

# Turkey's Contributions to PfP

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This article will discuss Turkey's role in NATO's approach to Partnership for Peace countries, and how the Alliance's new partnership policy may affect NATO's relations with these countries. The article examines Turkey's contributions to NATO's partnership policy, in particular to Partnership for Peace. The author emphasizes the sustainability that characterizes Turkey's relations with NATO.



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With the collapse of the Soviet threat, NATO has sought a new *raison d'être* in the post-Communist period. In developing this framework, NATO has identified new organizational missions. For example, through its strategic concepts it has set forth new duties such as peacekeeping, crisis management and cooperation-based security provision, beyond the duties stipulated under the North Atlantic Treaty. At the same time, the Alliance has expanded, welcoming new members, establishing partnership programs in different regions, helping with military modernization and rearrangement of power structures. These have become essential components of the Alliance's new security policy. These various developments have allowed the Alliance to maintain its crucial position, with respect to Turkish foreign and security policy, even after the Cold War. As Aybet has pointed out, the place of Turkey was predominantly a functional ally in the Cold War and the immediate post-Cold War era, and then as a strategic partner after September 11, 2001.<sup>1</sup>

With its 28 members and 40 partners, a mandate that covers energy security and missile defence systems, responsibility for multiple missions across three continents, NATO has become a global security organization. This process, which has changed NATO's structure, membership and functions, has directly influenced Turkey. Turkey has played a supportive role in this process and NATO's partnership policy is a remarkable example of this role.

#### *NATO's Partnership Policy*

The post-Cold War era brought about a new international system requiring the reorganization and reconstruction of international institutions. Accordingly, NATO has attempted to recalibrate its capabilities, interests and activities. This process has also led to the establishment of NATO's partnerships - Partnership for Peace (PfP), Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) - in different geographic regions to underpin NATO's changing role as an alliance that has taken on security roles beyond its treaty area. In addition to these formal partnership frameworks, NATO also cooperates individually with countries outside the Euro-Atlantic area that contribute to its missions

<sup>1</sup> Gülnur Aybet, "The Evolution of NATO's Three Phases and Turkey's Transatlantic Relationship", *Perceptions*, vol. XVII, no. 1, Spring 2012, pp. 19-20.

without being part of its partnership frameworks, such as Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and New Zealand.<sup>2</sup>

Adopted at the Lisbon Summit, a New Strategic Concept raised the profile of partnerships by promoting cooperative security to the level of one of the Alliance's three "essential core tasks", alongside collective security and crisis management. Following up on the Lisbon decisions, Allied foreign ministers endorsed the new partnership policy at their meeting in Berlin on 15 April 2011. The Allies also restated their goal of achieving cooperative security through partnership during NATO's Chicago Summit in May in 2012.

The partnership concept originated in bilateral contacts between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in 1990 during discussions on how to manage post-Cold War European security.<sup>3</sup> NATO's partnership policy has been a main component of the Alliance's new vision for the post-Cold War era. Since the early 1990's NATO has maintained multiple partnership frameworks which have over time served several functions. As Moore has noted, partnership initially constituted an essentially political means of integrating and democratizing Europe.<sup>4</sup> NATO's first partnership program, PfP, launched in 1994, paved the way for practical co-operation between NATO and the states of Central and Eastern Europe, including former Warsaw Pact members. PfP was an effective tool of NATO's enlargement policy, basically a security commitment and diplomatic embrace rather than a military effort. PfP offered a tailored solution between enlargement and maintaining stability in Europe, and aimed to establish cooperative relationships with new democracies undergoing transition periods. In this context NATO created a wide range of practical mechanisms, such as the

<sup>2</sup> These states have pledged troops and have committed financial contributions to NATO-led operations, especially to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The increasing value of these countries to NATO is also reflected in changing terminology to describe them. These states had formerly been referred to as "contact countries" however after the Riga Summit in 2006, they were also named "partners across the globe" or often simply as "global partners". After the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Mongolia were included in this classification.

<sup>3</sup> According to Kay, the partnership concept is consistent with an effort by the US to use bilateral and multilateral relationships to consolidate American primacy in the international system. For more information about the relationship between American national security objectives and the use of partnerships as a tool for managing the international security environment, see: Sean Kay, "Partnerships and Power in American Grand Strategy", *NATO: The Power of the Partnerships*, Ed. Hakan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary ve Magnus Petersson. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 18-40.

