turkey is rapidly becoming part of Europe’s first line of defence on the issue of organised crime, the two sides need to discuss and agree on ways to increase efficiency.¹⁰ Although both sides understand that cooperation in JHA will be mutually beneficial, it has been rightly pointed out that for Turkey to take on the whole EU acquis in the area of freedom, security and justice will be a lengthy, difficult, sensitive and costly process.¹¹

We should also discuss Turkey’s national threat assessment. There are substantial internal and external challenges to Turkish security and prosperity, such as economic and social development, the EU accession course, new asymmetric, as well as more traditional security threats, especially on Turkey’s eastern borders. According to press reports, the White Paper adopts the position that Turkish national security is threatened by Islamist and separatist problems.

Greece is one of the second-tier threats. For Greece, Turkey remains the only threat to its national security. This is both awkward and costly in many ways. Human lives have been lost on both sides, and the financial burden is considerable. It is also a paradox to have a military rivalry, sometimes turning into a confrontation (although bilateral relations have considerably improved since 1999) and even casus belli statements between two members of the NATO alliance, who will one day also be partners in a political union, the EU.¹² Kirsty Hughes put it very succinctly: “the EU in general expects candidate countries to have good or at least normalised relations with neighbouring countries, in particular with existing EU member states. This means that Turkish accession does imply a settlement of the Cyprus problem, and further development of relations with Greece leading to a settlement of disputes over borders in the Aegean.”¹³

The situation in Northern Iraq and the reactivation of the Sevres syndrome (regarding fears of territorial dismemberment as a result of some form of foreign intervention), which makes Turkey suspicious of Western countries, further complicate the situation as this contributes to a weakening of Turkey’s self-confidence. As long as Turkey is unstable, lacks self-confidence and feels insecure, the whole neighbourhood will feel the consequences. The role of the Turkish military in shaping threat assessment, drafting national security policy and making major decisions on weapons procurement is quite exceptional and a factor not to be underestimated. It is not unusual for large bureaucratic organizations to use various means to retain and increase, if possible, their

role and influence. It cannot be a priori excluded that the effort to preserve the Turkish military's special role and influence and sizeable share of government expenditures will lead to the "discovery" of new threats or the exaggeration of old ones.

On the question of whether the refusal of some European countries to offer military support to Turkey during the Iraq war¹⁴ has left any scars, the answer should be given by the Turks themselves.¹⁵ Perhaps it did, but one needs to also ask the questions: Was there any real threat to Turkish security? Was that refusal directed against Turkey or against US policy?



Ahmet Evin attentively listening to Peter Volten

It is, of course, understandable that Turkey will be thinking hard about its future relations and reliance on NATO and the EU. It is also true that the only substantial and credible military power is currently the USA. Whether the USA, with its current policies on Iran, Iraq, Syria, Russia and other matters of great importance for Turkey is a more trustworthy ally than the Europeans, is up to Turkey to decide.

The question also needs to be asked whether there are profound differences between the strategic cultures of Turkey and the EU. The latter's approach on security issues can clearly be described as post-modern, with an emphasis on soft power and integration processes. Although, using the terminology of Robert Kagan, many analysts would agree that "most Turks have been like Americans, from Mars, while Europeans are from Venus"¹⁶, it is now argued that Turkey has started to "adopt the EU's distinct foreign policy 'style' of promoting security through multilateral mechanisms and institutional integration"¹⁷ and shares the belief that "engagement" rather than containment and pre-emption would be the most appropriate mechanism for dealing with these regimes. The socialisation process, a by-product of being a candidate and subsequently a member of the EU can safely be expected to further strengthen this process of change. This was clearly observed in other countries on the road to accession, for example Greece.

In conclusion, in many areas Turkey has evolved into a producer and a provider of security, rather than merely a security consumer. It is an eager participant in peace support operations under the aegis of both the UN and NATO. There are, as it is to be expected, significant similarities and substantial differences between the threat assessments of the EU and Turkey, and their relations have often been characterised by a rather uneasy pattern of interaction between the EU and Turkey. The two sides do not have identical views on a number of foreign policy issues, although increasing convergence can be observed in some areas.

In the future, it will be necessary to have regular debates and consultations in an evolving security environment, with evolving institutional mechanisms and evolving national perspectives in the context of the EU.

