

# Law, Ethics, and Justice in the Emerging International Order: A Study of Turkish Diplomacy under the AK Party Government (2002-2014)

BERDAL ARAL\*

*ABSTRACT* This paper draws on the ‘moral’ dimensions of Turkey’s ‘new’ foreign policy as it became manifest after the Justice and Development Party rose to power in 2002. This article first discusses ‘ethics’ and ‘justice’ in the context of international politics and states’ foreign policy. It then delves into Turkey’s behavioral posture vis-à-vis a number of key issues and policy areas, such as global economic and social inequality, disarmament, military aggression, the degree of respect for international law and human rights, protection of the environment, self-determination, and attitude towards and within international institutions, first and foremost being the United Nations, to demonstrate how this new outlook has played itself out

## Introduction

**T**his study considers Turkish diplomacy with specific reference to ethics, justice, human rights and international law during the period of 2002-2014. Discussion of this topic is premised on the view that, between 2002-2014, the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) government was, in principle, not moved by a ‘realist’ perception of international order, but instead sought to incorporate human rights, morality and justice, as founding principles, into the overall framework of its foreign policy. The study argues that there is ample support for this assertion in regard to the period between 2002-2014, when one looks into Turkey’s respect for international law expressing concern for morality, its embrace of human rights both domestically and abroad, its support for democratic uprisings in the Arab world, and its search for justice in the international order. This article finally reflects on the sources of ‘morality’ in Turkish diplomacy after 2002, which indicate the staying power of ‘morality’ as an essential ingredient of Turkish diplomacy so long as the AK Party remains in power.

\* Istanbul Şehir University, Turkey

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justice and consistency are highlighted. The second part of this study, which is the broader one, shifts its focus to the specific case of Turkish diplomacy after 2002. It elaborates on Turkey’s deference for (increasingly inclusive) international law, which may be seen as an expression of an ethical frame of mind, for reasons discussed. Next, it draws on the Turkish embrace of human rights, both at home and abroad, and, after this, shows how, combined with its evolving democracy, this embrace enabled Turkey to become a source of inspiration for Arab uprisings after 2010, *inter alia*, against oppression, injustice, and lack of freedom. The following section takes up the issue of Turkey’s search for ‘justice’ in the international order by reference to its diplomatic overtures as well as its posture in the UN and other international platforms. The final part of this article dwells on the sources of ‘morality’ in Turkish foreign policy after 2002 to show that this proclivity towards morality and justice has become an enduring pattern in Turkish behavioral posture towards other international actors.

### **Removing Morality from Foreign Policy Analysis**

Diehard positivism (in particular) as ‘realism’ is still alive and kicking in the discipline of International Relations. In the contemporary world, all too often, state interests continue to reign over moral principles. The problem is confounded by the current flight of states and modern societies from universally valid principles of morality in the name of relativism, which is a doctrine that denies that morality and truth can have universal validity. In the words of Bryan Turner, “it is widely recognized that relativism is a problem confronting modern societies because it rules out the possibility of reaching any specific agreement about moral principles.”<sup>1</sup> In this social, political and intellectual climate of fragmented regimes of ‘truth,’ ethics, morality, religion and traditions continue their journey of terminal decline in the social sciences, which borders on mar-

This study begins with a theoretical discussion of the prevalence of amoral positivism in the social sciences, which tends to play down and at times disregard the relevance of ethics in the foreign policy of states. This posture is often rationalized as ‘neutrality’ or ‘objectivity.’ The paper proceeds with a scrutiny of the concepts of ethics, morality and justice in the context of foreign policy. The debate continues with the disclosure of the pillars of ‘ethical’ foreign policy in which, *inter alia*, advocacy of legitimacy, peace,

ginalization. The idea of injecting values into social analysis is stigmatized by the dominant perspective and mode of academic inquiry today as the antithesis of ‘serious’ scientific inquiry. This ‘positivistic scientism’ often glosses over the normative ‘ought to’ in favor of the positivistic ‘is.’ In the specific context of international politics and international order, one should also beware of a pervasive hegemonic discourse that permeates societies about unruly ‘others’ –both inside and outside– as well as of the mantra about the ‘victorious’ liberal values (of the West). Accordingly, any view that considers the existing international order as morally problematic, while offering new ideas, principles and norms for the purpose of injecting morality into the current international order, is often dismissed by positivistic scholarship as ‘polemical’ and ‘un-academic.’

Insofar as the foreign policy orientation and practice of a large number of states is concerned, ‘amoral positivism’ stands as a major marker of state behavior in the contemporary world. As noted by two Western observers,

“within nations, there will be battles over whether moral or practical concerns should come first and over which moral concerns should take precedence. Even as universal values become more a part of the foreign policies of nations, those policies will still be ridden with contradictions and hypocrisies. And yes, the morality of the strong will generally still prevail over that of the weak, and considerations of value almost inevitably will have to take second place.”<sup>2</sup>

The unfairness of the international system, the coercive practices of the hegemonic actors in international society, and the prevalent atmosphere of inter-state rivalry tend to inflame ethnocentrism and egocentrism as the defining characteristic of a great number of states’ perspectives and behavioral postures vis-à-vis the outside world. The endurance of hegemonic discourses that advantage Western perspectives of international politics and law, almost ‘coerces’ states into taking a ‘neutral’ and ‘distant’ position between the ‘oppressor’ and the ‘oppressed,’ between ‘the occupier and the occupied,’ (e.g. Israel v. Palestinians; the United States (USA) v. Afghanistan; Russia v. Georgia; home states in the West v. Muslim communities who were frequently harassed after September 11), and eventually compels states to become passive bystanders in a world full of injustice and cruelty in spite of the rhetoric of human rights, democracy and self-determination. This hegemonic discourse, which privileges Western perspectives, is an ideal recipe for international anarchy, wars of aggression, oppression, and economic inequality. Due to the prevalence of this noncommittal and passive behavioral posture that privileges the hegemonic actors and the domineering discourse which it embodies, most states and scholars of international relations have been trapped in a language of formalism and diplomatic niceties that plays into the hands of the existing constellations of power. In the aftermath of the Cold War, it has become commonplace in so far as the privileged actors of the dominant neoliberal international order

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a lot to do with the realization that the world is doomed to suffer the consequences, *inter alia*, of environmental and humanitarian disasters of epic proportions unless morality and justice become major determinants of the international outlook of states and their foreign policy behavior. Diana Francis reminds us that, “as the globe shrinks and the problems that threaten it expand to engulf it, national self-interest may be not only a notional but also a practical contradiction in terms.”<sup>4</sup>

is concerned to blame the victims of colonialism, neo-colonialism, politics of intimidation and imperialistic greed for their ‘backwardness,’ ‘laziness,’ ‘fanaticism’ and ‘lack of individualism,’ which are used as tools to ‘explain’ their economic and social deprivations and political ills. The victim has come to be ‘silenced’ and ‘marginalized’ by the sanitized language of modern diplomacy and the resolutions of international institutions that, as in the case of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, often reflect the imperial ambitions of their powerful members.<sup>3</sup>