<sup>4</sup> Rebecca R. Moore, "Partnership Goes Global: The Role of Nonmember, Non-European Union States in the Evolution of NATO". *NATO in Search of a Vision*. ed. Gülnur Aybet and Rebecca Moore. Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2010, p. 232-233.

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Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and the Planning and Review Process (PARP), and activities to promote cooperation with partner countries. In the enlargement process, PfP served as an important instrument to foster security reform and prepared the partner countries for accession to the Alliance. In this respect, it can be said that this program has reached one of its important goals, given that twelve of the PfP countries are now NATO members.<sup>5</sup> PfP was considered as a gateway initiative for NATO membership, particularly for Eastern and Central Europe. However, it has not had that kind of influence in Central Asia and South Caucasus. This fact partly explains why concrete cooperation remains limited, even though all five Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) and three South Caucasus countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) take part in PfP. NATO's relationship with these countries is largely defined by the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

#### *Turkey's Role*

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As illustrated above, NATO's enlargement and partnership policies have played a crucial role in achieving NATO's strategic aims in the early post-Cold War era. The

<sup>5</sup> PfP has been an important institution in and of itself for non-NATO countries in northern and central Europe as well as being a mechanism for engagement at varying levels for countries of Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. PfP was employed to prepare the twelve nations incorporated as full members between 1999 and 2009: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The following states are still members of PfP: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia Federation, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Special cooperative links were also set up with two PfP countries: Russia and Ukraine.

enlargement policy has aimed to accept new members to provide stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The primary purpose of the partnership policy has been to develop relations with non-NATO countries. These two main policies have provided an opportunity for NATO to enlarge its sphere of influence.

Since it was proclaimed in 1994, Turkey has contributed to NATO's partnership policy to facilitate developing relations and cooperation with non-NATO countries. Pursuant to the decisions taken at the 1994 Brussels Summit, Turkey declared the establishment of the PfP Training Center at the Euro Atlantic Partnership Council meeting on 30 May 1997. Following the declaration, the Turkish PfP Training Center was inaugurated on 29 June 1998 and recognized by NATO on 12 February 1999. The Turkish PfP Training Center was the first such center to be officially recognized by NATO.<sup>6</sup> Since its inception, this center has trained approximately 14000 military personnel on several areas, including crisis management, border security, civil-military cooperation in peace support operations, arms control, international law of armed conflict and combatting human trafficking. As of February 2014, the Center has conducted 370 residential courses, 14 seminars and 72 mobile training activities. The Turkish PfP Training Center has also contributed to NATO's Iraq and Afghanistan Training Missions by accepting participants from these countries in the residential courses, conducting tailored courses and deploying mobile training teams.<sup>7</sup> Participation in these activities allows personnel of partner nations to build their capabilities and develop interoperability. Turkey also hosts one of NATO's fifteen accredited Centers of Excellence, the COE for Defense Against Terrorism. Some of the courses conducted in the Center are also open to partner countries personnel.

Through these centers, Turkey is working to establish an understanding of security based on cooperation and collaboration, between NATO and personnel from partnership countries. Turkey's active participation in PfP activities has increased its significance for the Alliance. This Center has given an opportunity to Turkey to act as a lead nation. It has also given NATO an opportunity

<sup>6</sup> There are currently 24 Peace of Partnership Training and Education Centers recognized by NATO. For the full list of these centers, see: <http://www.nps.edu/About/USPTC/PfP/PfPCenters.html>, (last visited) <http://www.bioem.tsk.tr/anasayfa.htm>, 25.02.2014.

<sup>7</sup> For more information, see, TSK Barış İçin Ortaklık Eğitim Merkezi Komutanlığı, "Katılım Durumu", (last visited) <http://www.bioem.tsk.tr/anasayfa.htm>, 25.02.2014.

to invest in Turkey through expanded training and capacity exchange without a large armed presence.