¹ Tarik Oguzlu, "An Analysis of Turkey's Prospective Membership in the EU from a 'Security' Perspective", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 34, No. 3, September 2003, p. 288

² Hughes, p. 50

³ Turkey in Europe: More than a Promise, Report of the Independent Commission on Turkey, September 2004, p. 17-18

⁴ Esra Cayhan, "Towards a European Security and Defence Policy: With or Without Europe", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 2003, p. 46

⁵ Raffaella Del Sarto, "Turkish Membership: An Asset for the EU's Policy Towards the Mediterranean and the Middle East" in Nathalie Tocci & Ahmet Evin (eds.), *Toward Accession Negotiations: Turkey's Domestic and Foreign Policy Challenges Ahead*. European University Institute, Florence, 2004, p. 138

⁶ Steven Everts, "An Asset but not a Model: Turkey, the EU and the Wider Middle East", *Center for European Reform*, October 2004, p. 2

⁷ John Roberts, "The Turkish Gate", *Turkey in Europe Monitor*, Issue 11, CEPS, Nov. 2004, p. 2. Turkey is heavily using the "energy argument". According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "...Turkey is poised to become a significant energy hub and stands as an important energy partner for Europe and its energy strategy is consistent with the EU's energy security policy. Turkey's objective to become Europe's fourth main artery of energy supply following Norway, Russia and Algeria overlaps with the EU's energy supply security policy and opens a new avenue for cooperation between Turkey and EU that will also reinforce Europe's ties to Asia." (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, p. 15) Furthermore, "Turkey's geopolitical position and close links with tens of millions of Turkic people in neighbouring countries could help secure European access to the enormous wealth of resources in Central Asia and regions of Siberia, making Turkey a vital factor for Europe's security of energy supplies coming from the Middle East, the Caspian Sea and Russia." *Turkey in Europe*, op.cit., p. 19

⁸ See for example the official website of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where it is argued that "In the context of the required international solidarity in the fight against terrorism, the decision of the EU in May 2002 to include PKK, a separatist/terrorist organization and the extreme leftist DHKP-C in the list of terrorist organizations, followed by its decision in April 2004 to include KADEK and KONGRA-GEL, both aliases of PKK in the said list, constituted a positive development." Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Synopsis of Turkish Foreign Policy*, p. 16

⁹ Ahmet Evin, "Turkey and the Middle East: Antecedents and Precedents" in Tocci & Evin, op.cit., p. 131.

¹⁰ It has been argued that the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organised Crime (TADOC) is already a valuable professional institute for the entire region. (Michael Emerson & Nathalie Tocci, *Integrating EU and Turkish Foreign Policy*, *Turkey in Europe Monitor*, Issue 7, CEPS, July 2004, p. 3) For a detailed discussion on JHA see also, Joanna Apap, Sergio Carrera & Kemal Kirisci, "Turkey in the European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice", *CEPS EU-Turkey Working Papers*, No. 3, August 2004.

¹¹ Hughes, p. 51. Obviously, a rejected Turkey would also be likely to prove a much less cooperative partner on issues concerning border security, illegal migration, and international crime.

¹² Overall, the two countries are much better off today in terms of bilateral relations than they were in 2000. However, it should be emphasized that there has been no progress so far in resolving the fundamental differences between the two countries. Indeed, the current rapprochement between Greece and Turkey remains fragile. Both countries have not moved from their firm positions regarding 'high politics' issues as Greece and Turkey continue to perceive each other through a Hobbesian prism. The Cyprus problem and issues related to the Aegean Sea, most of which are perceived by Greece as unilateral Turkish revisionist claims, are nowhere near resolution. Thanos Dokos, "Greek-Turkish Relations as a Variable in the Mediterranean and Transatlantic Equations" in *Greek-Turkish Relations*, Johns Hopkins University, Bologna, 2005

¹³ Hughes, p. 52.

¹⁴ At the time of the 1991 Gulf War, some European allies had questioned whether the commitment would apply to an Iraqi attack against Turkey in retaliation for coalition air strikes from Turkish territory. When Turkey requested deployment of part of the Allied Command Europe (ACE) Mobile Force, in response to threats on its eastern border, NATO agreed. But there was a rigorous debate in various European capitals and national parliaments, including the German Bundestag, as to whether Turkey had brought the threat upon itself.