However, there are some signs that interest in ethics, morality and justice appears to be growing among both academics and foreign policy elites. This has

### **Elucidating Morality and Justice in the Context of Foreign Policy**

The term ‘morality’ relates to good intentions and good goals which could be judged to be right. One of the key principles of morality is the ‘Golden Rule’ which means that an actor should act towards others as it would like others to treat it. This is where one could fruitfully begin to discuss morality and ethics. The Greek philosopher Socrates (469-399 BC) was one of the first thinkers pioneering the study of morality and virtue. According to Socrates, it is virtue that matters most in human life. Virtue emanates from knowledge, while vice is the direct consequence of ignorance. In his view, goodness will lead to happiness.<sup>5</sup> The knowledge of the good is no other than virtue which is morally right. He assigns a special place for justice which gives worth to human existence. The pursuit of virtue is preferable to the pursuit of material wealth. Besides, communities will be better off if they act in solidarity with one another.<sup>6</sup> The terms ‘ethics’ and ‘morality,’ in the jargon of International Relations, are almost indistinguishable in meaning and content; therefore, these two terms will be used interchangeably in this study. According to Chomsky, if we wish to act morally (ethically) vis-à-vis other people, we ought “to apply to ourselves the standards we impose on others, and to recognize the obligation to help suffering people as best we can.”<sup>7</sup> The ultimate socio-political purpose of morality or ethics is to

establish justice for the community. Whereas morality operates at the level of individual behavior, justice concerns itself with the way in which a community is governed. This is another way of saying that justice is closely related to the normative quality of rules.

When transposed to the behavior of states, a moral outlook suggests that national interest ought to be redefined from a solidarity perspective. This is noted by Francis: “An ethical view would demand that the ‘national interest,’ however described, is seen always in relation to the greater whole and considered in the light of the needs of others.”<sup>8</sup> States have negative duties (as well as positive duties) towards one another: “if a state is harming another one, then it should cease doing so.”<sup>9</sup> The term ‘foreign policy’ refers to

“the way a state co-ordinates and prioritizes its externally oriented interests, and projects the values it considers significant. It often results in actions to shape the state’s external environment, to produce outcomes positive to the state and its allies. Foreign policy can also imply an absence of action. Thus a western lack of will to prevent the Rwandan genocide tells us as much about foreign policy.”<sup>10</sup>

An international perspective and behavioral posture informed by an ‘ethical’ foreign policy considers morality and the search for justice as key variables in decision-making. Such a state advocates ethical foreign policy values and acts on legitimate behavior in the matrix of international relations, critiquing the current international order with a view to set up more progressive norms and institutions, and advocating attempts to restructure the world so that it better serves human needs and aspirations. The core of ‘ethical’ foreign policy is “a policy of being proactive in helping to meet the needs of others.”<sup>11</sup>

In the case of Turkey, it could be argued that Turkish foreign policy between 2002 and 2014 was strongly tinged by considerations of morality and justice, and that one could possibly draw on the ‘qualitative change’ between the AK Party era and the defining features of Turkish foreign policy during and after the Cold War. It should be noted that prior to 2002 there were moments when ‘moral considerations’ were set in, as the founding in 1997 of the Developing 8 (D-8),<sup>12</sup> among eight prominent Muslim states by the then Turkish Premier Necmettin Erbakan, whose goals, *inter alia*, encompassed justice and fairness as the determining feature of the relationship between member states, thus supplanting the ills of the prevalent international economic system such as economic exploitation, inequality and confrontation. However, with some exceptions as said before, the overall contours of Turkish diplomacy after the Second World War and before the AK Party era could be coined as an ‘amoral’ foreign policy, which broadly overlapped with a ‘formalism’ that dovetailed with a state supporting the main pillars and structures of the international status-quo irrespective of whether it was unjust, oppressive, or morally despicable. This



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Somalian President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud attend the Inauguration of Aden Abdulle International Airport Somalia in Mogadishu, which was renovated with the Turkish support, on January 25, 2015.

AA PHOTO / KAYHAN ÖZER

type of foreign policy refuses to question the normative underpinnings and the usefulness of international institutions for members of international society, fails to call for greater accountability and transparency in international decision-making, declines to endeavor to change the global and regional balance of power in favor of the weak and the voiceless. Status-quo oriented states are prone to caution and inertia in assessing international events, avoid taking risks and/or initiatives for a more secure, just, free and egalitarian world. This is an apt description of Turkish foreign policy during the Cold War and beyond. Indeed, as well put by Kramer, “until the coming to power of the AKP in 2002, Turkey’s foreign policy, under the dominant influence of the established Kemalist state elite, was mainly security-driven and inward-looking trying to retain the national and international status quo as far as possible.”<sup>13</sup>

Alas, in Turkey, a large proportion of veteran scholars of International Relations examine AK Party government’s foreign policy from a *realpolitik* (power politics) perspective as though no *qualitative* change occurred in the Turkish perception of the outside world and in the means deployed to achieve Turkish diplomatic objectives after 2002. In other words, a high proportion of seasoned academics continue to explain, conceptualize and contextualize Turkish foreign policy from a power politics framework. They tend to highlight issues that have direct bearing on Turkey’s overall standing in the constellation of political, military and economic power, both at regional and global levels. By contrast, Turkey’s vociferous defense in a multitude of international platforms of the case for the (mostly) impoverished South and the Muslim world, and against imperial encroachments and enduring economic inequality, are mostly played down or interpreted simply as a pragmatic display of power by a ‘rising’ state. The said studies also tend to take a cynical view of the likelihood of a fundamental change within the existing international order. They also have scant

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interest in values and culture as the flourishing components of international politics. Apparently, the habit of status quo-oriented thinking, which is reminiscent of 'old Turkey,' has not died out. In the words of Shapcott, "it is a limitation of most realist writers that they simply favor the national interest over the interests of outsiders. In other words, realists display a preference for the status quo, the states-system and nationalism, which is not fully defensible."<sup>14</sup>

### **Pillars of 'Ethical' Foreign Policy**

The foreign policy of a state should be marked by the following patterns of behavior if it could, broadly speaking, be described as 'ethical' and geared towards the goal of establishing justice at regional and global levels. First, the ethical state complies with the norms of international law, which increasingly reflect the common conscience of the international society of states and other actors. Accordingly, it avoids resorting to the use of (illegal) force as an instrument of foreign policy. Such a state displays a propensity for peace and cooperation with its neighbors. It happily advocates peaceful methods in regard to its disputes with other actors in international society. Its support for peace is grounded, *inter alia*, in its longing for justice. An ethical state opposes illegal military operations in the territory of other states. In addition, such a state does not allow its territory to be used by third parties for direct or indirect military aggression against other states.

