

Europe in Cyprus: The Broader Security Implications

MARIOS L. EVRIVIADES

Visiting Professor of International Relations
Panteion University

THE ADMISSION OF CYPRUS TO the European Union (EU) is dwarfed by what was at stake for the Union in the case of the admission of Poland. The expansion east involved close to 75 million people in eight countries and carried overwhelming historic and symbolic significance, whereas Cyprus involves a small Mediterranean country with a total population of about a million and a political package Brussels would rather do without. If the current EU enlargement were to fail it would be for reasons related to its eastward drive and not the unsuccessful resolution of the "Cyprus Problem" or Turkish threats to react "without limits" should Cyprus be admitted to the Union.¹

The irony of the accession of Cyprus to the EU is that, on account of it being realized and in the process of its accession, Cyprus has been generating and accelerating the necessary conditions that make possible the accession of Turkey as well. On account of Cyprus, whose EU membership Ankara bitterly opposes, Turkey now stands its best and only realistic chance of becoming politically, and not merely militarily, integrated into European institutions. Cyprus offers Turkey the possibility of becoming safely and permanently "anchored" in the West. The prospect of this happening is transforming the security environment in the eastern Mediterranean by "de-militarizing" existing problems and either effectively addressing them or making them irrelevant.

HOLBROOKE: SECURING TURKEY THROUGH CYPRUS

As late as 1994, Washington vehemently opposed the application of Cyprus for EU membership. In connection with, and as a result of the United Kingdom's 1973 entry into the European Community, Cyprus had signed an Association Agreement with Brussels and a Customs Union Agreement. Cyprus then submitted an application for

MARIOS L. EVRIVIADES is Visiting Professor of International Relations in the Department of Communications, Media and Culture, Panteion University, Athens.

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full membership in July 1990 that received a positive opinion from the European Commission in June 1993.² Ankara opposed the application vehemently as a direct consequence of Washington's opposition. It has been a cardinal principle of Washington's policy towards Cyprus that, "any solution to the Cyprus problem that might also damage U.S.-Turkish relations is simply not worthwhile, which is why the problem has been viewed as an issue to manage and not necessarily to resolve."³

The critical turning point in Washington's policy towards the Cypriot application came in 1995 under the stewardship of Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Richard Holbrooke. The American official reached the simple but innovative

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and daring conclusion that the whole of the eastern Mediterranean must be viewed as a nexus of interconnected issues that impacted U.S. national interests and security.⁴ More significantly, Holbrooke realized that something needed to be done about these pending issues

besides merely managing them. Holbrooke correctly identified Cyprus as the key issue to the security predicament involving Greece and Turkey and the political antagonism surrounding the relations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities of Cyprus.

Central to Holbrooke's thinking and indispensable for our understanding of the broader implications of the accession of Cyprus to the European Union were the twin issues of securing and stabilizing Turkey. Since World War II, U.S. political and strategic planning for the eastern Mediterranean and the wider Middle East has been premised on the expectation that Turkey will remain politically strong and pro-Western. Thus, Ankara had to be permanently anchored in the West for it to act in consonance with the United States and live up to the multitude of roles envisioned by Washington and articulated by Holbrooke.⁵ In this assumption, Holbrooke was not departing from traditional U.S. diplomacy that gave primacy to the U.S. security relationship with Turkey. He wanted, in fact, to reinforce it and secure it permanently.

The novelty of the Holbrooke approach was its focus on Cyprus. Holbrooke realized that Turkey could not be "anchored safely" in the West and perform its multifaceted role until a Cyprus compromise acceptable to Athens and Nicosia was implemented. However, such an agreement could not be achieved through the sterile UN sponsored negotiations that were isolated and not "linked" with the EU integration process. Any solution had to involve Turkey and recognize its drive to join the Union, which, for Holbrooke, was the critical component for stability in the eastern Mediterranean.

Holbrooke's position dovetailed with the Athens' strategy that Cyprus, as part of

a strategy to force Turkey to facilitate a solution, must apply for admission to the EU.⁶ Holbrooke may or may not have shared the conviction of the Greeks about the catalytic role of Brussels. Nevertheless, he was cognizant of the fact that Greece held power within the EU. Holbrooke recognized that Greece was determined to use this power to bring Cyprus into the Union, while keeping Turkey out. Despite these factors, Holbrooke was determined to devise a practical and effective way of securing Turkey for the West in the post-Cold War era of flux and uncertainty. Strategic resolution of the Cyprus problem was central, but it remained a means to an end. The prize was the security and stability of Turkey, to be achieved through political integration with Europe.

Officials in Washington were apprehensive that a Turkey not integrated in the political institutions of Europe might drift towards radical ethnocentrism and fundamentalism. Turkey would thus become a threat to itself through domestic instability and, on account of its unique geographic location, its huge population and growing war arsenal, a threat to the region and to the West.⁷ With Washington only too eager to showcase Turkey to the non-western and especially to the Islamic world as a living proof that western democratic pluralism and Islam are reconcilable, Turkey's future had global implications and the ability to impact the United States' grand strategy.