¹⁵ Indeed, it has been argued that "the fact that putting Article V into practice did not turn out to be a "smooth and automatic" process led some Turkish policymakers to perceive this hesitance as indicative of the EU's perception of Turkey as a "burden" and not an "asset" for building security in Europe." Pinar Bilgin, "Turkey and the EU: Yesterday's Answers to Tomorrow's Problems", *EU Civilian Crisis Management*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, May 2001, p. 41

¹⁶ Everts, op.cit., p. 3.

¹⁷ Perhaps because it feels less like an "abandoned" country that must guarantee its own survival in an anarchic world, Turkey's behaviour has become more balanced and sophisticated. Turkish officials and leaders are still keen defenders of their national interests, but they have started to moderate their inclination to think mainly in zero-sum terms, acknowledging the possibility of win-win solutions. Everts, op.cit., p. 3-4

Turkey and the European Union: Partners in Security in an Era of Insecurity

Meltem Müftüler Baç, Professor, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabancı University

Introduction

The negotiations for Turkey's membership in the EU began on 3 October 2005 ending a long period of uncertainty both for Turkey and the EU. The possible accession of Turkey to the EU brings forth important questions with respect to the future of Europe. Among these, Turkey's role in European security looms large and has the potential to influence the preferences of the various EU governments towards Turkey on the one hand, and the European public's position on Turkey's membership on the other hand. That is why Turkey's role with regard to European security and the EU needs to be reviewed thoroughly when Turkey's accession to the EU is analyzed.

When the Cold War ended, the European order was reconstructed along the path of political integration. One of the main tenets of this political integration was the necessity of building a Common Foreign and Security Policy. As a result, harmonization in foreign and security policies became one of the three pillars of the European Union. The road to political integration coincided with the perception that liberal democracy had triumphed and the world had become a safer place, now that the Soviet threat was dealt with. The European Union's deepening and widening projects were attempts to strengthen the new world order and to stabilize the European continent by bringing the former Warsaw Pact countries back to Europe. Thus, one of the main motives for the EU's enlargement process launched in 1990s was security related and aimed at making the European continent safer. The expansion of the EU towards Central and Eastern Europe was, however, unfortunate for Turkey because Turkey no longer qualified as essential for European security as it was in the Cold War years. As a result, in the 1990s, the EU was hesitant towards Turkey and underestimated its potential value as a member. There was some change in that perception when the crisis in the Balkans erupted which increased Turkey's value for European security to a certain degree. However, it was not until the systemic shock of 9/11 that the European Union could assess the main impact of Turkey's membership on European security.

The new security challenges for the European Union

The main shock to the international and European order came on 11 September 2001 when the terrorist attacks against the USA brought new security challenges and issues for international security in general and European security in particular. The emerging post 9/11 international security environment revolved around a new polarization in world politics mainly around Western values on the one hand and Islamic terrorism on the other hand. Reminiscent of the post World War II order of a bipolar world with communism and capitalism as opposing worldviews, the post 9/11 world order was now structured around confrontation between cultures. Unfortunately, this confrontation between different cultures assumed a military character. What sets the post 9/11 order apart from the Cold War balance of terror is its non-state character, as mainly individuals and non-state organizations become the actors challenging international security. In short, since 9/11, there is a profound change in terms of where security risks come from and in terms of what constitutes a security risk. Since states are no longer the main adversaries, the classical forms of deterrence

that characterized strategic thinking for centuries are no longer sufficient enough to deal with the new risks.

After the Cold War terror mutated from the logic of deterrence based on a nuclear balance of terror into a new imbalance of terror based on a mimetic fear and asymmetrical willingness and capacity to destroy the other without the formalities of war. This imbalance is furthered by the media, which transmit powerful images as well as triggering psychological responses to the terrorist events¹.

The emerging security problems for the European continent then seems less in line with the Cold War realities and requires new sets of responses. Rather than the deterrence of a deterring a potential state as the main aggressor, there is now the need to deal with unknown risks originating from unspecified enemies. There are two different components in the new responses to deal with the challenges of the 21st century. One is to keep up in terms of military capabilities, while the other is to develop a new understanding between different cultures that seem to be at odds with one another. In both of these responses, Turkey has a critical role to play for European security.