Second, the ethical state is an active participant of lobbying and norm-creation in international platforms and institutions in the context of endeavors intended to enhance the economic, political and cultural benefits enjoyed by economically impoverished and/or politically fragile states. It considers 'international society' as a global communion of nations, communities and other actors that are ontologically, politically and economically related. Third, the ethical state backs democracy, human rights, transparency, accountability and the rule of law inside the country and within the broader international society.

Fourth, the goals as well as the means used to achieve foreign policy goals of an ethical state are benevolent/good for others; its foreign policy is not purely geared to the satisfaction of national interests; it is committed to the elimina-

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tion of global problems such as economic inequality, poverty, aggression, oppression, threats posed by nuclear weapons, climate change, discrimination, racism, violence and wars. The ethical state seeks to lay the foundations for democratic representation and decision-making

in major international institutions, while providing foreign aid to poor countries if it is reasonably affluent.

Fifth, the ethical state acts consistently and predictably by establishing sustainable channels of interaction between domestic policies, structures and narratives on the one hand, and its international behavioral posture and discourse on the other. Such state pursues a principled behavioral posture by treating similar cases in a similar manner. It is aware that condemning one case of military occupation or intervention and not others, protesting the selected body of serious human rights violations in particular countries, while keeping silent in others are symptomatic of double standards indicating deficiency in moral rectitude.

Last but not least, a state whose foreign policy behavior is informed by morality actively challenges the political, military and discursive hegemony of the West over the 'rest'. This suggests that an ethical posture featuring concern for justice in the international order is sensitive about imperialism and other forms of coercive intrusions that disable 'weaker' states.

In order to ascertain whether Turkey's behavioral posture vis-à-vis the outside world between 2002-2014 could be described as an 'ethical' foreign policy, it is necessary to unravel how Turkey, both in words and deeds, performed on a panoply of problems and issues which have strong bearing on morality and justice in international society.

### Turkey's Deference for International Law as 'Morality'

Basically, there are two fundamental indicators for an ethical foreign policy: first, the posture of a state on international issues that are essential for peace, justice, freedom and prosperity in the world. These are the kind of issue areas which take the lion's share of the activities performed by international institutions such as the UN. The second indicator is the form and substance of a given state's diplomatic relations with its neighbors as well as with other states. This part of the study focuses on both aspects of Turkish foreign policy which, in some cases, have intermingled.



A state's respect for the norms of international law in our global and interdependent world, many of whose rules are reflections of moral precepts, is an important manifestation of its ethical position. Indeed international legal norms, as an expression of collective view in international society, are key indicators of legitimate behavior in international society.<sup>15</sup> The link between international law and morality is well put by Murphy:

“International legal norms are always a product of moral understanding –at least among a political elite– then it follows that the task of constructing a better moral foundation for international law is not just an exercise in alternative theory building. What is also needed is a critique of the current order on its own terms so that those who seek to sustain it become convinced of the need for change.”<sup>16</sup>

It is in this context that we ought to evaluate Turkish foreign policy when the AK Party assumed power, between 2002 and 2014. All the evidence suggests that, broadly speaking, in this period, Turkey acted peacefully towards other states and actors and thus avoided acts constituting direct or indirect aggression. This is surely an ethical position when one considers that “the moral has been equated with the legal with regard to the use of force in international affairs.”<sup>17</sup> On the eve of the US occupation of Iraq, quite a few renegade MPs from the AK Party joined the opposition in refusing to give the required majority for the Memorandum of 1 March, 2003 which, if accepted, would have permitted Turkish territory to be used for the deployment of American troops in the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq.<sup>18</sup> While the US was utterly disappointed about this outcome, Turkey accumulated a great deal of appreciation from the rest of the world. Its prestige got boosted beyond expectations. The refusal of the Memorandum by the parliament was also perceived by many outsiders as the maturation of Turkish democracy. As a result, Turkey's image greatly improved in Europe. Previously Turkey had been seen as an oppressive and intolerant state, overpowered by the army, behaving like an American satellite; after the rejection of the memorandum, it came to be seen as a more democratic and civilized state that had the capacity to resist American pressure.<sup>19</sup> Hence, contrary to the position of Erdoğan, who was dragged into a power political calculation of going along with the US by the desire to avert the collapse of the fledgling AK Party government by hostile forces inside and outside, those opposing the motion in the parliament chose to take an ethical and principled position in the upcoming occupation of Iraq. Worthy of note also is the fact that, on the eve of the US invasion of Iraq, Turkey actively sought to avert this aggression by initiating Iraq's “neighbors' conference” to dissolve the crisis without resort to the use of force.<sup>20</sup>

In the case of other military aggressions, it is worth noting that Turkey was moderately critical of the Russian aggression in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine

(2014) (Crimea, in particular, whereby Turkey smoothly renounced the incorporation of Crimea into Russia), and unequivocal in its condemnation of Israel's massive assault on Lebanon (2006) and Gaza (December 2008-January 2009; 2014). Although Turkey, before as well as after the AK Party government, generally remained reticent about China's human rights violations, in 2009, when large number of Muslim Uyghurs were massacred in Urumqi, a city in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (East Turkestan), Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan blasted the Chinese authorities and said the killings were "nearly genocide."<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, Turkey remained silent when, backed up by the US logistically, militarily and politically, Ethiopia invaded Somalia in 2006. It is fair to say that Turkey tended to take a stance against military aggression, although, on the whole, the scale of its reaction was moderate if this brought it on a head on collision with the prominent actors of international society, such as the US, China and Russia.

Turkey, in addition to its renunciation of military aggression, has been a vocal critic of 'state terrorism' and 'crimes against humanity' during the AK Party's tenure in office. The ebbs and flows of Turkey's relations with Israel is a case in point. The AK Party was initially willing to maintain the pace and scope of Turkey's long established relations with Israel with the caveat that the latter shunned acts of state terrorism and outright military aggression against the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Turkey was prepared to act as intermediary between the Palestinians and Syria on the one hand, and Israel on the other. However, Israel's routine massacre of the Palestinians, combined with state terrorism against the Palestinian leadership, its constant flouting of the peace process, its construction of a wall traversing the entire West Bank, its massive offensive against Lebanon in 2006 with the consequence of 1,200 dead, combined with its wholesale attack on Gaza in 2008 behind the back of the peace talks between Israel and Syria with Turkish mediation, were the harbingers of the evaporation of the 'good old days' in Turkish-Israeli relations. Turkey fiercely condemned and protested Israel's grisly assault on Gaza in December 2008-January 2009 which led to the killing of more than 1,400 people. Tayyip Erdoğan's salutary outburst against Israeli President Shimon Perez in Davos in 2009, when he chastised Israel for behaving like a killing-machine, and Israel's bloody attack in 2010 on the Mavi Marmara, which was carrying large number of international activists aiming to deliver aid materials to the embargo-ridden Gaza, and killing nine of the passengers, all of whom were Turkish nationals and wounding over fifty,<sup>22</sup> were the final nail in the coffin of Turkish-Israeli relations. In short, after 2002, Turkey stood on the side of genuine peace and justice in the context of the Palestinian rights.