Even before WWII ended, U.S. policy planners assigned Turkey a critical role in their strategic plans for a war against the Soviet Union, as well as in their regional plans concerning the Middle East.⁸ Washington, therefore, had always been keenly concerned with Turkish domestic stability. This stability was ensured through bilateral defense and economic agreements with Ankara and through development and economic aid from international institutions responsive to U.S. wishes. But it was primarily through Turkish military integration in the Atlantic system of defence that Turkey's stability was secured. The prime beneficiary of this military integration was the Turkish army. In addition to modernizing, by the 1980's the Turkish army managed to establish a parallel system of government, to which elected officials including the Prime Minister and the President deferred. This system, the National Security Council, was constitutionally empowered and therefore perfectly legal.⁹

The amounts of U.S. military assistance to Turkey speak for themselves. From 1946 to 1985 Turkey was the world's fourth largest recipient of such assistance behind Israel, South Vietnam, and South Korea. From 1984 to 1990, it was behind only Israel and Egypt.¹⁰ Yet unlike all these countries, Turkey was not involved in any hostilities during this period, save its brief war against Cyprus in 1974.

These levels of military assistance changed at the end of the Cold War when the existential threat posed by the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal and the ideological power of communism against the United States were eliminated. This new condition broke the umbilical cord between the United States and its allies. U.S. allies were down-

graded dramatically in strategic value, while critical constraints to U.S. global unilateralism were removed. Certainly some allies retained their usefulness to Washington more than others for political or other reasons. But henceforth no ally was vital to the security of the United States, and this carried serious implications for traditional U.S. allies and friends. The precipitous fall in U.S. military and economic assistance worldwide in the 1990s reflected this reality.¹¹

Although the strategy of securing and stabilizing Turkey has been identified with Holbrooke in this article, it was in fact state policy that followed inter-departmental and inter-agency assessments that occurred in 1994-1995. Sufficient evidence about

this has appeared since, including a revealing opinion piece by Holbrooke published in the *Washington Post* (on 29 November, 2002),

The intensive bilateral relationship Turkey shared with the US and its multilateral relationship with NATO were essential in Turkey's "militarization."

the eve of the Copenhagen EU. In the piece Holbrooke discloses a 1995 "three-pronged American strategy" designed to: 1) bring Cyprus into the Union 2) obtain a specific date for the commencement of accession negotiations with Turkey and 3) in the process generate pressure through Turkey to push the Turkish Cypriot leadership towards a settlement of the Cypriot problem. But what permeates the article and—what Holbrooke openly admits to—is a concern for Turkey. "The most consequential part of this historic European moment [Copenhagen Summit]" writes Holbrooke, "is Turkey's application to join the European Union." Accordingly, if Turkey were spurned then Europe ran the risk of eventually creating a, "...radical or fundamental regime at the very gates of the European Union."

The diagnosis of the U.S. strategy to irreversibly "anchor" Turkey to the West admits to failure, for more than half a century of vigorous association between Turkey and the Atlantic security community has failed to achieve this security objective. The intensive bilateral relationship with the United States and the multilateral relationship through NATO were identified with the development of the "militarization" of Turkey and the strengthening of the secularist Kemalist elite. Directly related to this was the multi-party pluralism that the Kemalist regime had been obliged to bring into effect after WWII.¹² Until then and since its 1923 foundation the Turkish Republic was a one-party system. Such systems have historically been associated with authoritarian and totalitarian ideologies incompatible with the U.S. post-WWII value system. Turkey could not become a legitimate participant in the Atlantic security system unless it fulfilled the minimum pluralistic criterion of the time—namely the essentials of a multi-party democracy. The mono-party secular regime of Ismet Inonu opened up the sys-

tem to party politics and, having won a controversial election in 1946, promptly lost the 1950 election to conservative forces. The composition of these forces was religious and anti-Kemalist and drew their strength from the Anatolian heartland—a precursor of things to come.

Thus a critical milestone of change through the ballot box was passed, which set the foundation for the establishment of pluralistic institutions in Turkey. This achievement must, to a large extent, be credited to Washington. But because security and anti-communism held primacy in the U.S. led Cold War alliances the military modernization of allies was held above political considerations. In the specific case of Turkey, the best possible regime outcome was what has been called “military democracy.”¹³ The United States and NATO could only offer so much to Turkey and no more. As long as the ideological conflict of the Cold War persisted—and we should not forget that it was viewed as an “endless conflict”—the pretense of democratic practices in various parts of the Western world were considered a legitimate alternative or just as good as the real thing.

