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**Documento de Trabajo**

**Serie Unión Europea y Relaciones Internacionales**

**Número 55 / 2012**

# **Turkey's Accession to the European Union: Going Nowhere**

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**William Chislett\***

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### **Turkey's Accession to the European Union: Going Nowhere**

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CEU Ediciones

Julián Romea 18, 28003 Madrid

[www.ceuediciones.es](http://www.ceuediciones.es)

Instituto Universitario de Estudios Europeos

Avda. del Valle 21, 28003 Madrid

[www.ideo.ceu.es](http://www.ideo.ceu.es)

ISBN: 978-84-15382-17-1

Depósito legal: M-2775-2012

Maquetación: Servicios Gráficos Kenaf s.l.

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# 1. Summary

Turkey's EU accession process has been stalled since the middle of 2010. The country has only opened 13 of the 35 chapters of EU law in more than six years, the last one during Spain's EU presidency in the first half of 2010. The Cyprus problem remains mired in a blame game. Meanwhile, Ankara's foreign policy toward the countries in its neighbourhood is much more assertive and the 'Turkish model' is gaining influence in the Arab spring countries.

## 2. The current situation<sup>1</sup>

Turkey's European Union accession talks have ground to a halt in all but name. They started in October 2005 and since then 13 chapters of EU law have been opened out of a total of 35, with none opened since July 2010, and only one provisionally closed. The last chapter to be opened was the one on the uncontroversial issues of food, phytosanitation and veterinary safety on the very last day of Spain's EU presidency during the first half of 2010.

The government of Spain is one of the few in the EU that actively supports Turkey's EU membership, and this backing cuts across the political divide. Both the Popular Party, back in power after eight years in opposition, and the Socialists are in favour of Turkey joining the EU if the country fulfils all the conditions.

Eight of the remaining 22 chapters have been suspended by the European Union since December 2006, because of Ankara's failure to open its ports and airports to Greek Cypriot traffic, five related to economic and monetary union are blocked by France, although Turkey meets the Maastricht criteria on the budget deficit and the level of public debt, and six by Cyprus (see Appendix 1). Ankara refuses to extend its customs union with the EU (since 1996) and implement the 2005 protocol regarding Greek Cypriot vessels –and hence recognise the Republic of Cyprus– unless there is also direct trade for the internationally unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Cyprus, divided since Turkey's invasion<sup>2</sup> of the island in 1974 into a Greek Cypriot south and the TRNC, which was triggered by a Greek-inspired coup, joined the EU in 2004, but Ankara only recognises the enclave in the north.

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<sup>1</sup> This Paper arose out of a seminar on Spain and Turkey on 16 December, 2011 organized by the Institute for European Studies of the San Pablo-CEU University in Madrid. I would like to thank Marcelino Oreja, the president of the Institute and a former foreign minister, and José María Beneyto, the director and a member of parliament for the Popular Party, for inviting me to participate in the seminar, and also the other speakers: professors Kemal Kirisci and Refik Erzan of Boğaziçi University, Istanbul; Manuel de la Cámara, a former Spanish ambassador to Turkey; Alberto Carnero, the international affairs director of FAES, and Román Escolano, the former director of institutional relations at BBVA. I also acknowledge guidance from Ayşe Sinirlioğlu, Turkey's ambassador in Madrid, and Antonis Toymazis, the Republic of Cyprus ambassador in Madrid.

<sup>2</sup> The Turkish government refuses to use the word invasion and calls its action a military intervention under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee between Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Not surprisingly, Turkish support for EU membership has declined since the peak of 73 per cent in 2004, before the negotiations started, according to the latest Transatlantic Trends Survey produced every year by the German Marshall Fund of the United States (see Figure 1). However, there was a ten-point increase in 2011 in the percentage of Turks who thought EU membership would be a good thing (48 per cent), the highest level since 2006, but only 26 per cent of respondents in the 12 EU countries surveyed expressed the same sentiment. While the proportion of Turks who thought it was likely the country would join the EU increased by seven points to 33 per cent, there was virtually no change in the EU, where 53 per cent still thought Turkey's membership was likely.

**Figure 1. Turkish Attitudes Toward Membership of the EU: Good vs. Likely (%)**

	<b>Membership a good thing</b>	<b>Likely to join</b>
2004	73	
2005	63	
2006	54	
2007	40	26
2008	42	26
2009	48	28
2010	38	26
2011	48	33

Source: Transatlantic Trends 2011.

Half of those polled in the 12 EU countries said Turkey's membership would not be good in economic terms for the EU, while 39 per cent agreed it would be beneficial. The French (63 per cent), Swedes (62 per cent), Germans (58 per cent) and Spanish (55 per cent) were the most likely to see Turkey's EU membership as negatively affecting the EU economy.

Disenchantment with the EU has led one-in-five Turks (20 per cent) to express support for Turkey to act in closest cooperation with the countries of the Middle East on international matters (see Figure 2). This is the same level as in 2010 (double that of 2009) and hardly signifies that Turkey is 'turning its back on the West', as claimed in some international media and government circles. Indeed, a larger share of Turkish respondents in 2011 (19 per cent) than in 2010 said Turkey should cooperate the closest with the EU on international matters.

**Figure 2. With Whom Should Turkey Cooperate Closest (percent agreeing)?**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Turkey should act alone	43	34	27
Countries of the Middle East	10	20	20
European Union countries	22	13	19
Russia	3	5	9
All	7	11	9
United States	4	6	8

Source: Transatlantic Trends 2011.

With no new chapters opened and the accession process deadlocked, the European Commission's latest annual progress report on Turkey, released last October, focused on constitutional reforms, the government's democratic opening, the trials of the alleged plotters, the Kurdish issue and, in particular, freedom of expression<sup>3</sup>. The EU's reports used to be road maps for Ankara to engage in legislative and political action, but now have little influence and are little more than a ritual exercise.

The deadlock has led to a slackening of reforms in Turkey and creeping authoritarianism. The Economist Intelligence Unit's 2011 democracy index labelled Turkey a 'hybrid regime' and ranked the country 88<sup>th</sup> out of 167 states. The socially conservative Justice and Development (AK) government of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, which has Islamic roots, has been in power since 2002 and has become less tolerant. Thanks, however, to a stellar economic performance (which shows signs of petering out), the AKP won an increased share of the vote (almost 50 per cent) in the 2011 general election.

One of the reasons for the rising intolerance is the lack of an effective opposition in parliament. The fiercely secularist Republican People's Party (CHP), the social democratic party that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk the founder of the Turkish Republic in 1923 established, is a pale shadow of its former self. It has tended to concentrate on petty issues. The CHP has been out of office since forming part of coalition governments between 1993 and 1996 and was not even represented in parliament between 1999 and 2002. However, its new leader, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, an ethnic Kurd from the heterodox Alevi sect (Erdogan is from the dominant Sunni sect), won more seats (135 of the 550) in the 2011 general election. Democracy within parties is also weak.

Turkey leads the world in the number of imprisoned journalists (97 at the latest count including distributors and publishers), according to the Turkish Journalists' Union<sup>4</sup>. The European Human Rights Court received nearly 9,000 complaints against Turkey for breaches of press freedom and freedom of expression in 2011, compared with 6,500 in 2009. Orhan Pamuk, a Turkish writer and Nobel laureate, was fined about \$3,670 last March for his statement in a Swiss newspaper that 'we have killed 30,000 Kurds and one million Armenians.'

While the EU report acknowledges that the 'media and public continued debating openly and freely a wide range of topics perceived as sensitive, such as the Kurdish issue, minority rights, the Armenian issue and the role of the military,' it expressed concern at the 'high number of violations of freedom of expression.' Turkey dropped in the press freedom ranking of Reporters without Borders from the 102<sup>nd</sup> position in 2008 and 122<sup>nd</sup> in 2009 to 138<sup>th</sup> out of 178 countries in 2010.