During the AK Party period, Turkey has manifested clear and unflinching support for the aspirations of the Palestinian people for independence. It rec-

ognized Hamas as a legitimate political actor of the Palestinian people, and has consistently protested the siege of Gaza and the construction of the wall that traverses the West Bank. It has also objected to the illegal Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank and to “restrictions to the movement of Palestinian people and goods; actions and measures that could alter the character and status of Jerusalem and further isolate East Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian Territory.”<sup>23</sup>

Under the AK Party government, Turkey became more accommodating about peaceful solutions to some of its most intractable international problems with neighbors. One of such disputes is the Cyprus problem. Indeed Turkey, under the AK Party rule, placed its full weight behind the Annan Plan, devised by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in November 2002 and revised a number of times before it was put to a referendum in the Turkish and Greek parts of Cyprus on 24 April 2004. The Annan Plan,<sup>24</sup> if accepted by both sides, would have ended the division of Cyprus under a federal state. Against the opposition of the army and other major political parties in Turkey, Erdoğan enjoined voters in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to cast affirmative votes, which they eventually did with 65 percent of votes. However, the Annan Plan was aborted due to rejection by the Greek Cypriots.

Turkey was similarly accommodating towards Armenia, with which it had a long history of hostility. The parties signed a protocol in Zurich in October 2009 that would eventually establish diplomatic ties between them. However, the parties failed to bring this process to a successful completion due, in particular, to the failure of Armenia to accept a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which resulted with Azerbaijan losing 20 percent of its territories.

On the environmental front, in February 2009 Turkey eventually signed and ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve environmental standards in Turkey.<sup>25</sup> On the issue of nuclear weapons, Turkey was known to be a committed member of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It was quite vocal about its refusal to be a nuclear weapons possessing state. Turkey made repeated calls for the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. It did not mince its words about the threats posed by Israel’s huge arsenal of nuclear weapons for regional peace, and has called on Israel to scrap them. Turkey also called on the P-5 (permanent members of the UN with veto power) and other nuclear



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The photo shows the passengers of “Mavi Marmara” which was going to send humanitarian aid to Gaza on May 2010.

AA PHOTO / ERHAN SEVENLER

weapons owning states to eliminate these weapons from the face of the earth. It was painfully aware that

“The more states that acquire nuclear weapons the more states will want them; the more states that want them the more available will be the technology and fissile materials needed to make them, and the greater will be the chance that those weapons will be used, rationally or irrationally. Use by one state against another would break the taboo against further use.”<sup>26</sup>

Finally, Turkey has been committed to similar policies with regard to biological and chemical weapons, which are weapons of mass destruction that do not differentiate between combatants and non-combatants. Turkey, together with Brazil, managed to cut a deal with Iran in May 2010 on the issue of the latter’s uranium enrichment program, which has been conceived as a ‘threat’ by mostly Western countries. According to this deal, Iran would have sent its uranium for enrichment abroad.<sup>27</sup> If this deal had been accepted by other major actors, the nuclear standoff between Iran and the West could have come to an end. However, the US, alongside its European allies, refused to accept the deal. Turkey maintained its principled position on the Iranian nuclear issue when it voted against the imposition of new sanctions against Iran in the UN Security Council in June 2010.<sup>28</sup>

Indeed, between 2002 and 2014, Turkey actively engaged as a peace broker among a flurry of adversarial states and other parties. On the official website of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, it was noted that Turkey, often as mediator, worked hard to

“bring about internal reconciliation in Iraq, Lebanon and Kyrgyzstan; two separate trilateral cooperation processes we have launched with the participation

of Serbia and Croatia to achieve lasting peace and stability in Bosnia-Herzegovina; similarly, a trilateral cooperation mechanism we have implemented with Afghanistan and Pakistan, a country which has an important role in ensuring peace and security in Afghanistan; ... our contributions to launch a broad-based resolution process between the Government of Somalia and conflicting parties are concrete examples of our efforts.”<sup>29</sup>

Turkey has likewise been active in seeking to enhance greater understanding among different civilizations during the AK Party’s period in office. Indeed, Turkey and Spain acted as co-chairs of the Alliance of Civilizations, which was formed in 2005 to diffuse civilizational tensions that were hyped up, especially after the September 11, 2001 terror attacks, and instead lay the groundwork for inter-civilizational and inter-cultural dialogue. This platform sought to tackle mutual misconceptions as well as ill-disposed perceptions among adherents of different religions, cultures and civilizations. While combating bigotry and narratives of exclusion on the one hand, and encouraging constructive dialogue on the other, the Alliance of Civilizations was seeking, first and foremost, to diffuse the crisis between the West and the Muslim world. This was done, in particular, through periodic conferences and a myriad of projects. The term ‘Alliance of Civilizations’ was also a clear ‘response’ to the notion of ‘Clash of Civilizations,’<sup>30</sup> a narrative used by some circles, especially in the West, to engender global chaos and feud as a self-fulfilling prophecy.<sup>31</sup>

The apex of Turkey’s commitment to act as peace broker between antagonistic states was its joint initiative with Finland to institute “The Group of Friends of Mediation” in 2010 which, as of December 2014, had brought together 40 states, the UN, and some regional and international organizations. The focal point of its activities has been conflict resolution and peace processes.<sup>32</sup> Turkish assertiveness and increasingly independent posture during the 2002-2014 period was also the result of its sizeable economic growth and concomitant ability to pay off all of its international debt to the International Monetary Fund in 2013.

## **Turkish Embrace of Human Rights**

The impact of greater respect for human rights in Turkey under AK Party rule has been very much related to the ethical aspects of its foreign policy in a number of ways: First, greater sensitivity towards human rights within Turkey, combined with positive democratic changes in the country, broadened the scope within which Turkish foreign policy was formulated and executed. This diminished the overweening impact of a (military) security perspective in favor of a more civilian, conciliatory and constructive outlook. This also gave way to a greater concern with the sensitivities and priorities of other ac-

## The AK Party government showed the courage of 'settling old scores' with Turkey's scars, ranging from the Kurdish problem to the grievances of religious Muslims, and the deprivations of non-Muslims in Turkey

tors. Second, Turkey's successful internalization of human rights gave it considerable leverage to support human rights struggles elsewhere, particularly in the Arab world. Third, protection of human rights, in combination with the right of self-determination and democracy, stood out as important ingredients of the search for a more just and ethical international order.