The collapse of the Cold War ideological order has prompted serious reformulations. A growing recognition and acceptance of genuine democracy “as a universal value” and as the only long term guarantor of human and political rights, accountability, and domestic and international stability has taken place. Confronting this ideological turnaround brought to the surface the contradictions of non-democratic or pseudo-democratic systems and the necessity for genuine domestic reforms.¹⁴

In the case of Turkey, orthodox Kemalism has proven inadequate to provide those democratic reforms that could empower the Turkish people.¹⁵ The war against the Kurds, the 1997 “post-modern” or “soft coup” against the Islamists, or more correctly, against the counter-Kemalist forces that kept on demonstrating their resiliency in the face of official suppression, are symptoms of a fledgling democracy that cannot be addressed except through the tested institutional mechanisms of Brussels. This has been the case with Greece, Spain, and Portugal, and currently with eastern and central Europe. The only thing certain is that the United States is both incapable and unwilling to do this and that NATO—transformed or not—has reached its limits as to what it can do for Turkey. This leaves the EU as both the practical and realistic option considering that Turkey’s relationship with Brussels is complex, deep, and goes back to the early 1960s. In the post-Cold War era, the political modernization of Turkey can be realized, in a measured way, only through its integration with the European Union.

The alternative for Turkey is not the apocalyptic vision advanced by Holbrooke and other like-minded statesmen. Turkish Islam in particular is not radical or fundamentalist (except on its fringes). It is as pragmatic as the vote, which has demonstrated active Islamic support for EU membership.¹⁶ But even the Kemalist elite distrustful of

the West are cognizant of the dilemmas confronting Turkey.¹⁷ The land of Atatürk can continue on its present retrograde path that generates endemic instability while assuming an activist international role that is a function of and is contingent on U.S. strategic objectives in the Middle East. This option may have worked for the Kemalists in the past but it entails dangers for the future. Alternatively, Ankara can bite the bullet of European reform that would give her a co-equal place in a system encompassing an integrated Europe. This was a major point of debate amongst Turkish elites on the eve of Copenhagen. The EU road is not risk-free either, but it is arguably less risky than a non-European one. Numerous other countries have opted for the EU, finding benefits in terms of institutional stability, economic development and human security. This empirical fact is as good a guarantee as Ankara can get in order to overcome its apprehensions and the entrenched domestic interests that oppose the EU option. It cannot expect anything more and Brussels cannot offer more.

THE LINKAGE STRATEGY OF ATHENS

The Greek and Turkish applications for Association Status with the then European Community (EC) were launched within weeks of one another in the summer of 1959, with the Greek bid preceding the Turkish one. The Turkish bid followed from their official policy position, "[t]he tradition of Turkish policy required that Greece be watched very closely so that it would not use the political and economic weight from a new relationship with Europe against Turkey."¹⁸ Assuming that the EC were to blossom, grow and attract suitors, the stage was thus set for it to become an antagonistic arena for Athens and Ankara.

The Turkish concerns turned out to be well-founded once Greece became a full-fledged member in 1981 and Turkey was left behind. Greek behavior however was not motivated by inherent hostility, but by Greek security concerns and the necessity to counter balance Ankara's power through non-military means. The coercive behavior of Ankara was manifested aggressively in Cyprus in 1974 and, since then, in the Aegean as well.¹⁹ Symbolically, this Turkish attitude remains the standing threat of war against Greece. Promulgated by the Turkish Parliament in 1976 and renewed in 1995, it is a mindset that considers a balance of power between Greece and Turkey inimical to the preservation of peace between the two countries. Only absolute superiority will do for Turkey.²⁰

Working with the well-founded assumption that since 1987 Turkey's pre-eminent strategic goal has been integration into the European Union, Greece has responded with sophisticated strategy. This strategy linked Turkish progress with Brussels and with Greece's bilateral problems with Ankara and with Cyprus.²¹ This strategy would end up "Europeanizing" Greece's problems with Turkey, but in effect "Europeanized"

Greece's foreign policy and other policies as well.²² This was in itself a very significant development. Under the premiership of Costas Simitis, the "Europeanization" of Greece would yield important dividends such as opening wide the EU door for Cyprus and facilitating, ultimately, a Greek-Turkish rapprochement.

Following the application of Turkey for full membership in April 1987, Premier Turgut Ozal was anxious to reactivate the EU/Turkey Association Agreement that had been frozen since the 1980 *putsch*. But Greece, inaugurating her linkage policy, upheld her concern and did not relent until Ankara repealed (March 1988) a 1964 decree that discriminated against Greek nationals domiciled in Turkey.²³ Athens also maneuvered on the eve of an April 1988 meeting of the EU/Turkish Association Council to have included in the EC Joint Declaration language that the Cyprus issue "affects the relations of Turkey with the EC."²⁴ Turkey promptly cancelled the meeting. To the dismay of Ankara, a European Parliament resolution on Cyprus in the same month contained even stronger language. It stated that Turkish forces occupied territory of another EC Associate member and that this presented "a major stumbling block to the normalization of relations" with Turkey.²⁵ The formulation that the situation in Cyprus affected relations between Ankara and Brussels became standard element in EU official declarations about Turkey.