Turkey's role in European Security

It is within the new international security environment that one needs to assess Turkey's role in international politics. It should be noted that Turkey has been an integral part of European security since 1945. The main role that Turkey played for European security was traditionally defined as follows:

It may be seen as a forward position for Western security interests, extending NATO power into the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. In this mode, Turkey's eastern military bases and borders reaches form a strategic frontier for its allies to project a military presence well into the Russian sphere of influence and the strategic energy zone around the Persian Gulf states².

This has remained unchanged in the post Cold War period as well, but Turkey's potential value for European security was nonetheless challenged seriously when the European continent was shaken with terrorism and unknown security challenges. When the European Council in 1999 at its Helsinki summit decided to accept Turkey as a candidate country for European Union membership, Turkey's impact on European security became an issue of serious debate in the European policy making circles.³ An important question was whether Turkey would act as a security producer for Europe or as a liability. When Turkey's EU accession negotiations for membership began in October 2005, the debate intensified over the material costs and benefits of Turkey's accession with security as one of the main concerns. According to the European Commission's Staff Working Document on Turkey, its geopolitical significance for the EU is as follows:

Turkey is situated at the regional crossroads of strategic importance for Europe: the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia, Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean; its territory is a transit route for land and air transport with Asia, and for sea transport with Russia and Ukraine. Its neighbours provide key energy supplies for Europe, and it has substantial water resources⁴.

Turkey, therefore, carries significant weight for European security and this role has intensified in the post 9/11 period due to international restructuring that the war on terrorism has brought. Turkey could fortify the EU's struggle against 21st century risks in both tangible and intangible ways.

In terms of its tangible role, Turkey could boost up the military capabilities of the EU. Turkey's role in European security could be summarized as its potential contribution to the EU's Rapid Reaction Force, its capabilities, and its military bases. The importance of Turkey's geostrategic location for the security of Europeans was demonstrated most recently when it was mainly through Turkey that the Europeans were evacuated from Lebanon in July 2006 when the Israeli attacks against Hezbollah camps in Lebanon began.

When we assess judging the Turkish contribution to European security, we need one needs to focus on military contributions in a realpolitik fashion. In terms of Turkey's role in military capabilities for the EU, Turkey has contributed to the EU's military operations far more substantially than many EU members. Turkey's NATO membership coupled with its associate membership in the WEU has already integrated Turkey militarily into the European order since 1945. As a result, Turkey's ability in projecting security beyond its borders has contributed to European security.

Ever since 1990, Turkey has been very active in the peacekeeping efforts of the UN, NATO and the EU. Turkey has so far sent its troops 13 times to participate in such peacekeeping operations; it was an integral part of the NATO, later EU force in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo. There are currently 300 Turkish troops in the EU's Operation Althea in Bosnia, 400 Turkish troops in Kosovo, 260 troops in Kabul under SEEBRIG. In addition, Turkey provides significant logistic and equipment assistance to all the operations conducted under NATO. It is these tangible contributions that Turkey provides to European security that will constitute the main material benefits of Turkish membership. In addition, such a presence will strengthen the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy as one of the main objectives for the EU upon its new wave of enlargement is to bring stability, security into its borders without necessarily incorporating all neighbouring countries as full members of the EU.

Since the main problem confronting European security comes tends to come from the South, mainly from the Middle East, Turkey's role in that area needs to be mentioned. The most recent illustration of Turkey's effect on impact for European security is provided by the Middle Eastern crisis between Israel and Lebanon. A major turning point for Turkey's role in European security came in the summer of 2006 with the armed confrontation between Israel and Hezbollah, a non-state actor in Lebanon. The crisis illustrated how fragile peace in the Middle East is on a very tight rope, and how it needs to be protected in a delicate fashion. On September 5, the Turkish Parliament approved the government bill on Turkey's participation in the United Nations mission in Lebanon that is adopted by the UN Security Council Resolution number 1701. This means that for the first time since World War I, Turkish military personnel -1000 troops- will be part of a mission in a military operation in the Middle East. Even though Turkey participated in the UN embargo against Iraq in 1990 and tied down Iraqi troops at the Turkish-Iraqi border, it refrained from sending troops as part of a multilateral force,⁵ despite the approval of the governmental bill to do so in 1991. Thus, the Turkish government's decision in September 2006 demonstrates a departure from that stance and illustrates the changing Turkish position on the Middle Eastern conflicts. Turkey's involvement in the UN force in Lebanon is in accordance with the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy as well where the EU will be engaged in peacekeeping operations in its bordering countries. It also demonstrates the Turkish willingness to bring peace to the region where it is located.