As a result of the unprecedented set of reforms in Turkey after 2002, the level of Turkish democracy rose and a better framework for human rights protection was established in the country: a new Civil Law, Penal Law and Press Law were enacted; the state of emergency in southeast Turkey was lifted; the right to publish and study Kurdish was ensured; heavy penalties were envisaged for torturers; the right of assembly found greater legal protection; existing restrictions on foundations and associations were put to a minimum; the State Security Courts were abolished; a new law diminished the National Security Council's overpowering influence in the Turkish political system; defense spending was put under civilian scrutiny; the scope of freedom of expression was broadened; the tight grip on endowments belonging to non-Muslims was loosened; non-Muslim foundations were granted the right to own property and to open places of worship; Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law, which limited the scope of free expression, particularly on the Kurdish question, was dismantled; and human rights treaties to which Turkey adhered were given superior status over conflicting domestic statutes. Turkey thus has projected its agenda for peace, freedom and reconciliation 'inside' into the 'international' realm.

Later on, Turkish nationals were given the right to file complaints against the state to a government-appointed ombudsman; individuals' personal information would be protected unless asked for by a judicial authority; individual right of petition to the constitutional court with regard to human rights violations was granted; special protection was granted towards women and children; trade union rights were enhanced; and public servants were accorded the right to make collective contracts.<sup>33</sup> What is more, the government embarked on a rather ambitious 'solution process' in 2012 to resolve Turkey's protracted Kurdish problem and the chain of conflicts which it had engendered since 1984. The uniqueness of Turkey's most recent experiment with democracy and human rights is incisively observed by Kramer:

"For the first time in Republican history, the democratic process seems to be the unhindered force for the definition of the longer-term development of Tur-

key's society and politics. There is a real chance that modernization and social engineering from above can be replaced by much more cumbersome but also sustainable social developments and democratization from below."<sup>34</sup>

Human rights could possibly be conceived as an expression of common morality if it was deployed as a vehicle of resistance against tyranny. This was precisely what transpired in Turkey in the years between 2002 and 2014.

Until a few years ago, Turkey's long journey towards the protection and promotion of human rights and the consolidation of democracy was very much informed by its engagement with the European Union (EU), first, as a 'candidate state' in 1999 and, after 2004, as a 'negotiating state' for membership in the EU. In this process of political transformation, the EU played a key role both as the 'external referent' that gave a touch of legitimacy insofar as the Turkish establishment was concerned, and as the 'supreme regulator' that, broadly speaking, set the pace, direction and substance of human rights reforms. This process was also decisive in the construction of Turkey's behavioral posture within broader international society. This European 'context,' as emphasized in numerous academic studies on Turkish foreign policy, is dubbed by Buhari as "Europeanization studies."<sup>35</sup> Whatever the context, however, surely this human rights campaign in Turkey was ethical and designed, at least partially, to correct past 'injustices.'

During the AK Party's second term in office, the strong ties between the human rights reforms in Turkey and Turkey's European vocation began to loosen gradually. While the reform process did not necessarily lose steam, the government began to give it an indigenous slant. This new path was strongly connected to one 'external' and one 'internal' factor. In 2007, when Sarkozy came to power in France to pursue, alongside the Germany of Merkel, a policy of alienating and tightening the screws on Turkey, the latter began to opt for a more autonomous path vis-à-vis the EU. Internally, the government became less vulnerable to coercive interventions to Turkish politics as it began to consolidate its power. The negotiation process began in 2005 but then apparently came to a standstill, and Europe began to lose its vital role as a major external leverage.

The AK Party government showed the courage of 'settling old scores' with Turkey's scars, ranging from the Kurdish problem to the grievances of religious Muslims, and the deprivations of non-Muslims in Turkey. Together, in addition to being individual human rights, these issues could plausibly be characterized as 'collective' human rights problems with which the West in general was ill equipped to cope. Indeed, the West is known to be less sensitive to issues of collective human rights than to the case of the liberal rights and freedoms, which are epitomized in the conception of 'individual' human rights.

Turkey's ambitious 'democratic peace' projects are intended to end state oppression and open up the public sphere for the participation of all segments of Turkish society. Both the motives and goals behind Turkey's ingenious human rights openings were ethical and ideally suited to patch up past injustices.

## Turkish Support for Democratic Uprisings in the Arab World

The deepening of its democracy and the better protection of its citizens' human rights rendered Turkey a source of inspiration insofar as the Arab world was concerned. It gave greater hope to the long suppressed and voiceless masses that 'change' was possible within the confines of an open political system based on free elections. The political actors in such a system needed neither to act like a puppet of the US, nor cause the destruction of the moral fabric of society, as the Turkish experiment demonstrated. When the Arab peoples one after the other revolted against what they saw as 'corrupt,' 'despotic' and 'subservient' regimes from the end of 2010, Turkey came to the forefront as a point of reference. After initial hesitation, Turkey extended its full support for the democratic uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa. It is interesting to note that, on the eve of Mubarak's eventual downfall (11 February 2011), Tayyip Erdoğan expressed his support for demonstrators seeking to topple him. The Turkish Prime Minister advised Mubarak to step down. Turkey was also generally supportive of democracy movements in Tunisia, Libya and other North African countries in the course of 2010-2013,<sup>36</sup> while, in order not to burn bridges completely with the incumbent regimes, avoiding the extrav-

agant displays of joy. Turkey sought to keep a low profile in the case of the uprisings in the Gulf region, which is a reservoir of petroleum and natural gas which Turkey desperately needs. This was surely a sign of restraint on the part of Turkish foreign policy in matters which touched on key economic and political interests and a painful reminder of the pragmatic challenges to an ethical foreign policy.

In the case of Syria, Turkish involvement was more direct. Right from the outset, when popular unrest and calls for change began in the spring of 2011, Turkey sought to convince the Assad regime, with which it had established cordial relations during the

**AK Party government took a confrontational stance towards the Syrian regime and came to voice the grievances and aspirations of the Syrian opposition**

AK Party era, to the extent of holding a joint cabinet meeting in December 2009, to embark on a democratic opening of its political system which would, it was then hoped, give greater political participation to the people and lessen the scale of human rights abuses. However, in spite of the pledges made, the Baath regime under the presidency of Bashar al-Assad reneged on its promises





and continued its violent crackdown on the opposition. In the initial stage, Turkey opposed the imposition of international sanctions against Syria. In the long meeting between the then Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and Bashar al-Assad on 9 August 2011, the former enjoined Assad to end the bloody crackdown on the opposition groups that called for greater freedom, to release its detainees, and to organize free elections. These demands were apparently rejected by the regime. Hence, when Turkish hopes for change from above were dashed, the AK Party government took a confrontational stance towards the Syrian regime and came to voice the grievances and aspirations of the Syrian opposition. Turkey then called on the UN Security Council to impose comprehensive sanctions and to authorize military action in order to end the bloodshed in Syria, which had led to the killing of some 300 thousand people as of December 2014.<sup>37</sup>

There is no doubt that Turkey's position in Syria was a 'moral' one. At first, Turkey sought to persuade a brutal dictatorship to change, and when the Assad regime proved recalcitrant, it dissociated itself from the Syrian state and championed the cause of the opposition. Also worthy of note was Turkey's 'humanitarian diplomacy.' Indeed, Turkey gave refuge to the hapless victims of war in Syria and Iraq fleeing northwards after 2011, a situation which became ever messier with the emergence, in Iraq and Syria, of the extremist and ruthless armed rebel group called the 'Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant'

Mavi Marmara, as part of "Our Route Is Palestine and Our Load Is Humanitarian Aid" campaign with the initiative of the IHH, transported drugs, medical supplies, cement, iron, and playgrounds to Gaza.