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Brussels could have done without the linkage strategy of Athens, although during major crises in the past (1974, 1996) it did take a stand favorable to both Greece and Cyprus. Inevitably Brussels became substantially involved once Turkey submitted its application for membership in April 1987 and Cyprus submitted its application in July 1990. Although the Turkish application was rejected in 1989 on the grounds that the country was not ready for membership, the door was left open and Ankara began to pursue the Community option vigorously. As noted, the application of Cyprus was positively evaluated in 1993 and her "vocation to belong to the Community" was confirmed.

On the bilateral level, what Athens sought through linkage was to moderate Turkish behavior and make Ankara's threat of force ineffective and politically costly. The desirable outcome was that Ankara commit to a peaceful resolution of bilateral problems in the context of legal norms and treaties. Athens also sought to have the Community adopt the position that the use of force in resolving problems was unacceptable and that all prospective members must behave in accordance with acceptable practices. With regards to Cyprus, the goal of linkage was to pressure Ankara to lean on the

Turkish Cypriots for an agreement on Cyprus so that the latter can enter the Union with its political problem solved. Alternatively, Athens, with the consent of Nicosia, sought initially to delink the accession of Cyprus from its political problem.

Turkey opposed linkage of any kind in certain non-threatening terms and tried to neutralize linkage in two ways.²⁶ When it related to their candidacy Turkey's initial reaction was to boycott the EU integration process. The other standard Ankara action

that related directly to Cyprus was to take steps on the island that affected the status quo negatively and increased tension, while hardly disguising its

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warlike intentions. Short of the threat or use of force, the standard Turkish position was that, should Cyprus be admitted without a resolution to the problem which Ankara found acceptable, the latter has threatened to annex the northern part of Cyprus.

In the aftermath of the EU-Turkey crises, Ankara would take measures in the direction expected by Brussels, especially with regards to the economy and on some domestic issues of concern to the Union. These included human rights and resumption of the usually stalled negotiations on Cyprus. These actions, however small, demonstrated that the integration progress held primacy in Turkish foreign policy goals.²⁷

In the above context what I want to address is Turkey's strategy of tension and of threats regarding Cyprus. The 2002 Copenhagen Summit came and went, the EU accepted Cyprus with its political problem pending, but none of the Turkish threats materialized. None are likely to materialize in the future either.

CYPRUS: THE KEYSTONE

My submission is that Ankara's inability and unwillingness to react to the Copenhagen decision in any other way but that of protest may be the most significant long term development in the security environment of the eastern Mediterranean. Turkish power *vis-à-vis* Cyprus (and ultimately against Greece) became irrelevant because it could not be effectively exercised to prevent the Copenhagen decision regarding Cyprus. This development must be credited to the gradual movement of the Union in the eastern Mediterranean region, pulled there by the candidacy of Cyprus (and of Turkey) and the linkage policy of Athens *vis-à-vis* Ankara as well as Brussels.

As already noted, the linkage policies of Athens were adopted by the United States with different motivations and priorities. The United States lobbied for Turkish EU candidacy at the highest level and was involved in all stages as the saga of the

candidacy of Cyprus and Turkey unfolded in the corridors of Brussels and European capitals.²⁸ The end result has been that it was on account of Cyprus that Greece lifted its objections to the frozen EU/Turkey Fourth Financial Protocol in the March 1995 Council of Ministers Meeting at Brussels. The lifting of the Greek veto allowed the implementation of a Customs Union between Turkey and the EU. What Greece got in exchange from Brussels was twofold: a reaffirmation of its 1994 and 1995 decisions that Cyprus will be included in the next enlargement round and the critical commitment that accession negotiations with Nicosia would commence six months after the conclusion of the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference. The downside of the March 1995 decision was that it indirectly linked accession to the solution of the problem. This was in line with the overall position of the EU Commission as expressed in its 1993 Opinion, namely that accession of Cyprus implied reconciliation, a political settlement, and the entire population of the country benefitting from it.

The June 1995 Summit at Cannes and subsequent summits reaffirmed the position of the Union of Cyprus. At the Luxembourg Summit of 1997, 30 March, the date for the commencement of accession negotiations was set for 1998. Yet, while at Helsinki in 1999 the critical decision for Nicosia was taken: a solution to the problem was preferable it could not be made a precondition for accession. In the 1999 Helsinki decision the substantive issue of the "Europeaness" of Turkey was finally settled. Turkey was granted formal "candidacy" status (but without specifying a date for the commencement of accession talks), relations between the EU and Turkey reached the lowest point possible and those between Athens and Ankara came as close to war as they had since 1974. These developments had stemmed from some fundamentally wrong assumptions held within Turkey about its own influence and power in the post-Cold War epoch and most significantly the utility of force in the European context.