The government says that with the exception of four cases, the journalists arrested have all been charged with activities other than reporting such as their alleged involvement in the plot to topple the government known as Ergenekon. No one among the more than 300 suspects charged in the four-year long investigation, including senior military officers has yet been convicted, even though courts have heard more than 8,000 pages worth of indictments. Detainees in Turkey can be held for years before their cases are resolved<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> See the analysis of the report by Ilke Toygur published by the Elcano Royal Institute at [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano\\_eng/Content?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_in/zonas\\_in/europe/ari152-2011](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/europe/ari152-2011)

<sup>4</sup> See "Charges Against Journalists Dim the Democratic Glow in Turkey" by Dan Bilefsky and Sebnem Arsu (New York Times, 4 January, 2012) at [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/05/world/europe/turkeys-glow-dims-as-government-limits-free-speech.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=Charges%20against%20journalists&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/05/world/europe/turkeys-glow-dims-as-government-limits-free-speech.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Charges%20against%20journalists&st=cse)

<sup>5</sup> See the report of 10 January, 2011 by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights criticizing the legal system at <https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=2005423&SecMode=1&DocId=1842380&Usage=2>



In January, General Ilker Basbug, who retired as army chief in 2010, was arrested and accused of operating a series of websites issuing anti-government and anti-Islamist propaganda. He is the highest-ranking officer caught up in the long-running struggle between the Islamist-rooted government and the military, the bastion of secularism.

The EU progress report specifically mentioned the confiscation of an unpublished manuscript related to the Ergenekon investigation. Police seized copies of *The Imam's Army* by Ahmet Sik, who had been jailed a few weeks earlier. The book details the supposed dominance within the police of the influential Gulen movement, named after Fethullah Gulen, a preacher who has inspired the creation of a large network of schools that combine academic rigour with a moral education based on Islamic principles. His movement is considered to be Turkey's equivalent of the conservative Catholic organisation Opus Dei<sup>6</sup>.

Press freedom and freedom of expression is guaranteed by Turkey's constitution, but undermined by other legal provisions, and in practice only partly upheld. The criminal legislation 'is open to disproportionate use to limit freedom of expression', according to the EU report. A number of articles of the Criminal Code and of the Anti-Terror Law need to be revised and brought into line with EU standards. Turkish journalists say there is a climate of fear and self-censorship is practiced.

Turkey has also slipped a little in Transparency International's corruption perceptions index, which measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption. The country was ranked 61<sup>st</sup> in 2011 out of 183 countries, down from 56<sup>th</sup> in 2010, with a score of 4.2 (4.4 in 2010). The closer to 10 the cleaner the country.

Criticism of the AK party is also growing for curbs on other parts of society<sup>7</sup>, while the independence and impartiality of the judiciary has been challenged on the grounds that the 2010 constitutional amendments increased the executive's influence over the judiciary.

While the EU accession process is going nowhere (it hardly figured in the June 2011 general election campaign), the economy, the world's 17<sup>th</sup> largest, is booming like no other in Europe, so much so that it is becoming overheated and runs the risk of a hard landing. Real GDP growth was forecast at more than 7 per cent in 2011 (1.6 per cent for the euro zone and 0.6 per cent for Spain), down from 8.3 per cent in 2010 but well above the average 4.1 per cent of the past five years. UK Prime Minister David Cameron describes Turkey as the 'BRIC of Europe' (the acronym for the fast-growing economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China). Per capita income increased from \$3,500 in 2002 to \$10,761 in September 2011 (at current prices), largely because of currency appreciation. The rise (60 per cent) is less impressive in adjusted domestic prices.

Turkey's current account deficit (the second-largest in the world in absolute terms after the US) was close to 10 per cent of GDP last year, an unsustainable level. Inflation was around 10 per cent. The International Monetary Fund forecasts growth of 2.2% in 2012, still high by current European standards.

Inward foreign direct investment, including from Spain, took off in 2005 and while much lower in 2010 than the annual average until 2008 was higher than in 2009 and more than six times above the average for 1995-2004 (see Figure 3). The largest single investment in Turkey in 2010 was the acquisition by BBVA, Spain's second-largest bank, of 24.9 per cent of Garanti for \$5.8 billion.

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<sup>6</sup> See "Inspiring or Insidious" by Delphine Strauss (Financial Times, 29 April, 2011).

<sup>7</sup> See "Criticism Grows over Curbs on Civil Society" by Daniel Dombey (Financial Times, 25 November, 2011).

**Figure 3. Foreign Direct Investment in Turkey, 1995-2010 (millions of dollars)**

	\$ million	As % of GDP
1995-2004 (annual average)	1,404	6.6 (1995)
2005-2007 (annual average)	17,421	
2008	19,504	11.0
2009	8,411	23.4
2010	9,071	24.5

Source: World Investment Report 2011, UNCTAD.

The year 2012 could see even more friction between Turkey and the EU. France holds a presidential election, which could see a heightening of anti-Turkey sentiment<sup>8</sup>. Both President Nicholas Sarkozy, who faces a re-election bid, and Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor, want a 'privileged partnership' for Turkey in place of the full EU membership sought by Ankara. Official relations between Paris and Ankara reached a low point on 22 December, 2011, when the French national assembly passed a bill criminalising denial of the 1915-16 Armenian 'genocide.' It now has to go to the Senate<sup>9</sup>.

Ankara, which denies the mass murder of Armenians constituted genocide, retaliated by freezing political visits and joint military projects and withdrawing its ambassador. French warplanes were not allowed to land in Turkey and warships at Turkish ports, an extraordinary measure given that both France and Turkey are Nato allies. French companies' bids for Turkish government tenders could be affected. An estimated 500,000 citizens of Armenian descent live in France, and their votes could be crucial for Sarkozy.

Within Turkey, there has been an escalation of violence by fighters from the Kurdistan Workers party (PKK), a terrorist organisation that has waged a 27-year-old war in favour of a Kurdish state. The PKK has bases in the autonomous Kurdistan region in Iraq on Turkey's southeastern border. More than 250 people have died in attacks by rebels in the past six months in Turkey, including 115 members of the security forces. Turkish warplanes killed 35 civilians on 28 December when they hit suspected Kurdish targets in northern Iraq. Most of the dead were cigarette smugglers and not PKK militants.

Cyprus takes over the rotating six-month presidency of the EU next July. Ankara says it will have no direct contact with it, which will hardly endear it to even those countries that support its membership. The depths to which Turkey-EU relations have sunk were underscored by Abdullah Gül, the Turkish president, during his November 2011 official visit to the UK when he angrily told reporters, 'This half-a-country, this incomplete country will take over the EU Presidency. There will be a half-presidency leading a miserable Union.'

Neither the EU nor Ankara wants to throw in the towel. One is reminded of the old joke regarding the relationship between Turkey and the EU: Turkey would pretend to be working to join the EU, and the EU would pretend that it is working to accept Turkey. The deadlock is even more difficult to break now because the European Union has yet to find a way to resolve its debt problems. Countries are turning inward and with little appetite for adding a country the size and complexity of Turkey to their club.

<sup>8</sup> In an interview with *Le Monde* published on 13 December, 2011 Sarkozy said the 'European Union is primarily for the European continent. As far as I am aware, our Turkish friends, a great power, great nation, are mostly located in Asia Minor.'

<sup>9</sup> As of the end of 2011, 21 states officially recognize the Armenian genocide.

### 3. The Cyprus problem: still no light in the tunnel

All of Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, but the *acquis communautaire* only applies to the Greek Cypriot southern part of the island and not to the internationally unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (36 per cent of the territory) which has been occupied by Turkey since 1974. After the April 2004 referendum in which Turkish Cypriots voted overwhelmingly 'yes' for the Annan Plan to reunify Cyprus (Greek Cypriots massively rejected it), the European Council promised to alleviate the TRNC's economic seclusion<sup>10</sup>.

The first action of a divided Cyprus (see Figure 4) as a EU member was to block this gesture. The EU insists that Ankara must first fulfil its obligation to open its ports and airports to their traffic and thus recognise the Republic of Cyprus. Recip Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish prime minister, feels betrayed by the EU after Ankara successfully encouraged Turkish Cypriots to accept the Annan Plan.

Figure 4. Cyprus



Source: BBC.

Negotiations to reunify the island drag on: Demetris Christofias, the Greek Cypriot leader, has held more than 120 direct meetings with Dervish Eroglu, the Turkish Cypriot leader, and Mehmet Ali Talat, Eroglu's predecessor, since 2008, under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, but little has been achieved<sup>11</sup>. The negotiations are based on the principle that 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed' and on a framework endorsed by the United Nations<sup>12</sup>. Reuniting the island, unlike fulfilling the Ankara protocol, is not a *sine qua non* for Turkey's entry into the EU, although it is difficult to believe it would happen without a settlement.

The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, appeared to offer a way out of the stalemate over implementing the 2005 protocol, by granting the European Parliament a voice in the direct trade matter. But hopes were dashed when the EP's legal affairs committee questioned the legal basis on which the European Commission had proposed direct trade between the EU and the TRNC.