Meltem Müftüler Baç

In addition to Turkey's tangible contribution to European security, Turkey plays a unique role in Europe where it brings together different cultures around a common understanding. This could be considered as the intangible way in which Turkey contributes to European security. This should not be underestimated, if one considers the fact that one of the sources of the current crises in international politics originates from the lack of understanding between different cultures and religions. Turkey's endorsement of the European stance in world matters could bring legitimacy to the EU's position in the eyes of the non-Europeans. In addition, Turkey acts as a factor of stability in the region where it is located, basically because it could talk credibly to all the parties, the Europeans and the non-Europeans alike, due to its unique character. As a result, Turkey has the capacity to have a symbolic impact on European security, in a symbolic fashion since it could play a nominal role in bringing the European and Middle Eastern cultures together. This latter role was, for example, greatly illustrated during the NATO campaign in Afghanistan when the NATO's Civilian Representative in Afghanistan from 2003 to the summer of 2006 was the former Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin. This effective presence of Turkey in the NATO campaign in Afghanistan illustrates that one of the most important roles that Turkey plays is its effective communication with both sides that are different from each other culturally because both sides trust the Turkish interference. This is particularly important given that one of the main aims in international politics in the 21st century is to eradicate erode causes of violence and military confrontation rather than to just suppress them militarily.

Conclusion

In this paper I have argued that Turkey carries a significant weight in European security, even more so than during the Cold War years due to the changing dimensions of the European security architecture. The Europeans seem to need Turkey more than ever because Turkey plays a unique symbolic role in bringing together European and Middle Eastern cultures. This might be even more important than projecting a military might, as it could go down to the root of the problems confronting Europe today, namely terrorism and intercultural clash. By increasing cultural understanding and communication, Turkey could play a substantial role in enhancing European security. At the same time, Turkey contributes to European security in terms of its military capabilities and geostrategic location, which are tangible assets that Turkey would bring to the EU if it were to become a member with its eventual membership. The security dimension of Turkey's membership of the EU, therefore, is an important material and immaterial benefit for the EU, which could be utilized to convince the otherwise sceptical European public on the potential contributions of Turkey's accession.

¹ J. Der Derian, "Imaging Terror: Logos, Pathos, Ethos" *Third World Quarterly*, vol.26, no.1, March 2005, pp.23-37

² C. Dahlman, "Turkey's Accession to the European Union: The Geopolitics of Enlargement", *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol. 45, No. 8 (2004), p. 563

³ Meltem Müftüler-Baç, "Turkey's role in the European Union's Security and Foreign Policies", *Security Dialogue*, vol.31, no.4, December 2000, pp.489-502

⁴ Commission of the European Communities, "Issues Arising from Turkey's Membership Perspective", Commission Staff Working Document, {COM (2004) 656 Final}, (Brussels: 6 October 2004), p. 6

⁵ Meltem Müftüler-Baç, "Turkey's Predicament in the Post-Cold War Era.", *Futures*, vol.28, no.3, April 1996, pp.255-268.

Editorial

Turkey and CESS

Recently a new CESS programme received funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. Its aim is to study the reforms in Turkish civil-military relations and assist in capacity building. But first, the requirements of the EU in this field are to be studied. What exactly does the EU mean when it refers to its standards and practices in civil-military relations? The answer will help to level and to illuminate the playing field for candidate member states. The final report of our previous Turkey programme asserted that the EU needs to be clearer and more specific about such expectations. Our first Turkey programme ran from 2004 until 2006 and was also supported by the Dutch government. It got under steam during the Dutch EU presidency in the second half of 2004 (also see *News*).

In December 2006 CESS asked me to manage its new Turkey programme. I retired from the Royal Netherlands Navy as a captain in the autumn of 2005. My last assignment for the Ministry of Defence was to serve as the defence attaché in Ankara, from 2000 to 2005. This was a very important period for Turkey, as it moved from a coalition to a single party government in the Fall of 2002. Then it was hit by a severe economic crisis, while at the same time becoming strategically important as a result of the attacks of 11 September 2001.