AA PHOTO / IHH

(ISIL). While opening its territories to the massive flow of refugees from its southern neighbors, verging on 2 million by December 2014, Turkey did not differentiate between these displaced people on the basis of their ethnic (Arab, Turkman, Kurd) or religious affiliation (Muslim, Christian, Yazidi).

Tayyip Erdoğan and his government became a vocal supporter of the opposition in Egypt when a coup d'état, led by General Sisi, overthrew the elected President Muhammed Morsi in July 2013. Turkey was unequivocal about its

## **It is apt to draw on Turkey's policies towards Somalia as an indicator of Turkey's qualitatively distinct approach in comparison to other key players in Africa such as the US, European countries or China**

condemnation of this brutal seizure of power and the degrading assault on the fledgling democracy in Egypt. Accordingly, it has distanced itself from the new rulers of Egypt and consistently avoided in engaging in diplomatic initiatives which could be interpreted as a 'seal of approval' for the Sisi regime. By contrast, neither the pretenders of 'the champions of democracy and

human rights,' namely the US and the European countries, nor the UN took a critical stance against the coup; they even refrained from calling it by its name: 'coup d'état.' Turkey's stance towards the main actors of the crisis in Syria and Egypt is difficult to dismiss from an ethical point of view. As an observer notes,

"the breaking, or deteriorating, relations with the aforementioned countries is based on strong moral foundations. The formula to have good relations with the Baath regime in Syria, and with the junta regime in Egypt is very clear. The former regime has killed hundreds of thousands of their own citizens, and forced millions of them to become refugees and turned the country into a heap of rubbles; the latter regime has made a coup against the democratic transformation of the country, and killed thousands of Egyptians immediately after and launched a witch-hunt against the legitimate political representatives of the people and a part of the society."<sup>38</sup>

The merits, with some proviso, of Turkey's principled stance in the course of Arab uprisings ought to be conceived in the context of its 'soft power.' In the words of Ayooob, "Turkey's soft power is largely a function of the legitimacy of its political system and of its leadership at home."<sup>39</sup>

Turkey acted as an ardent supporter of democracy and human rights in many other instances after 2002: its concern for massive human rights violations against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar; its active support for the peaceful and democratic resolution of the conflict between armed Muslim groups and the government in the Moro island of the Philippines; its sensitivity towards mas-

sive human rights violations committed by Israel in the occupied territories against the Palestinians; its expression of disquiet about the marginalization of Muslim minorities in the West and about the perennial problem of Islamophobia. Nonetheless, Turkey's low-key approach towards the absence of freedom and democracy in the Arab Gulf countries such as Bahrain and Saudi Arabia indicated that Turkish idealism could be watered down and the realities of vulnerability, for instance, on the energy front, could pave the way for a pragmatic posture when and if Turkey's human rights diplomacy clashes with its core national interests. Likewise, Turkey kept its relative silence towards Sudanese human rights violations in South Sudan before the latter gained independence in 2011 and in Darfur, which was the scene of a bloody confrontation during the course of 2003-2009 between government troops and the rebel forces.<sup>40</sup> The case of Sudan pointed to a clash of two principles constituting part of Turkey's new international outlook: a rejection of imperialistic interventions by states such as the USA and Israel v. a display of sensitivity towards human rights.

### **Turkey's Search for 'Justice' in the International Order**

Soon after assuming premiership in March 2003, Tayyip Erdoğan revolted against the oligarchic center and the deep state in Turkey. Although he and his party succeeded in seizing power, namely the 'center,' he continued to voice the grievances of the 'periphery.' First, he waged war against the oligarchic structure of the state. Later, he extended this war against the oligarchic center of the international system in the person of the UN. He championed the slogan, "the world is greater than five," in reference to the permanent membership and the veto mechanism within the UN Security Council, and he became the international voice for the victims in Gaza when his "one minute" gesture at Davos struck a chord worldwide as a salutary outburst of deep frustration about the Israeli crimes against, first and foremost, the Palestinian people. In the words of one long-time friend and confidant of Tayyip Erdoğan, Erdoğan "uses the language of the others, those in the margins, the oppressed against the center of the world system. He does these with great skill."<sup>41</sup>

It is apt to draw on Turkey's policies towards Somalia as an indicator of Turkey's qualitatively distinct approach in comparison to other key players in Africa such as the US, European countries or China. Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan paid a visit to Somalia in 2011, which was "a highly charged visit to Mogadishu at the height of the 2011 Somali Famine... Erdoğan was the first non-African premier to visit Somalia in twenty years."<sup>42</sup> During this visit, Erdoğan repeatedly condemned the lack of international concern with Somalia's tragedy and the prevalence of the colonial rationale in the relations between the West and Somalia. This is what *The Economist* had to say about this visit:

“The nature of his visit was different. It was not about regional security. He came with his wife and daughter, his cabinet ministers and their families. The trip was brief and choreographed to boost standing at home. But that should not diminish the courage shown. The Turkish plane scraped the runway on landing. Even though the Shabab had been forced out of the city, the visit was an extraordinary security risk. Yet Mr. Erdogan’s presence was a statement of common humanity, a shared future, more eloquent sound-bite. It was the message so many Somalis have longed to hear...”<sup>43</sup>

While in Somalia, Erdoğan exclaimed that the world’s handling of the Somalia crisis was a test case for modern values. In order to pass this ‘litmus test’, states had to care about Somalia’s plight and provide assistance to this country.<sup>44</sup> Turkey’s private sector alone donated about 360 million dollars to Somalia in 2011, while 1,200 Somali students obtained full scholarships to study in Turkey in 2012.

As noted before, during the period between 2002 and 2014, Turkey was very critical of the UN for its failure to play an effective role in the maintenance of peace and justice in the world and to adequately support the development needs of impoverished nations. Particularly in the context of the Security Council, Turkish leaders Erdoğan, Gül and Davutoğlu blasted the UN for its passivity and hypocrisy on many occasions. Turkey asked the UN to concentrate “more on all issues related to development.”<sup>45</sup> The new paradigm in Turkish foreign policy was also evident in respect to the search for the alleviation of poverty and inequality in the world. It is worth noting that Turkey hosted the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries on 9-13 May 2011. To the surprise of many, Turkey became one of the major donors of aid to the least developed countries. That Turkey was elected as a provisional member of the UN Security Council in 2009 thanks to the overwhelming support of the developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, was a clear testimony that the Turkish material and moral support for their cause was well-appreciated.<sup>46</sup> Turkish development aid has continued to rise steadily; its official development assistance reached roughly 3.3 billion US dollars in 2013,<sup>47</sup> making it one of the largest donors of foreign aid in the world relative to its GNP in 2013.