Turkish elites, the Kemalists in particular, believe that their country is an important powerful a state that has a historically had a critical and institutionalized role in European security. Therefore, Turkey deserves and must be given special treatment by the West as a whole.²⁹ This almost universally held Turkish assumption was reinforced since 1995 by unwavering American and Israeli support for virtually every issue and strategic goal pursued by Ankara in her drive to assume the role of a multi-regional power.³⁰

However, in regards to Turkey's European project and to the frustration of Ankara, Turkey's assumptions do not appear to be well founded. The first evidence of this was the "Euroshock" of the December 1997 Luxembourg Summit decision, which authorized membership negotiations (to commence in March 1998) between the ten central and eastern European countries and Cyprus. Turkey was not only conspicuously absent from the list of candidates but was placed behind such countries as Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovakia. Additionally, while Turkey's candidacy was confirmed in

principle, it was made contingent on progress in Cyprus, the peaceful resolution of problems with Greece, improvement of human rights (central to which was the Kurdish issue), and, of course, on expected political and economic reforms.³¹

The Luxembourg decision was not made in a vacuum. Just one month after the January 1996 commencement of the EU/Turkey Customs Union, Turkey initiated the Imia crisis in the Aegean by aggressively questioning Greek sovereignty on the Imia islets. It took intense U.S. mediation to defuse the 1996 confrontation. The crisis

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confirmed the worse fears of the Greeks: that Ankara claimed Greek territory through a military-backed policy to revise the territorial settlement agreed to by the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne.³² The reaction of Greece, in part, was to freeze EU financial flows to Tur-

key, while obtaining an EU declaration on principles to guide EU relations with Turkey. This declaration in effect backed the Greek position which, *inter alia*, condemned the threat or use of force. As expected, the Turks dismissed the declaration indignantly.³³ Turkey also reacted violently when demonstrators peacefully attempted to challenge the status quo on Cyprus in the same year.

Turkey was further frustrated when it recognized that Brussels gave priority to the expansion of the EU in the east and to Cyprus. Turkey made an ill-fated attempt to link the expansion of NATO to her EU prospects. The politics of the unstable Turkish coalition politics also prevented meaningful reforms in line with the EU guidelines, especially with regards to human and political rights. This and Germany's ambivalent stand revealed that Greek opposition to the EU aspirations of Turkey was not isolated. The sum total of these forces produced the Luxembourg result. In its aftermath, relations between Turkey and the EU and with other countries, like Germany, reached their nadir and there was even talk in Ankara about withdrawing the Turkish application for candidacy. Needless to say, the stakes for Ankara were too high. Although the Turkish Foreign Minister found it necessary to state repeatedly that Turkey had no obsession with the EU, the truth was that Ankara kept pushing her EU candidacy with characteristic obstinacy, while investing human and material resources for its achievement.³⁴ In this regard Washington remained the most persistent and powerful advocate for Ankara.

The period between the Luxembourg decision and the mutually acceptable compromise at the 1999 Helsinki Summit, was one of flux, with relations between Brussels and Ankara improving but not by much. On the other hand, the Athens-Ankara-

Nicosia front continued to display its usual negative mode. A potentially destabilizing situation was also developing. Nicosia continued implementing the decision, made in early 1997, to obtain a sophisticated Russian missile defense system (S-300) to guard against Ankara's air force that held absolute air superiority over Cyprus.³⁵ Ankara kept up a barrage of threats declaring its intention to preemptively attack the missiles if they were ever installed, while Greece warned that it would respond if Cyprus were to be attacked. The potential crisis was diffused when the missile system was diverted to Greece once it became clear to Athens and Nicosia that the issue had the potential to derail their well planned EU accession strategy for Cyprus. Both Brussels and Washington played an active role in the December 1998 decision of Cyprus to forego the Russian missiles.

Greek-Turkish relations were to reach another low before taking a surprising turn that would eventually lead to something even more surprising. This was the 1999 Helsinki decision that opened the way for a rapprochement between the two traditional antagonists. The low point was reached over the Ocalan affair that seemed to confirm the suspicions of Turkey that Athens provided aid and comfort to Turkey's Kurdish rebels.

The pent-up anger of Turkey against Greece was vented when the fugitive Kurdish leader found shelter in a Greek embassy before he was captured.³⁶ But the Ocalan-induced crisis did not last long. Most importantly, it provided an opportunity for a new chapter that became possible by the skillful handling of the crisis by both Ankara and Athens while Brussels and Washington played supportive roles. Equally important for Turkey, the capture of Ocalan ended the Kurdish war, the continuation of which was reason enough to refuse Turkey candidacy status.

The step-by-step dialogue that commenced after the Ocalan affair received an unexpected boost from two sequential events that were literally acts of God. These were the two heavy-toll earthquakes that hit Turkey and Greece within a month of each other in the summer of 1999. The spontaneous and mutually extended help reversed decade old suspicions and hatred and inaugurated the era of seismopolitics between Athens and Ankara.³⁷ The earthquake diplomacy that ensued in conjunction with the heavy human toll from the earthquake altered the fortunes of Turkey *vis-à-vis* the EU.