Just as I was taking over the management of the Turkey programme at CESS late last year, a beautiful Istanbul exhibition opened at the Nieuwe Kerk in my home town Amsterdam. It paints a perfect image of Istanbul in the Ottoman days and today. One of the displays that impressed me most showed the meaning of gift exchanges in the Ottoman past. When diplomats exchange presents in my part of Europe, they are paying courtesy to each other's governments. However, the Ottomans saw the giving of gifts as a sign of submission. A simple act can have such radically different meanings in various cultures. For outsiders to better understand the Turkish way of thinking, they need an open mind and a lot of patience. Northerners often accuse the Turks of being proud to the point of arrogance, but many Turks feel the same way about us. So even if the Turks are becoming more European every year, we still need fine tuning between Turkey and the EU, and this requires good will from both sides. We need to better understand each other. This holds true in all fields, including civil-military relations. By the way, if you can visit the show in the Nieuwe Kerk, don't miss it. If you don't already love the city, you will afterwards.

During my period in Ankara I learned a lot about Turkey. Turks are indeed proud, but they are also very easy to approach, and of course extremely hospitable. I like their persistence when they want to convince you of their point of view. Negotiating in Turkey is an art, because if you come straight to the point, as Dutchmen do, you will not reach your goal. When in Rome, do as the Romans do. In Turkey, this means being patient and taking your time to socialise first. At the Turkish General Staff, you have to smoke at least one cigarette, eat a piece of chocolate with the General and finish your tea before you can start talking business. You cannot do business there unless you understand the geopolitical role of Turkey in the region. The Turks see their country as caught in a triangle of dangers: the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus. They also have deep-rooted concerns about the problems in the Turkish Southeast and Cyprus. Two of Atatürk's principles are still taken very seriously, namely

the unity of the state and secularism. They are invoked during almost every conversation. You have to understand the weight they carry in order to understand the political-military position of Turkey.

The Dutch presidency of the EU had a difficult decision to make in 2004. It had to determine whether Turkey had met the Copenhagen criteria, which would allow it to start negotiations for accession. Basically, a country meets these criteria if in the rule of law, freedom of thought, freedom of religion and freedom of expression prevail. The military may not play a dominant role in politics or daily life. The Dutch EU presidency concluded that Turkey had achieved most of this by the end of 2004, and that it therefore 'sufficiently' fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria.

Indeed, the Turks had initiated an enormous programme of reforms. Not only in the area of law-making, but also in the financial and economic sector. For instance, the government managed to push the inflation figure below 10 percent for the first time in many years. The banking world was reformed and put in order. New laws were made to meet the EU standards of good governance. These included the abolition of the death penalty and trial of civilians by military courts. The military gave up some very important positions, like their representation on the Higher Education Board and the board of Turkish Radio and Television. More importantly, their influence in the National Security Council has been greatly reduced.

These were dramatic changes. In its Progress Reports, the European Commission acknowledged that the Turks had come a long way, but it asserted that they still needed to do more. Many of the reforms announced remain to be carried out. In 2005 and 2006, tensions grew between Turkey and the EU, driven by differences opinion between them, but also by domestic politics in the countries concerned. The train crash feared by Commissioner Olli Rehn has so far been avoided, but the train has slowed down. The popular view is that Turkish accession to the EU is becoming increasingly difficult and unlikely. Nevertheless, as long as reforms in Turkey continue, the European Commission, the Netherlands and UK governments, and many others within the union are determined to continue supporting them. At CESS we believe that democratic reforms in a country like Turkey are important in their own right. They deserve our support, irrespective of the outcome of the EU accession talks. Of course, if such reforms also help smooth the way to the successful integration of Turkey into the Union, then that is all the better.

Europe needs Turkey, just as Turkey needs Europe. As a former soldier, I am especially concerned about Europe's security needs. When the European Economic Community signed an Association Agreement in Ankara in 1963, Turkey was a very important ally of the West. It had been a member of NATO since 1952. But strangely, after the removal of the Iron Curtain, we lost much of our interest in Turkey as a strategic military partner. It is time to correct this mistake. A strong, stable, secular, democratic and economically healthy Turkey that has adapted to EU standards and practices will be a great asset to the union. Never mind the cold and the storms between Brussels and Ankara. As a sailor and a Dutchman, I know that bad weather does not last forever. I will go on trying to do my bit, now in the NGO family.

