



Turkey and the United States: Ambivalent Allies+

By Kemal Kirisci*

Since so much of the U.S.-Turkish relationship was based on the situation of the Cold War years, their partnership has undergone important changes in the new era. By focussing on different issues and emphases, however, their association has adjusted quite well, despite continuing divergences on several issues. Given the enormous strategic significance of the region surrounding Turkey in the post-Cold War era, Turkish-U.S. relations will remain extremely important.

Specific incidents and disagreements in bilateral relations have at times displeased both sides without negating the alliance's impressive strategic achievements. Most of their joint objectives have been fulfilled, achieving a great deal in contributing to peace and stability both in Europe and the Middle East.

It would probably be wrong to describe the bilateral relationship simply as a function of cooperation against a common enemy or threat. The Turkish modernist commitment to developing a Western-oriented secular state in a predominantly Muslim country accompanied by a democratization process beginning in the 1940s provided a basis of shared values.

Still, the link between the U.S.-Turkish alliance's origins and the Cold War could not be clearer. In April 1946, as Winston Churchill was warning an American audience that an iron curtain was dividing Europe and a Cold War starting, the U.S. warship Missouri arrived in Istanbul. That visit is often cited as the symbolic

event signalling the start of this bilateral strategic relationship.

This was not a new idea for Turkish leaders. Even during the early 1920s, during the Turkish war of liberation, they had been seeking U.S. cooperation in an effort to counterbalance Britain in the region. But given American isolationism and limited interests in the area, relations between the two countries did not even start until 1927. As late as in 1945 the United States was supporting Soviet demands to revise the Montreux Agreement governing the status of the Turkish Straits, a situation extremely wearing for Turkish decisionmakers. The situation worsened when Soviet leader Joseph Stalin made territorial demands on the Straits and two Turkish provinces bordering the USSR.

Thus, it was only when the United States came to regard the Soviet Union as an expansionist power that Turkey's geo-strategic significance became an invaluable asset for U.S. policy. Following the USS Missouri's visit, U.S.-Turkish relations took off and Turkey became a beneficiary of both the Truman Doctrine of 1947 and the Marshall Plan launched the following year. Subsequently, especially with Turkey's participation in the Korean War on the side of U.S.-led UN forces did the United States sponsor Turkey's membership to NATO in 1952. During the ensuing Cold War decades, the two countries developed an intimate strategic relationship. Turkey provided critical base facilities for the U.S. military while, in turn, the United States

provided extensive economic and military aid to Turkey.

A symbol of this relationship--and how it has changed in the post-Cold War era--were the U.S. military and intelligence bases in Turkey. During the Cold War, U.S. and NATO bases provided a major strategic advantage toward the Soviet Union. However, these bases often became sources of tension especially during the 1970s when both the Turkish government and public wanted to see their closure. On the hand Turkey resisted U.S. demands to be able to use them for their rapid deployment operations in the Gulf area during the 1980s creating considerable disappointment and frustration in U.S. circles.

Yet, with the end of the Cold War the United States dismantled most of its military bases in Turkey often to the great disappointment of local communities for whom the bases were an important source of income. Paradoxically, the Turkish government has welcomed the U.S. decision for domestic political reasons but at the same time recognized that this has left it without an important source of leverage over the United States. Furthermore, the bases were also seen as a symbol of U.S. commitment to Turkey.

The only remaining major U.S./NATO military base of strategic and military significance is the one in Incirlik not far from the Syrian border. This base as well as other Turkish air force bases had played a pivotal role during the allied operations against Iraq during the Gulf crisis. The safe zone in northern Iraq continues to be enforced from Incirlik. All indications are that the United States would like to maintain its presence at this base. The cooperation between Turkey and the United States over the use of this base will be very much a function of Turkish domestic politics and Turkish decisionmakers perception of their own security needs. Most important, in the back of their minds there will be the

concern of how to balance the need to have U.S. support for Turkish security but not get drawn into a situation where the base is used by the United States for a regional intervention which Turkey is not ready to support. This was for example the case in February 1998 when Turkey refused the United States the use of the base to compel Iraq to cooperate with UN arms inspectors.

However, the relationship, with the exception of the 1950s and early 1960s, has been marred with difficulties and Turkish mistrust of American friendship and intentions. This resulted from three developments: First, was the U.S. decision to remove Jupiter missiles from Turkey following the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. The Turkish elite's view that this result from a bargain made by two superpowers behind its back fostered doubt about the U.S. commitment to Turkish security.