<sup>10</sup> US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told the House Foreign Affairs Committee on 22 April, 2009 that the Annan plan failed because it imposed on the Cypriot people provisions 'that would be unacceptable to Western democracies.'

<sup>11</sup> The author played a small part in international diplomacy over Cyprus by helping during a visit to the TRNC to get Talat invited to Madrid in March 2010 during Spain's EU presidency.

<sup>12</sup> 'A Cyprus settlement must be based on a state of Cyprus with a single sovereignty and international personality and a single citizenship, with its independence and territorial integrity safeguarded, and comprising two politically equal communities, as defined in the relevant Security Council resolutions in a bicomunal and bizonal federation and that such a settlement must exclude union in whole or in part with any other country or any form of partition or secession.'

Christofias and Eroglu met the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, for the fifth time at the end of October at Green Tree Estate near New York. After their previous meeting in July, it was hoped that the two leaders would come to the Green Tree meeting with agreement on all core issues in domestic matters (i.e. those not related to external security). They made some progress on economic and policing issues, but none on the much hotter political issues of how to elect the president for the whole of the island; what to do with property abandoned by the displaced during the military conflict (but now inhabited by others (mainly Turkish settlers); where to draw the boundary in a new federation; and how many people of Turkish origin would enjoy citizenship in the new federation. While the Turkish Cypriots spoke positively about the meeting, the Greek Cypriots insisted that nothing new had been agreed.

The two leaders promised yet again to reach agreement on core internal issues before another meeting with Ban Ki-moon in January, which would be a precondition for an international conference bringing in the countries that signed the 1960 Guarantee Treaty (Turkey, Greece and the UK).

The UN's patience is wearing thin: its peacekeeping force in Cyprus is one of the longest-running such missions in the world. Cyprus takes over the EU's rotating presidency in July 2012 and if no deal is reached before then, the UN could suspend its talks. This could only be done, however, with a new Security Council resolution. It would be a face-saving way for the UN to withdraw from the negotiations if it feels the two communities are unwilling to live together in the same territory. Alexander Downer, the UN's special envoy to Cyprus and a former foreign minister of Australia, has been quite outspoken about the lack of progress<sup>13</sup>.

Furthermore, the immensely fraught Cyprus problem has been compounded by a dispute over offshore oil and gas exploration in Cyprus' exclusive economic zone, which has enraged Ankara. The Texas-based firm Noble Energy began drilling last September, defying Turkish demands to desist. In response, Ankara sent ships and submarines to the area and raised the stakes over drilling rights around the divided island by saying it might provide naval escorts for survey vessels exploring for oil and gas off the coast of Cyprus. Christofias announced on 28 December, 2011, the discovery of a natural gas field holding an estimated 5-8tn cubic feet.

The Cypriot and Israeli governments signed in December 2010 an agreement delimiting the maritime boundary between the two countries. The oil exploration area borders waters with Israel, which shares around 20% of the gas field. This accord came after Turkey's relations with Israel reached a low point in the May, following the Israeli raid on a Turkish-flagged aid flotilla seeking to break the Gaza blockade, in which nine Turks died.

Ankara's position is that the 'Greek Cypriot administration does not represent in law or in fact the Turkish Cypriots and Cyprus as a whole. As such, it is entitled to neither negotiate and conclude international agreements nor adopt laws regarding the natural resources on behalf of the whole island which belongs to both sides.' Ankara regards the Greek Cypriots' 'provocative' activities as the 'primary destabilizing factor in terms of the UN settlement process, claiming that Cyprus is violating international Law.

In response to Turkey's gunboat diplomacy, the European Council statement issued after its meeting on 5 December, 2011 urged Ankara to 'commit itself unequivocally to good neighbourly relations and to the

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<sup>13</sup> He told the *Cyprus Observer*, a weekly newspaper in the TRNC, in June 2010: 'A lot of people love the verbal minefield, for many of them it's an excuse never to reach an agreement; they have different definitions of the same words, they're mainly English words, they define them differently, they debate them differently... If you want Cyprus to be the global capital of semantic debate that's one option for Cyprus, if you want to solve the Cyprus Problem that's another'. He went on to say 'it's easy to sound in favour of a solution... you can train a parrot in a pet shop to say that'.

peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice. In this context, the Union urges the avoidance of any kind of threat, source of friction or actions that could damage good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Furthermore, the EU stresses again all the sovereign rights of EU member states which include, inter alia, entering into bilateral agreements, in accordance with the EU *acquis* and international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.’

Two days after drilling began, Turkey’s prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and Eroglu signed a continental shelf delimitation agreement in the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York, which is null and void by all international norms and standards. This agreement delineates a part of Turkey’s and the TRNC’s continental shelves in the Eastern Mediterranean determined on the basis of what they regard as international law and equitable principles. The TRNC government has issued licences for exploration and exploitation of oil and gas reserves to the Turkish Petroleum Corporation.

Eroglu’s proposal to Ban Ki-moon for a suspension of all activities related to oil and gas reserves off the coast of Cyprus and for a committee to be formed by the two communities and the UN to obtain the written mutual consent of the two sides and determine their relevant shares was returned to the Turkish Cypriots via UN without further comment last October.

Meanwhile, the idea of a negotiated partition is no longer such a taboo among the international community. Jack Straw, the former British Foreign Minister (2001-2006), caused a stir in Cyprus when he raised the idea in an article in *The Times* in November 2010 ‘The chances of a settlement would be greatly enhanced if the international community broke a taboo, and started publicly to recognize that if ‘political equality’ cannot be achieved within one state, then it could with two states –north and south. This will be very controversial in the UN as well as the EU. Russia will be vehement in its opposition– as it was with Kosovo. But those who respond by inviting me to wash my mouth out with carbolic might like to say how much longer the EU and the UN can tolerate the current approach, whose only consequence so far has been to paralyse the development of relations with Turkey<sup>14</sup>.’

Even if a comprehensive settlement is reached to reunify the island, it is by no means certain that Greek Cypriots would vote ‘yes’ to it in another referendum. They have enjoyed the benefits of EU membership since 2004 and unless they are convinced an agreement would serve their long-term interests and that Turkish Cypriots have not won major concessions, they might again reject a deal. ‘Each side has heard the other’s positions a zillion times over and knows what the narrow middle ground is, so they could agree by next week if they wanted to,’ said an expert on Cyprus who has worked with the UN on the problem. ‘It’s just they don’t trust each other enough to want to.’

The friction between Turkey, an increasingly assertive player in its region, and Cyprus is a major barrier to closer links between the EU and NATO, to the detriment of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). While Turkey, with NATO’s second-largest standing army after the US and an early member of the Alliance (in 1952) vetoes any attempt at allowing the Cypriot authorities to access classified NATO documents, Cyprus (not a member of NATO) blocks Turkish participation in EU defence bodies. Turkey has no access to EU documents relating to military missions (even those in which it participates), and is not even allowed as an observer in relevant decision-making processes

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<sup>14</sup> See “No ifs or buts, Turkey must be Part of the EU” by Jack Straw in *The Times* of 8 November, 2010.

## 4. Europe's emerging energy corridor

The wrangling between Turkey and Cyprus over oil exploration is taking place against a backdrop of the EU's growing energy dependency and the role that Turkey is assuming as an energy corridor between Central Asia and Europe. If Turkey and Cyprus had 'normal' relations, oil and gas discovered off the island's coast could be transported to Europe via the network in Turkey of pipelines, but in the current circumstances this is a pipedream.

EU countries obtain oil from a large number of sources, but in the case of natural gas there is a very high level of dependency on Russia. This is neither politically wise or economically advantageous. When Moscow turned off the gas to Ukraine in 2006, it sent shudders across Europe as customers are increasingly dependent on Russia to keep warm.

There are currently seven pipelines in operation in Turkey (see Figure 5) and more planned including the 3,900km EU-backed Nabucco pipeline, construction of which is now scheduled to begin in 2013 after delays, cost overruns and problems in nailing down supply deals. It will link the gas-rich Caucasus and Central Asia to energy-hungry European nations. The first gas is scheduled to flow in 2017. The pipeline is aimed at meeting 5% to 10% of European gas requirements as well as functioning as an alternative supply route that would end the complete dependency of some eastern European member states on Russia. The main supplier countries in this project, whose partners include Austria's OMV, RWE of Germany and Botas of Turkey, are Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan (both of which have close relations with Turkey as they are part of the Turkic world) and Iraq. Turkey is also talking about connecting an export pipeline from Kurdistan to the Nabucco pipeline.