Turkey has provided support to other NATO partnership programs and its relations with global partners in addition to PfP. The fact that NATO expanded its fighting and intervention area following September 11 boosted the significance of the Alliance's partner-

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ships with Middle Eastern, East Mediterranean and Asia Pacific countries. Turkey supported NATO's said policies in its immediate geography, and helped manage those policies. Notably, ICI, which institutionalized cooperation with Gulf countries, was announced during the Istanbul Summit in 2004.<sup>8</sup> The underlying reason for Turkey's support for establishing relations with countries in its immediate surrounding under NATO's umbrella is that such initiatives will contribute to Turkey's security.<sup>9</sup>

*How will NATO's New Partnership Policy Affect Relations with PfP countries?*

NATO's New Partnership policy preserves the institutional partnership programs (PfP, MD, ICI); however all partners are also offered access to the whole spectrum of partnership activities NATO offers. It is clear that the new partnership policy envisages increased political cooperation with partner countries. The "Political Military Framework For Partner Involvement In NATO-Led Operations" is one of the documents of the Berlin package which provides for full consultation, cooperation, and transparency with operational partners and, as appropriate, potential operational partners, on all relevant aspects of the operation throughout its life-cycle.<sup>10</sup> This means that partners will have a bigger say in the preparation of operational planning decisions than before, although the North Atlantic Council still has the final word on decision-making in NATO-led operations.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> For more information about Turkey's contributions to ICI, see, Stephen F.Larrabee, "Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council", Turkish Studies, vol. 12, no. 4, December 2011, p. 689-698.

<sup>9</sup> Tarık Oğuzlu, "NATO Ortaklıkları ve Türkiye: Barış İçin Ortaklık, Akdeniz Diyalogu, İstanbul İş Birliği Girişimi, İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013, p. 29-42.

<sup>10</sup> NATO, *Political Military Framework For Partner Involvement In NATO-Led Operations*, 15 April 2011, (last visited) [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2011\\_04/20110415\\_110415-PME.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_04/20110415_110415-PME.pdf), 25.02.2014.

<sup>11</sup> Heidi Reisinger, *Rearranging Family Life and a Large Circle of Friends: Reforming NATO's Partnership Programmes*, Research Paper No.72, Rome: NATO Defense College, 2012, p. 4.

Under this new policy, NATO's specialized programs, IPAP and PARP, previously limited to PfP countries, are now open to all partners. All partners with which NATO has an individual program of cooperation have access to a new Partnership Cooperation Menu, which comprises some 1,600 activities, ranging from training in maritime operational planning to crisis response operations and courses on arms control, non-proliferation and terrorism. With this single pool of activities, the different approval procedures for the various work plans are eliminated.

There are two points to be underlined in relation to the likely implications of the new partnership policy. First, it is obvious that NATO's new partnership policy has shifted from a supply to a demand orientation. In other words, NATO tends to see it as the partners' responsibility to make the partnership effective. The impact of the financial crisis on the defence budgets of NATO member states is one of the major causes of this transformation. Secondly, with its new partnership policy, NATO is focusing more on developing its relations with global partners. In fact, this is directly related to both the change in international conjuncture and the Asia Pacific pivot in U.S. foreign policy which has occurred in conjunction with this change.

Given the different aims and interests across the partners, NATO's policy makers decided that NATO's new partnership policy needed to be flexible and variable. Yet, this objective also entails the risk that NATO may turn into a developed coalition of the willing led by more powerful states in the Alliance. For this reason, NATO must be much clearer about the aims of its partnerships and how they can contribute to Alliance as well as to partner interests. If the new partnership policy fails to achieve its objectives or becomes merely a developed coalition of the willing, NATO's purpose and necessity may be brought into question. To remain viable and relevant NATO must establish a consensus about what it wants to achieve with partners.

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## Conclusion

The post-Cold War Era, during which many elements of international security have entered into flux, the key feature of Turkey's relations with NATO is the emphasis on "sustainability". The change in perception of the out-of-area concept allows NATO to intervene in crises both inside and outside the Euro-Atlantic region, which in turn leads to consequences that influence international policy. NATO's self-reformation efforts throughout this process have in many ways coincided with the trajectories of Turkish foreign and security policies. The fact that Turkey's foreign policy, particularly throughout 1990's, was centered upon security reinforced the consistency of the relationship.

Turkey's contribution to the execution of the NATO's strategic concepts, announced in 1991 and 1999, is obvious. In the Bosnian and Kosovo crises, Turkey contributed to NATO's missions in both the pre-intervention and post-intervention stages. Turkey endorses NATO's enlargement and partnership policies, and has committed to improving relations with partners, particularly with new member countries both before and after their accession. Decisions and practices adopted in the 2000's created a perception that Turkey's foreign policy axis had shifted away from the West. Yet under the government of the Justice and Development Party, Turkey's relations with NATO have retained the focus on sustainability, and Turkey's policies have been consistent and aligned with NATO's partnership policy.