The radical new element in the situation was that the Simitis government took the strategic decision to abandon the traditional Greek posture and instead take the lead in promoting the candidacy of Turkey. The Athens linkage strategy remained intact, but Greek tactics changed. This new policy also unburdened Greece from the cost of opposing alone Turkey's candidacy within the EU. It also won the Simitis government kudos from Washington. The Greek reversal, in fact, facilitated the 1995 Holbrooke strategy on Turkey.

CONCLUSION

Cyprus carried its four-year accession negotiations with Brussels to a successful conclusion in exemplary fashion and consistently stayed ahead of all other candidates in meeting accession requirements. Its small size, the efficiency of its bureaucracy and its rather well-managed economy helped tremendously in the road to accession. But Cyprus' negotiators wanted to make the extra effort to be a model candidate, so that if accession was rejected, postponed, or frozen, it would have been because of nothing other than political factors. Political reasons could have come into play for two reasons: first on account of Turkish threats, and second, because the Greek Cypriot side displayed bad faith in the institutionalized search for peace on the island.

Although individual member-states may have shown concern over Turkish threats to bilateral relations with the Union or to Cyprus, the Union itself never took them seriously. Turkish threats against Brussels simply lacked credibility. The EU could not allow a third party veto power over its decision-making. Brussels was in fact more concerned with the stated intention of Athens not to permit enlargement without Cyprus than with Ankara's threats.³⁸

Threats against Greece and especially Cyprus may have appeared more credible. In fact, they were not. After the 1996 Imia crisis, which was unrelated to the EU, Ankara became increasingly conscious that the threat of force, against Greece in particular, had lost whatever utility it might have had. Force was becoming prohibitive with regards to its integration strategy with the EU. The matter became mute after Helsinki, since in its aftermath Turkey had already become "a candidate country destined to join the Union." War with Greece would still have come about, but it would have been a result of internal disarray or because of rogue elements within the armed forces that wanted to sabotage Turkey's European vocation.

Threats against Cyprus did appear more credible, and they were reinforced by the coercive diplomacy that Ankara practiced on the issue of the Russian missiles. But the resolution of that crisis can be read in another way also. By backing down, Cypriot President Clerides exhibited rational and good faith behavior and avoided dangerous brinkmanship, thus safeguarding regional peace. Turkish pride was also satisfied. More importantly, because the issue involved arms and missiles, a case against Nicosia could have been made that provided Ankara with a cover. But threatening the use of force because of developments in the European Union was a matter of an entirely different magnitude. It appeared surreal and that is why the 2002 Copenhagen Summit came and went peacefully.

Ankara still retains the option of annexing northern Cyprus and may still do so in the future. But annexation would in fact change nothing. The northern part of Cyprus

is already, in every way that counts, integrated with Turkey. Annexation cannot change the state of affairs in Cyprus from the perspective of international law just as much as Turkish actions have not changed it since 1974. The Turkish thesis that the 1974 war on Cyprus produced a new reality that must be acknowledged has not been accepted by the international community and has in fact been repeatedly condemned by its authorized institutions and organs.³⁹ On the other hand, annexation will cause Ankara's bid to join the Union to appear oxymoronic, since a candidate country will be occupying EU territory and will not recognize one of the Union's members.

Only by exhibiting bad faith in negotiations for a solution of the political problem could the Greek Cypriots have jeopardized their chances with the Union. As the party that wanted the 1974 status quo changed, the Greek Cypriots made the most substantial concessions to accommodate the Turkish Cypriots short of de-legitimizing the Republic founded by the 1960 Accords. Since 1998, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots have been demanding exactly that, in violation of solemn agreements and commitments that they had undertaken and which were endorsed by the Security Council of the UN. These agreements, such as the two High Level ones signed in 1977 and 1979, the relevant Security Council resolutions, and the plans for a comprehensive settlement, presupposed the establishment of a federal, bizonal republic with a single international personality and single citizenship. The Turkish thesis for "separate sovereignties" and for a confederal state fell outside this agreed framework and therefore deadlocked the negotiations repeatedly. More recently this has occurred in Copenhagen in the fringes of the EU Summit and in March 2003 at the Hague in the presence of the UN Secretary General.⁴⁰

There is still plenty of time for a resolution of the political problem until the actual accession of Cyprus in 2004. For quite some time now and especially since the 1999 Helsinki decision, the EU dynamic has been transforming the security environment in the eastern Mediterranean. The EU has changed the Turkish domestic politics and the internal politics of the Turkish community in Cyprus that now overwhelmingly support accession in opposition to its traditional leadership.⁴¹ With regards to Cyprus, the consensus inside and outside the country is that a detailed framework solution does exist. Accordingly, the remaining differences can either be resolved prior to 2004 or will be transcended by the integration process and the politics of Brussels, as has been the case with analogous problems in the past.