**Figure 5. Turkey as an Energy Hub. Pipelines in Operation**

	<b>Basic Facts</b>	<b>Turkey's Involvement</b>
Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline	1,768 km long; operational since May 2006; daily capacity: 1 million barrels	669 km on Turkish territory, including the Ceyhan terminal, 6.53% ownership consortium.
South Caucasus (Baku-Tbilisi-Ezurum, BTE) gas pipeline	669 km on Turkish territory, including the Ceyhan terminal. 6.53% ownership consortium.	Turkey holds 9% in the consortium, main consumer.
Tabriz-Ankara gas pipeline	2,577 km long, operational since 2001; annual capacity: 10 bcm.	BOTAS operates the Turkish section, Turkey is the consumer.
Blue Stream gas pipeline	1,213 km, links Russia and Turkey through a pipe running under the Black Sea, operational since February 2003, annual capacity: 16 bcm.	Turkey owns sections on its territory, the sub-sea section belongs to a consortium between Gazprom and Italy's ENI. Turkey is the consumer, 2/3 of its gas supplies come from Russia.
Interconnector Turkey-Greece (ITG) (gas)	296 km long, operational since November 2007, annual capacity: 7 bcm (currently working at 0.7)	210 km on Turkish territory, establishes Turkey as a transit country.
Kirkuk-Ceyhan oil pipeline	970 km long, operational since 1976, daily capacity: 1.6 million barrels	Turkey hosts Iraq's largest crude oil export line.



Western gas pipeline	842 km long, operational since 1988, brings Russian gas to Turkey shipped through Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine, capacity: 8 bcm per year.	Turkey is the consumer, 2/3 of its gas supplies come from Russia.
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Source: Mark Leonard in “Turkey: an actor, not an issue” in *The Spectre of a Multipolar Europe*, European Council on Foreign Relations (October 2010)

The Nabucco pipeline would rival the Nord Stream pipeline linking Russia and Germany under the Baltic Sea. This began to operate last November and when fully operational as of 2013 will carry 55 billion cubic metres of gas into Germany from where it will be piped to the Netherlands, France, Denmark and the UK. In a separate move last December, Turkey agreed to host the Black Sea section of the South Stream pipeline in its territorial waters. This pipeline, seen as a competitor to the Nabucco pipeline, will transport up to 63 billion cubic metres a year of Russian gas to south and central Europe from 2015, reducing Russia’s dependence on gas export routes across Ukraine.

In the words of Ruprecht Polenz, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the German parliament, ‘the supreme importance of secure energy supplies for our economic development now and in future makes it seem sensible to incorporate Turkey into the EU, and thus make it part of the common energy supply area into which the EU ought to develop<sup>15</sup>.’

## 5. A more assertive and independent foreign policy

With the ending of the Cold War, when Turkey ceased to be the sentinel on the front line, and the EU accession process deadlocked, it was only natural that at some point Ankara would choose to forge a more independent and strident foreign policy towards its backyard that reflected its own interests and not primarily those of Washington, as well as its burgeoning economic strength. Turkey borders the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East, all of them regions of conflict.

Security considerations dominated Turkey’s traditional foreign policy; the military played a major role in it. Resort to coercive and confrontational methods was not unusual. Turkey came to the brink of war with Armenia in 1992, Greece in 1996, and Syria in 1998.

In sharp contrast, the ‘zero problems’ policy of Ahmet Davutoglu, Erdogan’s former chief foreign policy adviser, who has been foreign minister since 2009, represents a search for dialogue and cooperation and underscores the emergence of Turkey as a trading state, the rise of business groups and the need for markets. Foreign trade has surged in the last 20 years (see Figure 6). Total exports to neighbourhood countries rose from \$1,809 million in 1991 to \$24,849 million in 2010 and imports increased from \$2,163 million to \$43,047 million.

<sup>15</sup> See p. 57 of Ruprecht Polenz’s Paper for the Körber Foundation ([http://www.koerber-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/internationale\\_politik/pdf/2010/Koerber\\_Policy\\_Paper\\_No\\_12.pdf](http://www.koerber-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/internationale_politik/pdf/2010/Koerber_Policy_Paper_No_12.pdf))

**Figure 6. Growth and Distribution of Turkey's Foreign Trade, 1991, 2010 (\$ million)**

	1991		2010	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
Neighbourhood total <sup>1</sup>	1,809	2,163	24,849	43,047
Bulgaria	76	140	1,498	1,701
Russia <sup>2</sup>	611	1,097	4,632	21,596
Iran	487	91	3,043	7,645
Iraq	122	492	6,043	1,355
Syria	264	67	1,849	663
Arab world total	1,907	3,293	22,478	10,012
Israel	79	78	2,083	1,360
European Union	7,348	9,896	52,659	72,215
United States	913	2,255	3,768	12,318
Overall total	13,593	21,047	113,899	185,497

(1) The other countries are Greece, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia. (2) The 1991 figure is all of the USSR and the one for 2010 just Russia.

Source: TUIK.

Not only has the volume of trade grown enormously, but regional grouping structure of exports and imports has also changed to a significant extent (see Figure 7).

**Figure 7. Foreign Trade with Regional Groupings (% of total)**

	1991	2010
European Union	49.8	41.7
Middle East	17.4	15.9
United States	9.2	5.4
Ex-Soviet Union	6.4	14.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	1.1	1.5
Others	16.1	20.7

Source: TUIK.

There has also been a considerable movement of people into Turkey from all countries, due, among other reasons, to more liberal visa policies and the country's very strong job creation capacity, except for Israel with whom relations have deteriorated over the past couple of years (see Figure 8). The increased volumes of trade and movements of people underscore the much greater integration of Turkey into its neighbourhood.



**Figure 8. Movement of People by Neighbourhood Countries\***

	1995	2010	% change 1995-2010
Iraq	15,363	280,328	1,725
Syria	111,613	899,494	706
Egypt	18,237	61,560	238
Iran	349,655	1,893,170	470
Israel	261,012	109,559	-58
Former Soviet block neighbours	1,487,162	7,228,477	386
European Union	3,182,641	14,747,142	363
Total	6,762,956	28,632,204	323

(\*) The figures include tourists and immigrants and anyone else moving in and out of Turkey.

Source: Turkish National Police.

As a EU candidate country, Turkey has to align its policies with the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It has gone along with many of the CFSP decisions, but on issues that are fundamental to its foreign policy, particularly in the 'Arab spring' countries where Ankara responded quickly to the paradigm shift (for example, it took the lead in calling for Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's president, to step down) the government has increasingly pursued its own line unilaterally (or non-aligned). This has led to misguided accusations that Turkey is turning its back on the West in favour of re-engagement with the lands once ruled by its sultans during the Ottoman Empire.

Many of the first steps taken under the initial phase of the 'zero problems' policy were positive: mending fences with Syria (the risk of war in 1998 over giving shelter to the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in Damascus gave way to visa-free travel); signing a landmark deal with Armenia in 2009 to open the shared border (yet to happen) closed by Ankara since 1993 in support of its ally Azerbaijan (in conflict with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh); hosting talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan; and liaising with Sunni militants in Iraq.

Yet Ankara now has no shortage of problems with countries in its region, some of them more acute than in the past. Reconciliation and dialogue has been replaced by confrontation. Relations with Syria have deteriorated to such an extent that Erdogan compared the embattled President Bashar al-Assad to Hitler in December 2011 and called on him to resign. Turkey has provided refuge to Syrians fleeing the brutality of the regime, a platform for the opposition Syrian National Council and undisclosed assistance to the Free Syrian Army.

As regards Iran, after defying its western allies and voting in 2010 against the UN Security Council's additional sanctions on Tehran in a bid to find a diplomatic solution to the controversial nuclear programme, Turkey and Iran now spar over the future of the Syrian regime and take opposite sides on Nato's anti-missile defence shield<sup>16</sup>. In the latest sign of growing tensions between the two regional powers, Ali-Akbar Velayati, senior adviser to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, said last December that Turkey's 'secular Islam' was a version of western liberal democracy and unacceptable for countries going through an 'Islamic awakening.'

<sup>16</sup> In June 2009, when Iranians took to the streets to protest election results, Erdogan sent his congratulations to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, raising eyebrows among western leaders.

His outburst followed a threat voiced by Hossein Ebrahimi, an Iranian member of parliament, over Turkey's missile defence radar base, which is being built in Malatya. If Iran were attacked, its first target would be the base, he said.