Under the AK party, Turkey has also been committed to nuclear disarmament and has urged the UN to pursue this goal with greater resolve. This point was emphasized in a speech by the then Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül in 2006: “non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament are important components of our foreign policy.”<sup>48</sup> Turkey also occasionally pronounced on the threats to world peace posed by nuclear weapons. It was weary of the performance of the UN Security Council after the Cold War, despite initial high hopes. It was troubled by power politics games in the Council and the lack of consistency in its actions. In an official report on its priorities before the UN

in 2007, Turkey subscribed itself to the reform of the Security Council:

“Security Council reform is essential in order to make it broadly representative, efficient and transparent and to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions. The Security Council should have a more democratic and equitable composition that corresponds to contemporary international realities. An expansion of the Security Council in the non-permanent category will better reflect the principle of sovereign equality.”<sup>49</sup>

Under the AK Party government, Turkey undoubtedly became an advocate of a multipolar international system in which law and justice would prevail over crude power and selfish interests. Thus Turkey no longer aligned itself uncritically with the Western world, although the gravitational center of its strategic positioning in foreign policy has continued to be the West. Not surprisingly, Turkey has had strong misgivings about the existing international order. It has been too aware that imperial greed and the proxy wars which are waged in the name of some prominent actors were among the prime causes of most wars in the world today. In scores of international platforms, from the UN to the World Economic Forum, Erdoğan and other prominent figures in the political leadership spoke out for the integrity of the Muslim world, Africa and other impoverished and marginalized group of states and communities in the world. Turkish attempts to increase the voice of Muslim nations in the international arena especially in the context of the Islamic Cooperation Organization also testified to this commitment.



**The AK Party took cognizance of the grievances, first, of the Arabs, who lived together with the Turks for centuries under Ottoman sovereignty, and, second, of the rest of the Muslim world**

## **The Wellspring of ‘Morality’ in Turkish Foreign Policy since 2002**

The AK Party is motivated strongly by considerations of morality whose roots can be traced in certain values, ideas and material factors. First, the decision-making cadres within the AK Party manifest some awareness of Islamic ethics and idea of justice. As has been highlighted by Ahmet Davutoğlu, former foreign minister and current prime minister (after September 2014), and the architect of Turkey’s ‘new’ foreign policy, Islam ordains believers, and hence Islamic rulers, to subordinate economics to politics, to maintain social stability and order upon the principle of justice, and to endeavor to establish a social structure premised on socio-economic balance within society and the reinforcement of solidarity.<sup>50</sup> The search for justice extends to the outside world as well. In Davutoğlu’s words, “Muslim political consciousness... accepts

## There was no ‘axis shift’ in Turkish foreign policy, since the gravitational center of its foreign policies continued to be the West

political activity as a special mission in establishing justice over the whole world.<sup>51</sup> The core of ideas and concepts constituting Davutoğlu’s ‘strategic depth’<sup>52</sup> could, to a significant extent, be assimilated into ‘moral depth,’ granting that the term ‘strategic’ here, *inter alia*, refers to the multiple channels of morality and behavioral codes flowing from Turkey’s religious, political and cultural reservoir rooted in its unique history. The two key sources that filled this reservoir were ‘Islam’ which is, in addition to being the name of a religion, a worldview and a rich body

of moral precepts, and the ‘Ottoman Empire’ which was a multiethnic and multi-confessional empire whose wealth of diplomatic and political experience was often connected to the search for justice within an Islamic worldview.

Second, the Muslim world, of which Turkey is part, is known to have suffered at the hands of colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism over the last one hundred years, if not before. The AK Party took cognizance of the grievances, first, of the Arabs, who lived together with the Turks for centuries under Ottoman sovereignty, and, second, of the rest of the Muslim world. In Turkey, there is a deep-seated mistrust of the hegemonic international system led by imperialistic Western states which, following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War, converted the Middle East into a backdrop of colonial aggression, divide and rule policies, direct and indirect incursions, subversive activities, and illicit liaisons with corrupt dictators. Turkey, under the AK Party, manifested clear support for the true emancipation of the people in the Arab world from the abuses of imperialism, aggressive, racist and expansionist Zionism, and corrupt and repressive governments.

Third, Turkey came to sympathize with the Third World’s search for a more just and egalitarian international order that was largely informed by a critique of the international system and by the grievances of the Muslim world. The concern for morality and ethics was put into effective use thanks also to Turkey’s growing knowledge and awareness of the outside world, and particularly of dynamics within the Muslim world.

Fourth, as discussed above, another source of Turkish morality and the search for justice was rooted in Turkey’s respect for international law and the growing stature of its democratic and human rights credentials. It projected its ever greater receptivity to notions such as law, legitimacy and justice into the international arena by demanding that international institutions act upon their promises.

Finally, its strategies within the larger international society were shaped by Turkey’s elevation to the status of a ‘rising power.’ In the words of Schweller and

Pu, the grievance of a rising power “is not over the essential rules of the game but over representation and the application of the rules, that is, the hypocrisy, pitfalls, injustices, and corruption behind the existing manifestation of that order.”<sup>53</sup> This was also the case for Turkey’s critique of the international order. That Turkey became a ‘rising power’ was first and foremost manifested in the Middle East on account, in part at least, of its increasing economic ties with the surrounding countries. In accounting for Turkey’s fruitful engagement with its Muslim neighbors under the AK Party rule, Öniş holds that “Turkey’s relations with the Middle East and the Arab world have improved dramatically to the extent that the Middle East has become increasingly the focal point of Turkey’s assertive and confident multilateral foreign policy initiatives in recent years.”<sup>54</sup> According to Öniş, the roots of its growing assertiveness should be traced in Turkey’s impressive economic growth, degree of its modernization, democratic strength and increasing pluralism.<sup>55</sup>

## Conclusion

The evidence at hand suggests that Turkish foreign policy changed considerably after 2002. The hallmark of the AK Party following its elevation to power was its ability to pioneer the *gradual* transformation of Turkey, instead of opting for a revolutionary strategy for change. This behavioral posture suggested that the AK Party had to take the existing parameters of Turkey’s much bruised democracy as a given, and then open a long-drawn-out crusade against the political status quo by what limited political and legal instruments it held at its disposal. This was no different in foreign policy. Turkey, under the successive AK Party governments, consistently expressed critical views about the international system, while remaining part of the system. To be more specific, unlike Venezuela under Chavez or Iran during the presidency of Ahmadinejad, Turkish grievances of injustice were expressed in venues constituting the key platforms of the existing international system such as Davos, Brussels and New York.