Turkey is today closer than it has ever been to political integration with Europe

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and this in itself accelerates the integration process even further. Forces within Turkey opposed to Brussels should not be underestimated, particularly since they still dominate the national security culture of the country.⁴² But these forces may be fighting a rear-guard action. Moderate political Islamic forces are discovering that the democratic pluralism championed by Brussels legitimizes and empowers them against the ossified Kemalist system that has suppressed them politically for decades. It is at the very least ironic that Turkish political Islam, which thirty years ago considered the European Union a "Zionist conspiracy,"⁴³ is today fervently pro-EU and that that raising objections are the secularists that have been historically viewed as the vanguard of Ataturk's westernization project.

Still the supreme irony is that the Cyprus-EU integration process has, intentionally or not, unleashed and empowered political and social forces that have been transforming the entire region by moderating state behavior on vital issues at critical junctures. It must be emphasized that in the past half-century Cyprus not only divided the Greek and Turkish people, it has been the cause of and has been used by local and external forces to destabilize their fragile political systems as well. This has been noticeably the case in the 1960s and 1970s in both Greece and Turkey.

Whatever the immediate problems of the forthcoming accession of Cyprus to the EU, which has been negotiated without the active participation of Turkish Cypriots, they are outweighed by the institutional and physical presence of the EU in the region. There is also carefully worded language in the accession documents in line with 1993 Opinion that accession must benefit the island as a whole, economically as well as politically.⁴⁴ The argument that the numerically fewer Turkish Cypriots will be disadvantaged or discriminated against institutionally or overwhelmed runs contrary to the entire historical experience and founding philosophy of the European integration process. Too many forces are pointing against such an unlikely development.

Finally, one can only speculate about the impact of the political as well as the physical presence of the EU in the eastern Mediterranean on the politics of the Middle East and especially on the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict. So far the role of the EU has been constructive but politically limited. Will its presence in the region increase its political effectiveness? What raises optimism is that the historical experience of the EU suggests that the closer the geographic proximity of Brussels to areas of instability and conflict, the greater its stabilizing impact has been. Immediate geographic proximity has had the greatest impact, as transition in southern, eastern and central Europe demonstrate.⁴⁵ 

NOTES

1. Turkey's Foreign Minister Ismael Cem has used this phrase repeatedly. See for example *Turkpulse* (No.70) of 6 May, 2001. Turkey's overall "aggressive diplomacy toward the EU" as well as toward Greece and Cyprus is chronicled and analyzed in detail in Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000): 163-180. I draw extensively on Kramer's account subsequently.

2. For details see the collective work *Cyprus and the European Union* edited by Andreas Theophanous and others (Nicosia: Intercollege Press, 1999) *passim*.

3. Stephen R. Norton, "The future of secular Turkey," *Washington Times*, 21 April 2002. Norton served as US military attaché in Cyprus Turkey and Greece in the 1980s and 1990s.

4. Ibid.

5. According to this view Turkey had acquired such immense strategic importance for the US in the post-Cold War era that it assumed in US strategy the role that West Germany played during the Cold War. On this, see the extremely informative collective work Morton Abramowitz, editor, *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy* (New York: The Century Foundation Press, 2000) *passim*.

6. See the essays by the late Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Yannis Kranidiotis, *Greek Foreign Policy* (in Greek) published posthumously by Sideris Publishing, Athens 1999. Kranidiotis was considered one of the architects and a driving force behind this strategy.

7. See below Holbrooke's article in *Washington Post*; Abramowitz, "The Complexities of American Policy Making on Turkey," 153-184 in the edited volume cited in note 10.

8. Marios L. Evriviades, "Turkey's Role in United States Strategy during and after the Cold War," *Mediterranean Quarterly* (Vol. 9, No. 2) Spring 1998:37 and citations there in.

9. The literature on this is vast. See generally Cengiz Candar, "Ataturk's Ambiguous Legacy," *Wilson Quarterly* (Autumn 2000): 88-96; Eric Rouleau, *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 79 No 6 (December 2000):100-114; Jeremy Salt, "Turkey's Military 'Democracy'," *Current History*, (February 1999): 72-78.

10. See Evriviades (1998): 35-36.

11. The widely held presumption that countries like Turkey and Israel, have become more important to the US in the post-Cold War period remains to be demonstrated and has increasingly been undermined by US unilateralism. The US, international terrorism and WMD notwithstanding, does not face existential threats analogous to the Cold War kind.

12. See Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993): 102-103; George S. Harris, *Troubled Alliance* (Washington DC: AEI - Hoover, 1972): 31-46.

13. See note 3 above.

14. Amartya Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.10 No.3 (July 1999): 3-17.

15. Cf. citations in note 14 above. Cf. also Hasan Kosebalaban, "Turkey's EU Membership: A Clash of Security Cultures," *Middle East Policy*, Vol. IX No.2 (June 2002):130-146.