Relations with Israel (which for long saw Turkey as its only Muslim ally) have also taken a big hit. Ankara suspended military agreements with Israel and reduced diplomatic representation to second secretary level last September, following the UN report on Israel's raid on a Turkish-flagged aid flotilla seeking to break the Gaza blockade, and Tel Aviv's refusal to apologise<sup>17</sup>.

Ankara has stuck its neck out in its region, making Erdogan the most popular politician on the Arab street. He was rapturously received in Cairo and Tunis during 2011 where he promoted a market economy, secularism and democracy. As Hugh Pope and Peter Harling of the Crisis Group reported, Ankara 'has not hunkered down defensively (like Israel and the surviving Arab regimes), championed uprisings selectively (like AlJazeera television and the Gulf backing predominantly Sunni uprisings, Hizbollah and Iran supporting Shiites in Bahrain), or promoted democracy while fearing the result of any vote (like the West, which would rather contain the Islamists and change nothing to its stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict)<sup>18</sup>'.

Davutoglu defined Turkey's foreign policy in the following way. 'There are three types of leader in this region. Those who see change as a must and want to lead and manage it; those who accept the need for change but who are following rather than leading in the hope of gaining time; and those who are resisting change. The third category will disappear, the second can get by for a time, but only the first category will survive. We are telling our friends in the region we want them in that first category<sup>19</sup>.'

The policy, however, has become problematic as it is an uneasy mix of alliance with the US and confrontation with Israel, support for Muslim democrats and links to other authoritarian leaders. As Katinka Bayrisch of the Centre for European Reform notes, Turkey and the EU 'would gain immensely from coordinating their activities in the Middle East and North Africa. The European Union has valuable experience in institution-building and economic reform. Turkey, meanwhile, is a credible actor in the region (its status as an imperfect democracy probably adds to its appeal)<sup>20</sup>'.

The European External Action Service is integrating foreign and other policies including enlargement, neighbourhood, energy, and aid. Davutoglu, EU High Representative Catherine Ashton, the EU's Enlargement Commissioner, Stefan Fule, and Egemen Bagis, Turkey's Chief EU Negotiator, meet but only once a year. Turkey should be formally brought into the CFSP, but Cyprus is blocking any suggestion of this, even though Turkey is the second-largest troop contributor to Operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite the decision-making body –the European Defence Agency– being completely off-limits to Ankara.

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<sup>17</sup> The Israeli government cancelled in December 2011 a \$141 million contract to supply Turkey with an advanced aerial intelligence system as it feared the delicate technology could end up in the hands of hostile governments, like Iran.

<sup>18</sup> See <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/are-there-zero-problems-for-turkey.aspx>

<sup>19</sup> See "Turkey Offers Stability to Stormy Region" by David Gardner (Financial Times, 7 June, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> See "Why the EU and Turkey Need to Coordinate their Foreign Policies" by Katinka Barysch (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 31 August, 2011) at <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2011/08/31/why-eu-and-turkey-need-to-coordinate-their-foreign-policies/6bmo>

## 6. To what extent is the ‘Turkish model’ applicable to the Middle East and North Africa?

Turkey’s EU accession process is engineering a political and economic transformation of the country, which is being closely watched in the Middle East and North Africa. Just as the EU’s soft power –defined by Joseph Nye, the inventor of the term, as the ‘ability to shape the preferences of others’– is credited with transforming eight formerly communist Eastern and Central European countries into democracies and free market economies and for acting as a catalyst for the modernisation of Turkey, so too Turkey is a source of inspiration in its region for those who believe that Islam and democracy can coexist.

Figures 9 and 10 show how far ahead Turkey is of other Muslim countries in its region. These nations, to a much greater extent than Turkey, are held back by three critical deficits –knowledge, freedom and women’s empowerment<sup>21</sup>. Another factor is Islamic Law, which has acted as a drag on development by slowing or blocking the emergence of central features of modern economic life, including private capital accumulation, corporations, large-scale production and impersonal exchange<sup>22</sup>.

**Figure 9. Comparative Indicators of Economic Performance**

Region, country or country grouping	Human Development Index	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Adult literacy rate (%)	Per capita GDP (PPP US\$)
Middle East	0.73	69.4	74.7	9,418
Arab League	0.70	68.5	69.6	8,103
Iran	0.78	71.2	82.3	10,955
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>88.7</b>	<b>12,955</b>
OECD (except Turkey)	0.94	77.8	99.0	33,755

Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2007-8, prepared by Timur Kuran, page 4 of his book *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton University Press, 2011).

Notes: As of 2007, the Arab League had 22 members and the OECD included 30 of the world’s most industrialized countries. Regional and organization averages are population-weighted. Certain indexes were unavailable for three Arab League members (Iraq, Palestinian Authority and Somalia).

<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Turkey’s rankings in gender equality, transparency and educational achievement are low.

<sup>22</sup> This overlooked issue is studied by Timur Kuran in *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Bank the Middle East* (Princeton University Press, 2011).

**Figure 10. Comparative Indicators of Political Performance**

Region, country or country grouping	Civil liberties 1 (most) to 10	Political rights 1 (strongest) to 10	Corruption perceptions 1 to 10 (least corrupt)	Rule of law -2.5 to 2.5 (best)
Middle East	5.1	5.6	2.9	-0.3
Arab League	5.4	6.1	2.8	-0.6
Iran	6.0	6.0	1.8	-0.8
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>0.1</b>
OECD (except Turkey)	1.4	1.1	6.8	1.2

Sources: Freedom House, *Freedom in the World Report*, 2008, first two columns; Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index, 2009 World Bank Rule of Law Indicators, 2008 prepared by Timur Kuran, page 17 of his book *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton University Press, 2011).

After meeting Turkish President Abdullah Gül last March, Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, acting president and chairman of Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, said the 'Turkish experience is the closest experience to the Egyptian people. Turkey is the model to inspire from.' Something similar was said by Rashid al-Ghannushi, the formerly exiled leader of the Tunisian Islamist movement, Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, and Tariq Ramadan, professor of contemporary Islamic studies at Oxford University. These people are not on the same page, but all of them, from different perspectives, view Turkey as a template.

A survey, 'The Perception of Turkey and the Turks in Egypt', conducted by BILGESAM at several Egyptian universities during 2010-2011 found that 63 per cent of Egyptians considered Turkey to be a good role for Middle Eastern countries and 75% wanted Turkey to play a more active role in the Middle East.

The 2011 Arab Attitudes survey, conducted by IBOPE Zogby International for the Arab American Institute Foundation, provided further evidence of Turkey's popularity in the Arab world. Support for Turkey's policies ranged from 45 per cent in Jordan to 80 per cent in Morocco and 98 per cent in Saudi Arabia. For the second year running, Erdogan was the most-admired leader in Arab countries, according to the 2011 Annual Arab Public Opinion Survey, conducted by the Brookings Institution's Shibley Telhami. In the five countries polled (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and UAE, Turkey was seen to have played the 'most constructive' role in the Arab events.

The key elements of the 'Turkish model' are secularism, democracy and political Islam; civil-military relations, market-state relations, links to the West and state traditions, all of which have helped to modernise Turkey and made the *sui generis* country something of a beacon in its region. 'The feature that makes Turkey attractive throughout the region is the fact that it is a predominantly Islamic yet secular country that has successfully accommodated the rise of political Islam', says Sinan Ülgen<sup>23</sup>. 'The unique cohabitation between secularism and political Islam is where the Arab world sees Turkey's potential value as a model.'

<sup>23</sup> See page 5 of "From Inspiration to Aspiration: Turkey in the New Middle East" (Carnegie Europe, December 2011) at [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/turkey\\_mid\\_east.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/turkey_mid_east.pdf)

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) won its third absolute majority in parliamentary elections last June (326 of the 550 seats), and with an increased share of the vote (see Figure 11). Political Islam did not arrive with the AKP, but its first victory in 2002 marked a watershed in the country's political history since the founding of the Republic in 1923 by the ardent secularist Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire (see Figure 12).

**Figure 11. Turkish Parliament Seats and Percentage of Votes, 2002-2011**

Parties	2002	2007	2011
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	363 (34%)	340 (46.6%)	326 (49.9%)
Republican People's Party (CHP)	178 (19%)	112 (20.8%)	135 (25.9%)
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)		71 (14.3%)	53 (12.9%)
Independents*		27 (5.2%)	36 (6.6%)
Voter turnout (%)	79.0	84.4	86.7

(\*) From various political affiliations but mainly the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party.

Source: Supreme Electoral Board.