Second, in 1964 then Prime Minister Ismet Inonu, a founders of the Turkish republic and a national hero, received what was considered a humiliating letter from President Lyndon Johnson. The letter, during a Cyprus crisis jeopardizing the Turkish minority there, warned Turkey not to use U.S. weapons in Cyprus and that if its involvement there provoked a Soviet military response Turkey could not count on U.S. support.

Third, the United States imposed arms supply sanctions on Turkey after the 1974 Cyprus crisis when Turkish forces captured one-third of the island.

Contemporary areas of conflict include fundamental differences over the U.S. policy of dual containment and frequent disagreements over the future of Cyprus, Greek-Turkish relations, Turkish weapons acquisition programs, and Turkish human rights problems.

Nevertheless, the alliance remains quite strong. On the strategic level, the two countries share common objectives on many issues as varied as expanding NATO's

membership, Turkish accession to the European Union, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or missiles, to the opening of new oil pipeline routes from the Caspian basin to the West, avoiding both Russian and Iranian territory.

What are the issues over which Turkey and the United States have a convergence of interest and policy as opposed to issues that generate conflict of interest? What are the dynamics behind the two countries conflict and cooperation? Why does the United States find itself imposing sanctions on Turkey? Why are Turkish leaders often suspicious of the United States? What kind of a future relationship can be expected for these two countries?

In the post-Cold War era, a key point of convergence between the United States and Turkey is that both favor the emergence of democratic, secular, pro-Western regimes in the area and want to prevent the rebuilding of a Soviet/Russian Empire. Turkey was among the first countries to recognize former Soviet republics as well as to support actively new regimes in ethnic Turkic republics, as well as Georgia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Macedonia and even Armenia.

In the early 1990s many U.S. decisionmakers even promoted Turkey as a model for the ethnic Turkic republics of the former Soviet Union. Both countries also saw these countries' admission in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO's Partnership for Peace program and North Atlantic Cooperation Council as critical to consolidating a new geopolitics in the ex-Soviet sphere of influence. Considerable cooperation also took place between the two countries in managing the ethnic conflicts in Georgia and Chechnia as well as the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorna-Karabakh.

The unequivocal common geostrategic concern has been to preempt any situation that might enhance Russian political or military influence in the region. A key instrument in this effort was to develop an "East-West energy corridor," oil and gas pipelines which went through Turkey instead of Russia. Both governments have been keen to see the development of alternative pipeline routes to existing Russian ones bringing Caspian and Central Asian gas and oil to the world markets. The high stakes involved led many to label the struggle as the "new great game."

Nevertheless, there has been some divergence over the preferred actual routing of pipelines. The Americans have advocated multiple routes including one from Baku across Turkey to its oil terminal at Ceyhan on the Mediterranean. The Turkish government has supported this route with much greater singlemindedness irrespective of commercial or economic factors and has felt its U.S. counterpart has not sufficiently pressured oil companies to do the same. Still, many American decisionmakers have repeatedly expressed public support for the Baku-Ceyhan route and clearly see this project as one enhancing Turkey's ties with the West, boosting its economy and enhancing its stability.

Regarding, regional economic development, too, the two countries appear to support similar approaches. Two good examples are the support given to the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSCE) organization. and Turkey's membership in the European Union (EU). Enhancing Black Sea economic cooperation was originally a Turkish plan to strengthen stability and security in a region experiencing drastic transformations. The United States gave this idea considerable support and it has made important institutional progress although as yet far from having achieved its full potential.

In respect to the EU, the United States has very actively pushed for Turkish membership even when this has meant friction with some European governments. The United States played a critical role in ensuring the ratification of the Customs Union Treaty signed between Turkey and the EU in 1995. The United States clearly sees the issue of Turkish membership in strategic terms and argues that membership would enhance Turkish economic development and democracy, while also helping make Turkey a much more stable country in a critical neighborhood. This logic has also been pursued in respect to including and actively promoting Turkey as one of the big emerging markets deserving U.S. investment.