Ritske Bloemendaal

PEOPLE

Mark Hobbelink

In the autumn of 2006, two Groningen University students joined CESS for an internship. Mark Hobbelink's major is in Slavic Studies, and Thialda Tabak is a history major. Besides working on the Starlink programme with Merijn Hartog, Mark generated a lot of bright ideas on new projects for CESS. "From day one on I knew I had come to the right place," he says. "Starlink is a very interesting programme, and it took me to Georgia and Ukraine, which I will never forget.



Mark Hobbelink with a Georgian participant in Gudauri

With my background as a specialist on Russia and the newly independent countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus I was able to suggest new activities for CESS. For instance, the extension of Starlink to Kazakhstan and Kirgizstan. I really enjoyed the autonomy, working at CESS, and I found the friendly atmosphere inspiring."

Thialda Tabak

"My interview for the internship at CESS was on an extremely hot summer's day, but I was taken into a cool, dark room in the cutest office you have ever seen. The toilet door is crooked, the kitchen is something out of Vermeer, and there are secret doors and alleys. Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry, of the Harry Potter books, has met its equal. Now I know why CESS is so good at opening doors in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. At the office, they are forever opening doors looking for something." Thialda was on the CESS team that went to Lviv, Ukraine, for the Starlink training course. Unfortunately, one of



Thialda Tabak

her other projects was cancelled for reasons unrelated to her. During her final weeks at CESS, she edited the first Starlink module that is nearing completion. "My internship ended as warmly as it began, even though outside it was now much colder, with kisses and good wishes from my new friends. Thanks, guys, especially Ana Rudico, who was the only other female in the upstairs office. While Merijn, Erik, and Mark went on endlessly about football, we could always rely on each other."

Femke Flederus

..joined CESS in early July 2006 to replace Joke while she was on maternity leave. After two weeks of training on the job, Femke took over all financial and office business. To most of us, this is black magic, but she took to it like a fish to water. "I got to spend most of the summer with Jos Boonstra, and got to know him quite well. He decided to accept a job in Spain, so there was a lot to sort out. Later, it was fun working with our interns Ana, Thialda and Mark and the regular staff. I learned a whole lot about Eastern Europe from them. I wish them all the best.

Thanks to everyone, but especially Joke. I was able to do my job because she had created the perfect circumstances for me. She had organized everything so well that I had absolutely no problem taking over. All I can hope for is that she says the same thing about me now that I left CESS at the end of November."



Femke Flederus

Nora Vladi-Venema

..is an enterprising young lady with a winning smile, as all who visit our front office can see for themselves. Her proud and happy mother Joke Venema, who is also our Business Manager, recently returned from maternity leave. At first she wanted Nora to be the cover girl of this issue, but then decided to put the picture on her computer desktop instead. Nora has two brothers, Mikea (4) and Job (3), who are too busy fighting with dragons and dinosaurs to show much interest in their little sister.



The latest addition to the CESS Family: Baby Nora

Ritske Bloemendaal

The most recent addition to our staff used to be a sailor. In the 1970s, Ritske Bloemendaal worked for a shipping line based in Hong Kong and called Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen. Then he served in the Royal Netherlands Navy, retiring as a captain in 2005. Before entering military diplomacy he served on board various ships in different capacities for a period of twenty years. He worked in Washington DC as military diplomat, and with the Naval Staff in The Hague as a Foreign Liaison officer. His last assignment for the Ministry of Defence was defence attaché in Ankara from 2000-2005.

In this job, he cooperated closely with CESS during the early stages of our first Turkey programme (also see Editorial). He joined CESS officially as Programme Manager on 1 January 2007, to take charge of our new Turkey programme (also see News). As Ritske lives near The Hague with his family, he also keeps in touch with Netherlands government authorities for CESS.



Commentary

Turkey's Accession to the EU: Putting Strategic Interest Before Practical Objections

By Jacq. Wallage, mayor of Groningen

The possibility of Turkey joining the EU has sharply divided Europe. As early as 1963, the country signed an association treaty with the EU. In 1987, Turkey formally applied for membership. Now formal negotiations on accession are underway, but it is still unclear whether they will achieve their goal. Twenty years after Turkey's application, the whole process remains slow, laborious and in some ways shameful.