**Figure 12. Political Islam in Turkey: % of Vote and Seats in Parliament Held by Islamist parties, 1977-2011**

Party	1977		1987		1991		1995		1999		2002		2007		2011	
	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S
Nat. Salv.	8.6	24			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Welfare	-	-	7.2	0	16.9	62	21.4	158			-	-	-	-		
Virtue	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.4	111			-	-		
AKP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34.0	363	46.4	340	49.9	326

V = votes; S = seats.

Source: Supreme Electoral Board.

The first openly Islamist party, the National Salvation Party (NSP), served as a partner in a number of coalition governments in the 1970s and was disbanded after the 1980 military coup. This was followed by the Welfare Party of Necmettin Erbakan which won the 1995 elections and governed in a coalition with the centre-right True Path Party. This coalition was forced out of office in February 1997 following an ultimatum from the military, the bastion of secularism and constitutionally its defender, accusing the government of undermining secular rule. The military has overthrown four governments since 1960. Welfare was subsequently outlawed by the Constitutional Court and split into two, the more traditionally Islamist Felicity Party and the AKP under Recep Tayyip Erdogan, which has strived to brand itself as a socially conservative rather than an Islamist party.

The AKP has successfully become a broad mosque party, but not without running up against the military and the judiciary and the fiercely secularist parties, which have tried to achieve in the courts or encourage the military to do what they have been unable to manage in elections.

In 2007, Erdogan called and won early elections in July 2007 to resolve a crisis with the military after it threatened to intervene if he pushed ahead with the candidate for the presidency, Abdullah Gül, the foreign minister, to replace Ahmet Necdet Sezer, a former judge. Gül was subsequently elected president by the parliament. In 2008, the AKP escaped being banned by the Constitutional Court by only one vote.

Before Turkey began, as of 2005, its EU accession process, the military was the main institution that provided checks and balances on politicians and its conception of secularism, albeit undemocratically and through a narrow prism. However, when the army staged coups, the generals always returned the country to civilian rule. As Ömer Taspınar of the Brookings Institution noted, 'The Turkish military rule, unlike the Egyptian one, has never produced an officer who stayed in power for decades. There has been no Turkish Augusto Pinochet, Francisco Franco, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, Gamal Abdal Nassar or Mubarak<sup>24</sup>.'

Today, as a result of reforms bringing Turkey into line with EU norms, the military's tutelage of governments and political influence has been greatly reduced, but Turkey has yet to produce fully democratic institutions that take its place and act as a counterbalance to executive power. This is particularly true of the judiciary and the media.

How relevant is the 'Turkish model' in the Arab context? The Arab spring countries and any more that join the revolution have very different histories to that of Turkey, which, institutionally at least, has been gradually anchored in Europe since becoming a member of the Council of Europe in 1949, three months after it was founded by 10 countries. Nato membership since 1952 has also played a key role in keeping Turkey close to the West.

With fits and starts, Turkey has been evolving for some 60 years towards a democratic, market-oriented country, unlike Arab countries. Kemal Kirisci, a Turkish political scientist, calls Turkey's democracy a 'work in progress' and contends that the 'Turkish model' benefits from this as it makes it much easier for the Turkish experience and efforts to be received more favourably compared to Western players. The model benefits from not being tainted by a 'regime change' agenda that arouses much suspicion among the Arab public.

Model may be too strong a word, for it implies that it can be 'exported', but Turkey can certainly act as a credible beacon for several reasons. The country is close to the Middle Eastern and North African countries, shares the same religion, its level of economic development is closer than that of many European states and the liberal visa policy enables many people from the region to come and see Turkey's evolving modernisation for themselves. The ruling AKP is also engaging with the new political parties in the Arab world.

The US political scientist Samuel Huntington spoke of a 'demonstrative' effect of transitions, which could provide inspiration for democratisation efforts in other countries. Spain's transition to democracy between 1975 and 1978 is a case in point, particularly for some Latin American countries. Also working in Ankara's favour is the increased focus of its foreign policy on the Middle East and, in particular, the vociferous support for the Palestinian cause<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> See "Egypt and the Turkish Model", *Today's Zaman*, 7 February, 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Some analysts date Ankara's more assertive foreign policy from January 2009 when Prime Minister Erdogan stormed out of a panel at Davos of the World Economic Forum after the moderator of the session on the Middle East refused to allow Erdogan more time to rebut President Shimon Peres' defence of Israel's Gaza offensive. 'When it comes to killing, you know very well how to kill,' said Erdogan as he walked out.



The model, however, runs the risk of losing some of its glow and credibility because of the stalled progress in further democratisation in Turkey. The best way that Ankara can serve the Arab world's democracy aspirations is to keep on evolving. The more democratic Turkey becomes, the stronger the impact it will have on its neighbourhood.

## 7. Spain and Turkey: a budding relation

Spain and Turkey are enjoying a burgeoning economic and political relation. Two-way trade more than doubled between 2002 and 2010 to €6.8 billion (see Figure 13), some Spanish companies have won big contracts in Turkey and successive Spanish governments have supported Turkey's EU membership bid. In 2009, Turkey joined the group of countries (France, Portugal, Poland, Italy, Morocco and Germany) with which Madrid holds an annual government summit.

**Figure 13. Merchandise Trade between Spain and Turkey, 2002-2011 (€ billion)**

	Exports to Turkey	Imports from Turkey	Trade Volume	Balance
2002	1.45	1.40	2.85	+0.05
2003	1.73	1.79	3.52	-0.06
2004	2.59	2.45	6.04	+0.14
2005	2.69	2.88	5.57	-0.19
2006	2.78	3.56	6.34	-0.78
2007	2.94	4.21	7.15	-1.27
2008	3.00	3.69	6.69	0.69
2009	2.84	2.63	5.47	+0.11
2010	3.74	3.06	6.80	+0.68
2011*	3.45	2.58	6.03	+0.87

(\*) First nine months.

Source: ICEX.

Spanish exports to Turkey, which are more than those to China and India combined and excluding the EU are the third largest after those to the United States and Mexico, have been growing at a faster pace than imports. The main exports are cars, machinery, boilers, steel and iron, electrical appliances and chemicals. The leading imports from Turkey are car components (both countries have major motor industries), clothing and chemicals.

There are around 400 Spanish companies operating in Turkey, the total stock of Spanish investments in Turkey is about €8 billion and more than 300,000 Spanish tourists visit Turkey every year. BBVA, Spain's second-largest bank, acquired 24.9% of Garanti for €4.2 billion in 2010, and in October 2011 the OHL-Dimentronic consortium won the tender for the €900 million contract to build a tunnel under the Bosphorous and Técnicas Reunidas secured a €2.4 billion contract to modernise the refinery of Tüpras in Izmit, the largest ever awarded by the oil company. This is Técnicas Reunidas' seventh contract in Turkey. OHL carried out the railway work for the high-speed train link between Ankara and Eskisehir and another Spanish company, Construcciones y

Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles (CAF) supplied 12 trains with six carriages. Inditex, Europe's leading clothes retailer whose flagship is Zara, has 135 of its 5,402 stores in Turkey.

There is plenty of scope for deeper relations. The two countries share a number of historic similarities which, coupled with contemporary considerations, make them suitable partners<sup>26</sup>. Among them are:

- The countries are at opposite ends of the Mediterranean, on the periphery of Europe.
- Both have a long Islamic past (between 711 and the fall of the last Moorish kingdom in Granada in 1492 the whole of southern Spain and parts of the northern half were under Muslim rule).
- Both have had large empires, in Turkey's case the Ottoman Empire and in Spain's case its colonies in Latin America and the Philippines.
- Both were, or in Turkey's case still are, significantly agricultural economies.
- Both have undergone massive internal migration from rural areas to cities and towns.
- Both have 'exported' hundreds of thousands of workers to Europe (Turks began to emigrate to Germany at around the same time as Spaniards in the 1960s).
- Both countries have had strong statist economic policies, until their economies began to be opened up.
- Both countries were enlisted for geostrategic reasons during the Cold War years by the US, which established military bases in Spain and Turkey (in 1953 and 1952, respectively). Both joined the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1961, Turkey as a founder member.
- Both have problems in containing minority nationalisms, in Turkey's case the Kurds and in Spain's case the Basques and Catalans (incidentally, Basque is an agglutinating language and in that respect is closer to Turkish than to Spanish).
- Both countries also have disputes over small territories that continue to cause headaches –in Spain's case its North African territories and Gibraltar, and in Turkey's Cyprus–.
- Both Spain and Turkey have also suffered from real or imagined 'black legends' that even today affect the countries' images abroad.
- The two countries co-sponsored the creation of the Alliance of Civilizations in 2004, an initiative to 'improve understanding and cooperation across cultures and religions and, in the process, to help counter forces that fuel polarization.' The initiative has since been assumed by the United Nations.