Therefore, coining Turkey’s present government as ‘anti-systemic’ and/or ‘revolutionary’ would be erroneous. There was no ‘axis shift’ in Turkish foreign policy, since the gravitational center of its foreign policies continued to be the West. This is evidenced by the continuing depth and scope of Turkish-American relations, Turkey’s continuing membership in NATO and the Council of Europe, and its enduring commitment to membership in the EU. These commitments did not, however, deter Turkey from raising its voice for the cause of justice and freedom in the international order.

Those who insist that there was no visible paradigm shift in Turkish foreign policy since the AK Party took on the leading role in Turkish politics in 2002, are motivated by a number of pre-suppositions which are not necessarily mu-

tually exclusive: First, in this view, if there was any change in foreign policy, this was a continuation of the diplomatic overtures of previous governments, such as the ones during the Özal era between 1983-93 and İsmail Cem's tenure as Foreign Minister between 1997-2002. Second, it is presumed that Turkey should never seek to abandon its close association with the US and other Western governments. It should keep its commitment to Western alliance as tight as possible. Turkey should thus avoid the appeal of a deepening alignment with the Muslim world and/or the developing world. If it becomes too 'anti-establishment' within the larger global system, it could be considered as an 'unruly state.' Third, it is believed that, by their very nature, states are prompted into action in the international arena by the realpolitik considerations of inter-state rivalry and power maximization. Therefore foreign policies of all states are inherently built on national interests and strategic goals. In this perspective, morality and the search for justice are relegated to the realm of non-governmental actors, such as relief agencies.

Turkey's predominantly ethical foreign policy after 2002 has been tarnished on some occasions by its pragmatic diplomacy. In 2012, it accepted the deployment of an early warning radar station in Malatya, Kürecik, as part of NATO's missile defense system, which was allegedly a 'defensive' initiative against Iran, although it was actually a provocative move by NATO. It initially opposed NATO's 2011 military operation in Libya (even if authorized by the UN Security Council), for fear of the possible abuse of the operation by some NATO members in search of strategic gains. However, it willy nilly took part in the operation although favoring a non-military solution to the Libyan impasse. Turkey failed to take a sufficiently critical attitude towards Sudan in light of the massive human rights violations committed in Darfur between 2003 and 2009, and it was relatively reserved about its support for the democracy movements in the Arab Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia.<sup>56</sup>

However these are only deviations from Turkey's otherwise morally commendable behavioral posture vis-à-vis the outside world between 2002 and 2014. As the Turkish case testifies, an ethical state behavior should work to establish global justice by combating poverty and economic inequality both at inter-state and intra-state levels, strive for peace, and be part of endeavors to forge representative international institutions unhindered by Great Power privileges. Turkey's genuine endeavor to rely on an 'ethical' foreign policy and its search for justice in the current international order should be seen as part of the broader struggle to establish a new, more egalitarian and multipolar international order. Finally, it is apt to draw on the likelihood of the staying power of the strong dose of morality as a key ingredient of Turkish foreign policy in the future so long as the AK Party maintains its dominance, on account of its reformism, its powerful sense of mission rooted in Turkey's deep history, and its strong grounding in the virtues of morality and justice as essential ingredients of Islam. ■



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36. During his visit to post-revolutionary Egypt and Tunisia in September 2011, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan advised the new rulers in both countries to opt for secularism. While Tunisia's en-Nahda concurred with this 'invitation', it was turned down by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.
37. Seymour Hersh, the Pulitzer Prize winning American journalist, claimed that the chemical attack of 21 August 2013 which targeted the Ghouta suburb surrounding Damascus and killed at least 1,500 people was launched by the opposition, and not the government forces, and that the sarin gas used in

the attack had been delivered to the insurgents by Turkey. However this claim was swiftly refuted by the fact that the rockets used in this attack were known to have been possessed solely by the Syrian army.

38. Galip Dalay, "Is Turkey a Winner or a Loser in Foreign Policy?," *Opinion*, Ankara, 28 January 2014.
39. Mohammed Ayoob, "Beyond the Democratic Wave in the Arab World: The Middle East's Turko-Persian Future," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2011, p. 63.
40. Turkey was particularly disturbed by foreign involvement in the armed insurgency in southern Sudan and Darfur against the central government, primary among them being the USA and Israel, as well as about the one-sided and exaggerated depiction of the humanitarian crisis in Sudan, especially in the Western media.
41. Hüseyin Besli, interview with Balçiçek Pamir, *Haberturk*, (Turkish Daily), 8 August 2014.
42. Ismail Einashe, "The Tears of Somalia: Turkey's 'Moral' Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary Turkey*, (7 May 2013), retrieved from <http://bulentjournal.com/new-the-tears-of-somalia-turkeys-moral-foreign-policy/>.
43. "Statesmanship in Somali," *The Economist*, August 25, 2011.
44. Einashe, "The Tears of Somalia: Turkey's 'Moral' Foreign Policy."
45. "Turkey's Priorities for the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly," (September 2007), retrieved from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/data/DISPOLITIKA/UluslararasıKuruluslar/TurkeysPriorities.pdf>.
46. On the Turkish performance in the UN Security, see Berdal Aral, "Turkey in the UN Security Council: Its Election and Performance," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 11, No. 4, November 2009, pp. 151-168; Aslı Ilgıt and Binnur Özkeçeci Taner, "Turkey at the United Nations Security Council: 'Rhythmic Diplomacy' and a Quest for Global Influence," *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 2014, pp. 183-202.
47. This data is retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/ODA%202013%20Tables%20and%20Charts%20En.pdf>.
48. Speech Delivered by Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül at the Luncheon for the Candidacy of Turkey to the UN Security Council for the Term 2009-2010, 19 April 2006, Ankara Palace, retrieved from <http://www.un.int/turkey/page17.html>.
49. "Turkey's Priorities for the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly."
50. Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms: The Impact of Islamic and Western Weltanschauungs on Political Theory*, (Lanham/New York/London: University Press of America, 1994), p. 153.
51. *Id.*
52. This is the title of a book which Ahmet Davutoğlu penned in 2001 in celebration of the historical and geographical breadth and depth rendering Turkey a unique case as a 'central state' with, *inter alia*, important ethical missions: See Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik* (Strategic Depth), (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001).
53. Randall L. Schweller and Xiaoyu Pu, "After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an Era of U.S. Decline," *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Summer 2011, pp. 50-51.
54. Ziya Öniş, "Turkey and the Arab Spring: Between Ethics and Self-Interest," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2012, p. 55.
55. *Id.* Along the lines suggested by Öniş, one could point to Turkey's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in dollars which increased 132 percent between 2003 and 2012. By the end of 2013, Turkey's GDP was 822 billion dollars. In purchasing power parity, Turkey was the world's 16<sup>th</sup> largest economy in 2014.
56. On the painful collision between ethical considerations and the imperative of national interests in Turkish foreign policy since 2002, see Öniş, "Turkey and the Arab Spring".

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