16. Karl Vick, "Secular Democrat or Zealot," *Washington Post*, 10 November, 2002; Elaine Sciolino, "New Leader Tries to Sell Turkey (and himself) to Europeans," *New York Times*, 21 November, 2002.

17. See Kosebalaban, 139-140; Cengiz Candar, "Some Turkish Perspectives on the United States and American Policy Toward Turkey" in Abramowitz, 135-137 *passim*.

18. Mehmet Ali Birand, "Turkey and the European Union," *World Today*, Vol.34, No. 2 (February 1975): 52.

19. For background see chapter ten in Kramer, 163-180.

20. Cf. Sukru Elekdog, "2 1/2 War Strategy," *Perceptions* Vol.1, No.1 (March-May 1996): 41; Marios L. Evriviades "The Umbilical Relationship: Greece and the United States," *Etudes Helleniques / Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1997):156.

21. See Kranidiotis, 179-261.

22. Cf. Ian O. Lesser and others, *Greece's New Geopolitics* (RAND: Santa Monica CA and Arlington VA, 2001) *passim*.

23. Constantine Stephanou and Charalambos Tsardanidis, "The EU Factor in the Greece – Turkey – Cyprus Triangle" in Dimitri Conostas editor, *The Greek Turkish Conflict in the 1990s* (London: McMillan, 1991): 217-218.

24. Ibid., 225.

25. Ronald Meinardus, "Third Party Involvement in Greek-Turkish Disputes," in Conostas, 162.

26. For details see Kramer, 163-180.

27. Cf. David Barchard, *Turkey and the European Union* (London: Center for European Reform, 1998) *passim*.

28. US sustained pressure on the EU on behalf of Turkey is well documented. It has involved at critical stages Presidential involvement and has caused resentment in Brussels. But Washington never wavered. See for example Martin Walker, "The Turkish Dilemma," *Wilson Quarterly* (Autumn 2000): 84; Abramowitz in Abramowitz:179; Caroline Daniel, "US Press EU to take Turkey as Member," *Financial Times*, 27 November, 2002; President Bush placed personal calls to the EU President and other EU heads of state on behalf of Turkey prior to Copenhagen, repeating what President Clinton did prior to Helsinki 1999.

29. "You must pay our bills because you need us" is the way it is often put. Cited in Dankwart A. Rustow, "Turkey's Travails," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 58, No.1 (Fall 1979):102.

30. See the Abramowitz volume cited and especially Alan Makovsky, "US Policy towards Turkey: Progress and Problems," 219-228.

31. On Luxembourg see Kramer:192-196, Barchard: 1-4; James Wilkinson, "The United States, Turkey and Greece – Three's a Crowd," in Abramowitz, 206-208.

32. For the crisis and its consequences pertaining to the EU see Kramer: 169-170. See also Carol Migdalovitz *Greece and Turkey: The Rocky Islet Crisis* (Congressional Research Service Report, March 7, 1996).

33. Kramer, 170.

34. See Barchard, 39-43.

35. Cf. Michael Barletta, "Cyprus: Mediterranean Countdown," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist*, Vol. 54, No 6 (November/ December 1998):12-14.

36. See Stephen Kinzer, "Turkey and Greece Trade Words over Kurd," *The New York Times*, 23 February, 1999.

37. See Fehmi Koru, "A friend indeed?" *Turkish Daily News*, 2 September, 1999; Stephen Kinzer, "A Sudden Friendship Blossoms Between Greece and Turkey," *New York Times*, 13 September, 1999.

38. See Kramer:199; Niels Kadritzke, "Reuniting a Divided Island," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, April 2002.

39. Such as the UN Security Council, the EU, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the European Court of Justice etc.

40. On 11 March and after some twenty hours of continuous consultation and negotiation UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressed his sadness for the failure of the recent intensive efforts to reach a settlement on the Cyprus problem. Annan stated *inter alia* that the Turkish side "had fundamental objections" to his plan for a solution. See Press Statement by the Secretary General, 11 March, 2003.

41. See Frank Bruni, "Turk says he'll try again to reunite Cyprus," *New York Times*, 2 April, 2003.

42. This issue is analyzed extensively by Kosebalaban.

43. See Jacob M. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey* (Leiden: E.J.Briel, 1974):192; N. Erbakan, who became Prime Minister in 1997 but was politically decoupled by the "soft coup" of that year, held this view. Ironically he sought protection for his political rights in the European Court of Human Rights.

44. See Kemal Kirisci, "12-13 December 2002 Copenhagen Summit of the European Council and Turkey," *Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association* (Available at "TUSIAD-US Website: www.tusiad-us.org").

45. Marios L.Evriviades, "Europe in the Mediterreanean," Paper presented at the Conference *Quo Vadis Europa ? The Vision and Frontiers of Europe*, organized by the Helmut Kohl Institute for European Studies, the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 22-23 April 2001.