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<sup>26</sup> See the author's Paper *Spanish Trajectory: A Source of Inspiration for Turkey?*, Open Society Foundation, Istanbul, November 2008, <http://www.aciktoplumenstitusu.org.tr/images/basin/pdf/RaporESP8.pdf>.



Both Spain and Turkey, as well as New Zealand, have declared their candidacies for non-permanent seats at the UN Security Council for 2015-2016. Given the strength of the bilateral relationship, both countries have no desire to compete too vigorously against one another.

Spain and Turkey are also both involved in Nato's missile defence system. US anti-missile warships will be based at Rota on Spain's Mediterranean coast and Turkey will station an early-warning radar in the south-east of the country.

The one area for potential friction is over the Alliance of Civilizations initiative, which the Popular Party government is not very enthusiastic about but will keep on supporting if only not to annoy Ankara and erode its image in the wider Muslim world. The PP views the Alliance as an internal issue promoted by José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the former Socialist prime minister, in order to mark a distance with José María Aznar, the PP's prime minister between 1996 and 2004, who supported the US invasion of Iraq. One of Zapatero's first decisions after he took office in 2004 was to withdraw Spain's peacekeeping troops from Iraq.

The project is also not aptly named as an alliance implies forces that unite against a common enemy, which is not the case of the Alliance of Civilizations as it aims to defuse tensions between cultures and religions.

Given the further belt-tightening measures facing Spain, the government will assign less money to the Alliance.

## 8. Conclusion: where does Turkey go from here?

Turkey has reached an impasse with the EU; there is little likelihood of opening more chapters related to its accession. As a result of the deadlock, which neither side seems willing to break, the European Commission has put forward the idea of a 'fresh and positive agenda' covering, among other issues, visas, trade, student exchanges and foreign policy co-operation. Ankara has made it clear that acceptance does not signify that it is prepared to drop the negotiations for full EU membership and adopt the privileged partnership idea promoted by the French and German governments.

Even this pragmatic approach, however, is fraught with difficulties<sup>27</sup>. Turkey is pressing for visa-free travel, which is out of the question for Germany and other countries. Turks are understandably incensed by the citizens of Serbia, Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina having visa-free travel (none of which are EU candidate countries). Turkish businessmen are often denied visas to attend trade fairs and students have to jump through many hoops before they can study in the EU. Even when Turks with visas arrive at their destination they are put in a humiliating situation at the point of entry. At the root of this discrimination is the fear that Turks will move en masse to the EU, whereas the reality is that those who have emigrated, particularly to Germany, are beginning to move back to their own country as it becomes richer and job prospects better.

On trade, Ankara feels justifiably hard done by its customs union with the EU as it is obliged to open its economy to third countries that agree free trade deals with the EU, but does not get access to new markets itself.

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<sup>27</sup> See "Is Turkey Our Partner Now?" by Katinka Barysch (Centre for European Reform, 28 November, 2011) at <http://www.cer.org.uk/publications/archive/bulletin-article/2011/turkey-our-partner-now>

Closer foreign policy alignment would involve not just more dialogue –which is happening– but a place for Turkey’s prime minister at the table of EU summits, something that could be done on an ad hoc basis. Given that Ankara still does not recognise the Republic of Cyprus, and, as a result, the Greek Cypriots veto Ankara’s every move, this is most unlikely to happen.

Spain’s new government, which took office in December 2011, could play a stronger role in trying to kickstart Turkey’s EU accession process and end the vicious circle created by Turkish disillusionment and EU prevarication if not outright hostility in some countries. The UK, the other large EU country that supports Turkey’s full membership, has been cast out into the wilderness after Prime Minister David Cameron’s decision at the December 2011 summit to veto a revision of the EU treaties, because it failed to offer safeguards for Britain’s financial-services industry. With the UK (not a euro zone country) marginalised and perhaps facing an exit from the EU (unlikely), Spain (a founder member of the euro area) has an opportunity to step forward and be more assertive over Turkey. This would involve, for example, actively countering the anti-Turkish sentiment coming out of the German and French governments.

Turkey’s EU accession process is going nowhere, but the country’s supporters should not use this as an excuse for sitting back until something happens in Brussels or Ankara. They need to be more proactive so that Turkey does not give up on reform.

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Turkey’s Current Negotiating Status\*

Number and Title of Policy Chapter	Status
1. Free movement of goods	Suspended <sup>1</sup>
2. Free movement of workers	Not yet opened <sup>3</sup>
3. Right of establishment and freedom to provide services	Suspended <sup>1</sup>
4. Free movement of capital	Opened
5. Public procurement	Not yet opened
6. Company law	Opened
7. Intellectual property law	Opened
8. Competition policy	Not yet opened
9. Financial services	Suspended <sup>1</sup>
10. Information society and media	Opened
11. Agriculture and rural development	Suspended <sup>1,2</sup>
12. Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy	Opened
13. Fisheries	Suspended <sup>1</sup>
14. Transport policy	Suspended <sup>1</sup>
15. Energy	Not yet opened <sup>3</sup>
16. Taxation	Opened
17. Economic and monetary policy	Not yet opened <sup>2</sup>
18. Statistics	Opened

19. Social policy and employment	Not yet opened
20. Enterprise and industrial policy	Opened
21. Trans-European networks	Opened
22. Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments	Not yet opened <sup>2</sup>
23. Judiciary and fundamental rights	Not yet opened <sup>3</sup>
24. Justice, freedom and security	Not yet opened
25. Science and research	Provisionally closed
26. Education and culture	Not yet opened <sup>3</sup>
27. Environment	Opened
28. Consumer and health protection	Opened
29. Customs union	Suspended <sup>1</sup>
30. External relations	Suspended <sup>1</sup>
31. Foreign, security and defence policy	Not yet opened <sup>3</sup>
32. Financial control	Opened
33. Financial and budgetary provisions	Not yet opened <sup>2</sup>
34. Institutions	Not yet opened <sup>2</sup>
35. Other issues	Not yet opened

(\*) As of January, 2012.

(1) Suspended by the European Union in December 2006 due to Turkey's refusal to open its ports and airports to Greek Cypriot traffic. (2). Blocked by France. (3) Blocked by Cyprus.

## Appendix 2. Timeline: The Long and Winding Road to the Opening of EU Accession Negotiations

### February 18 1952

Turkey becomes a full member of Nato.

### September 20 1959

Turkey applies to the European Economic Community (EEC) to become an associate member.

### May 27 1960

The army stages a coup and remains in power until October 1961. It draws up a new constitution and establishes a mechanism to intervene in politics, the National Security Council.

### September 12 1963

Turkey is made an associate member of the EEC.

### July 22 1970

Turkey signs an agreement foreseeing its eventual full membership of the bloc.

**March 12 1971**

The army hands an ultimatum to Prime Minister Demirel's government. On April 27 1971 martial law is declared in 11 provinces; some leftist and religious political parties are closed down. The state security courts, heavily influenced by the military, are created. The direct influence of the military lasted until the October 1973 elections.

**July 20 1974**

Turkey invades Cyprus by sea and air following the failure of diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts between Turkish and Greek Cypriots. After gaining control over 40% of the island, Turkey unilaterally declares a ceasefire.

**February 13 1975**

Turkish Cypriots establish their own state in the north of the island. Later that year Turkey takes control of most of the US installations within that territory, except the joint defence base at Incirlik, which it reserves for 'Nato tasks alone'.

**1978-79**

The EC suggests that Turkey applies for membership along with Greece. Ankara declines the suggestion.

**September 12 1980**

After months of street fighting between rival left-wing and right-wing factions, a third army *coup* topples the Turkish government. Military rule lasts until November 1983. Relations with the EC are virtually frozen.

**1983**

Northern Cyprus declares its territory as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The state is recognised by no one else but mainland Turkey. Parliamentary elections are held in Turkey and military rule is ended. Relations with the EC begin to normalise.

**May 1984**

The Council of Europe accepts the participation of Turkish parliamentarians.

**January 26 1987**

Turkey recognises the right of its citizens to file complaints with the European Human Rights Commission.

**April 14 1987**

Turkey applies to the EC for full membership.