It is slow because complex issues are at stake, such as human rights and long-term economic development. It is laborious, because deep-seated tensions (e.g. regarding Greece and Cyprus) must be overcome. Finally, it is shameful because in parts of EU public opinion, xenophobic arguments are at play. The issue of Turkish accession is being misused to score political points about the integration of Turkish immigrants in EU countries.

I am a long-standing supporter of Turkish accession, although I accept that further improvements, especially regarding human rights, will be of decisive significance in this regard.

There is no denying that parts of Turkey lie outside Europe, both geographically and culturally. If on your way to the Atatürk dam you end up in Eastern Turkey, you are clearly no longer in Europe. However, the elites of Ankara and Istanbul are clearly oriented toward Europe, and all over Turkey, academics, journalists, bankers and artists evidently belong to the more western oriented part of the nation.

In Western Europe, the debate on Turkish accession is following the same lines as the debate on integration and Islam. In this regard I think it is essential to bear in mind that although most people in Turkey are believers in Islam, there is a sharp separation of church and state. Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, made this separation one of his principal themes. In today's world we find political Islam positioning itself against democracy, but Turkey is an indispensable partner for all those who are attached to democracy, wherever they may live. Most of all, perhaps, for those living in predominantly muslim countries.

For all its undeniable imperfections in areas like human rights and the rule of law, Turkey is of strategic interest in stopping the advance of political Islam. To now alienate Turkey from the process of accession is to open the door to radicalisation in Turkey and to deprive Europe and America of a partner in the region who day by day proves that Islam and democracy are compatible. They are not necessarily hostile to each other.



The mayor of Groningen,
Jacques Wallage

Turkish accession is also a litmus test for our own approach to Islam in Western Europe. No one who is serious about the need for a modern Islam and opposed to the growing polarisation between democracy and Islam can afford to continue barring Turkey from the Union. We really must make a choice. We can either do our utmost to support the modernisation of Turkey, or we can continue to block Turkish accession, and by doing so increase the risk that sooner or later Turkey will come under the sway of fundamentalist movements seeking to establish an Islamic republic.

Nor should we forget that the course that Turkey chooses to follow will also influence other countries that are close to Turkey, geographically or culturally. I am referring to the Turkic peoples of Asia, to whom Turkey is an example and a source of inspiration, and to moderate forces in the Middle East.

Large numbers of Turks live in the current European Union. Through them, millions of families in Turkey already have direct and personal relationships with countries like Germany, the Netherlands and Italy. By the same token, the rise of European tourism to Turkey and the proliferation of second homes are giving millions of Western European the opportunity to see Turkey for themselves. So the political and economic unification of Europe is enhanced by personal experiences and involvement. This has been the case since the process of enlargement began, and in this sense, there is nothing exceptional about Turkey.

As much as I look forward to welcoming Turkey into the Union, I do believe that the EU must insist on the fulfilment of all requirements for accession. Turkey has already carried out several of the necessary reforms, but many others remain to be completed, and some have not yet begun. Unfortunately, some of the most important criteria for assessing a candidate's suitability for accession are difficult to measure.

How do we measure democracy? We can check whether a candidate has put the institutions and structures of a democratic society in place. However, as CESS reports point out, democracy is also a matter of political behaviour, which is difficult to assess. As Turkey's democracy matures, we will see a strengthening of the rule of law, democratic control of the military, a better protection of human rights and civil liberties and greater rights for minorities. If the EU wants to support these developments, it must embrace Turkey, not isolate it. Political and strategic interests must take precedence over practical objections.

Colophon

Security Matters is published by the Centre for European Security Studies (CESS).

Editor: Sami Faltas. Contributors to this issue: Ritske Bloemendaal, Can Buharah, Thanos Dokos, Sami Faltas, Femke Flederus, Merijn Hartog, Mark Hobbelink, Meltem Müftüler Baç, Erik Sportel, Thialda Tabak, Joke Venema and Jacques Wallage.



Lutkenieuwstraat 31a
9712 AW Groningen
The Netherlands
t +31 50 313 25 20
f +31 50 313 25 06
info@cess.org
www.cess.org