**December 18 1989**

The European Commission endorses Turkey's eligibility for membership, but defers the assessment of its application.

**January 1 1996**

A Customs Union between the now-named European Union (EU) and Turkey enters into force for industrial goods and processed agricultural products.

**December 13 1997**

At the Luxembourg summit, EU leaders decline to grant candidate status to Turkey. Ankara reacts angrily, freezing relations and contacts.

**June 2 1999**

Abdullah Ocalan, the founder of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), who led a violent 15-year campaign for independence for Turkey's 14 million or so Kurds, is convicted by Turkey of treason and separatism and sentenced to death (not carried out).

**December 10 1999**

The EU summit in Helsinki recognises Turkey as a 'candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate States'.

**April 2000**

The composition of the State Security Courts is changed, to exclude members of the military.

**March 2001**

The EU approves the Accession Partnership document, which sets out the political, economic and legislative reforms that Turkey has to carry out to fulfil the accession criteria. Cyprus is included as part of the 'Political Dialogue and Political Criteria'.

**March 19 2001**

The Turkish Government publishes the National Programme for the Adoption of the *Acquis*, with a detailed explanation of the reforms to fulfil the accession criteria.

**October 3 2001**

The Turkish Grand National Assembly approved 34 amendments to the Constitution, the most ambitious overhaul since its entry into force in 1982, in order to meet the Copenhagen political criteria.

**August 3 2002**

The Turkish Parliament passes sweeping reforms, including the abolition of the death penalty and the easing of bans on the use of the Kurdish language, to meet some of the EU's human rights criteria.

**November 3 2002**

The conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP), which has Islamic roots, wins a general election partially on a pledge to drive forward Turkey's sagging EU bid.

**November 30 2002**

The state of emergency in all remaining provinces of the south-east was lifted.

**December 11 2002**

The Turkish Parliament approves a clutch of constitutional reforms that make it harder to shut down parties and easier to prosecute torturers.

**December 12 2002**

The EU summit at Copenhagen decides to accept Cyprus in May 2004, despite faltering talks to reunify the island. It proposes a December 2004 review of Turkey's progress in fulfilling the Copenhagen political criteria for EU membership, and if the outcome is positive accession negotiations will be opened 'without delay'.

**April 2003**

The EU Council approves a revised Accession Partnership, specifying the remaining priority areas for reform. In July the Turkish government publishes a revised National Programme for the Adoption of the *Acquis*.

**July 2003**

The seventh reform package reduces the influence of the armed forces via the powerful National Security Council. The Council becomes more of an advisory body.

**November 5 2003**

The European Commission released its sixth regular report on Turkey's progress towards accession. It said the government had 'shown great determination in accelerating the pace of reforms' but 'on the ground, implementation of the reforms is uneven'. The report warned that Turkey's hopes of starting formal accession talks with the EU could face a 'serious obstacle' if no settlement is reached over the divided island of Cyprus by May 2004 (when Cyprus joins the EU).

**January 15 2004**

Romano Prodi is the first President of the European Commission to visit Turkey since 1963.

**March 31 2004**

Talks on a revised UN plan for the unification of Cyprus failed to win endorsement from the leaders of the island's Greeks. But the United Nations decided to go ahead anyway and put its plans to a vote in both parts of Cyprus on April 24, ahead of the island's entry into the EU on May 1.

**April 24 2004**

The Greek-Cypriot part of Cyprus entered the EU, but not the Turkish-Cypriot part, after more than three-quarters of Greek-Cypriots voted against the UN plan to reunite the island. Turkish-Cypriots, in contrast, endorsed the plan. Both sides had to accept the reunification plan in order for the whole island to join the EU.

**September 6 2004**

An Independent Commission of Europeans who previously held high positions in public office, including Marcelino Oreja, a former Spanish Foreign Minister and EU Commissioner, called for the EU to treat Turkey's case with 'respect, fairness and consideration'.

**September 13 2004**

Less than a month before the landmark report by the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards meeting the criteria for starting accession talks, Brussels warned Ankara that unless it removed proposals before parliament to criminalise adultery it would not meet the minimum criteria required of aspiring members. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish Prime Minister, accused the EU of interfering in the country's internal affairs, but withdrew the proposals.

**September 26, 2004**

The Turkish parliament held an emergency session and approved reforms of the penal code including tougher sentences for torture and 'honour killings'.

**October 6, 2004**

The European Commission issues a report recommending that the European Council at its meeting in December opens accession negotiations, but with certain conditions.

**December 17, 2004**

EU leaders agree at the Brussels summit to open talks on Turkey's EU accession. The decision, made at a summit in Brussels, follows a deal over an EU demand that Turkey recognise Cyprus as an EU member.

**October 3, 2005**

EU membership negotiations officially launched.

**December 2006**

The EU freezes eight of the 35 policy chapters because of Ankara's refusal to open its ports and airports to Greek Cypriot traffic.

**July 22, 2007**

An early general election is held to try to end the standoff between secularists and Islamists. This followed protests in April against Prime Minister Erdogan running in the presidential election and the ruling AK party's decision to put forward Abdullah Gül, the foreign minister, as its presidential candidate in place of Erdogan, despite opposition from the military. The AK party increased its share of the vote in the election.

**August 28, 2007**

Abdullah Gül is elected president by parliament.

**October 21, 2007**

Voters in a referendum agree to have future presidents elected by the people and not by parliament.

**February 7, 2008**

Parliament approves constitutional amendments, paving the way for women to wear the Islamic headscarf in universities.

**July 30, 2008**

The constitutional court rejects by a narrow margin a petition to have the AK party banned for allegedly undermining the secular constitution.

**October 2008**

Trial begins of 86 suspected members of an ultra-nationalist “Ergenekon” group, accused of plotting against the government.

**June 2009**

A further 56 people go on trial in connection with the alleged plot.

**July 2009**

President Gül approves legislation giving civilian courts the powers to try military personnel for threatening national security or involvement in organised crime.

**October 10, 2009**

Turkey and Armenia agree to normalise relations at a meeting in Switzerland. Turkey insists that opening the border, closed since 1993, will depend on progress on resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

**December 2009**

Measures are approved to increase Kurdish language rights.

**February 2010**

Nearly 70 members of the military are arrested over the alleged “Sledgehammer” plot.

**April 2010**

Parliament debates changes to the constitution, drawn up in 1982 after the military coup, in order to make Turkey more democratic. The Republican People’s Party accuses the government of using the changes to gain more control over the secular judiciary.

**July 2010**

A court indicts 196 people, including senior military officers, of plotting to overthrow the government.

**September 12, 2010**

A referendum on constitutional reform backs amendments to increase parliamentary control over the military and the judiciary.

**November 2010**

Wikileaks publishes confidential cables showing that France and Austria have been deliberately blocking Turkey’s EU membership talks.



**June 12, 2011**

The ruling AK party wins its third resounding general election victory.

**August 2011**

President Gül appoints military commanders after the top brass resigns. This was the first time a civilian government decided who commands the branches of the armed forces.

Source: Based on the timelines of the BBC and The Guardian.

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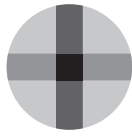
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**Resumen:** El proceso de adhesión de Turquía a la Unión Europea sigue estancado desde mediados de 2010. En más de seis años, el país ha abierto sólo 13 de los 35 capítulos que deben ser completados, el último de ellos durante la presidencia española de la UE, en la primera mitad de 2010. La cuestión de Chipre sigue enredada en un juego de culpabilidades. Mientras tanto, la política exterior de Ankara hacia los países vecinos es mucho más asertiva y el “modelo turco” está ganando influencia en los países de la primavera árabe.

**Palabras clave:** Turquía; Partido de la Justicia y el Desarrollo (Turquía); Protocolo de Ankara; Chipre; República Turca del Norte de Chipre; Política de ‘cero problemas con los vecinos’; Partido de los trabajadores de Kurdistán (PKK).

**Abstract:** Turkey’s EU accession process has been stalled since the middle of 2010. The country has only opened 13 of the 35 chapters of EU law in more than six years, the last one during Spain’s EU presidency in the first half of 2010. The Cyprus problem remains mired in a blame game. Meanwhile, Ankara’s foreign policy toward the countries in its neighbourhood is much more assertive and the ‘Turkish model’ is gaining influence in the Arab spring countries.

**Keywords:** Turkey; Justice and Development Party (AKP); Ankara protocol; Cyprus; Turkish; Republic of Northern Cyprus; ‘Zero problems with neighbours’ policy; Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