Although preferred American and Turkish policies seem to overlap considerably regarding geostrategic interests in Europe, the Middle East seem to offer a mixture of cooperative as well as conflicting views. Turkey, except for a short period in the 1950s, shied away from Middle East politics until 1990. In the 1950s, Turkey, as part of the West's containment strategy against communism and under both U.S. and British encouragement, tried to lead in forming an anti-Soviet alliance with Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. However, this policy attracted considerable criticism and harsh reactions from emerging pan-Arab regimes in Egypt and Syria and was promptly discontinued.

Until the oil and Cyprus crises of mid-1970s, Turkey maintained equidistance from the protagonists in the Arab-Israeli conflict and had very little economic interaction with the region. When the government wanted to mobilize Muslim support on the Cyprus issue and improve the Turkish economy's dire state, the government launched a policy to improve relations with the Arab world. Diplomatic status was given to the PLO and relations with Israel were downgraded. Even after the

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Turkey did not agree to U.S. requests that it support U.S. rapid deployment forces in the Gulf region.

Turkey's full backing for U.S. efforts in the Kuwait crisis and the building of close links with Israel in the 1990s marked a sharp change in this policy. When Iraq seized Kuwait, following thinly veiled threats from Saddam Hussein directed against Turkey, the Turkish government supported UN sanctions and allied military operations against Iraq. While that decision at the time engendered considerable differences and criticism within Turkey it signalled a U.S.-Turkish convergence of opinion in the Middle East. President Turgut Ozal also actively sought to participate in the Madrid peace process and had already advocated the idea of building water pipelines from Turkey across the Middle East as a project to help promote peace in the area. Although Turkey was not invited to the Madrid talks it did later take, with U.S. support and urging, an active part in the multilateral talks' working groups.

This also coincided with a period when Turkey began to develop relations with Israel, especially after the September 1993 Israel-PLO agreement. Since then this relationship has expanded considerably and clearly receives active U.S. support, including U.S. participation in the first naval exercise between Israel and Turkey in January 1998. The United States did object, though, to certain aspects of Israeli-Turkish military cooperation particularly in the area of anti-missile technology.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is another common concern to both Turkey and the United States. Turkish defense strategy is based on deterrence, including its NATO membership and air force strike capability. But during the Kuwait crisis, U.S. and NATO anti-missile batteries had to be

deployed in southeastern Turkey to defend against potential Iraqi missile attacks.

Clearly, the absence of Turkish anti-missile capability makes Turkey vulnerable to its three Middle Eastern neighbors amply equipped with weapons of mass destruction. The Turkish military is paying growing attention to this threat and countering it is an important part of Israel-Turkish military cooperation. In contrast, U.S. strategy has focused mostly on preventing proliferation by pressuring exporters--Russia, China and North Korea--not to supply these countries. In Iraq's case, the sanctions regime succeeded in destroying stockpiles where possible.

In general, though, this strategy has not been terribly successful and leaves Turkey vulnerable to potential attacks or intimidation. Turkey's vulnerability to Syrian Scud missiles fired at cities or against the infrastructure of the Southeastern Anatolian Development Project became quite obvious during the October 1998 crisis with Syria.

In terms of broader Middle East security and stability, Turkish and U.S. views overlap considerably. Turkey is keen to see that the Middle East does not become dominated by pan-Arabism. The 1960s and 1970s was a period when Turkey had difficult relations with pan-Arab regimes which were also usually allied to the USSR. The Middle East became an important market for Turkish goods and services during the 1970s and 1980s but this receded as the oil boom waned and the region's economy began to stagnate. Turkey's economic relations with the region further decreased as a result of U.N. trade sanctions against Iran and Iraq. However, Turkey continues to aspire rebuild economic relations with the Middle East. This is reflected in the Turkish-Israeli trade agreement and also efforts to improve economic relations with Egypt, Jordan and North African countries.

Turkey has also supported the peace process and sees its success as the best guarantee against a resurgence of any form of radicalism that could damage Turkey. U.S.-Turkish interests also coincide in Turkey's effort to strengthen relations with Jordan and other moderate Arab states. At the same time, Turkey's closer relations with Israel are developing counter-alliances against Turkey involving Iran, Syria, Greece and Armenia, a situation which could itself endanger stability. Further, the emphasis put on the military aspect of Israeli-Turkish relations has caused some discomfort in Turkish domestic circles especially when the peace process is stalled.

A final area of cooperation involves UN or NATO peace keeping and humanitarian assistance operations. U.S.-Turkish military cooperation was common in NATO exercises. But only with Operation Provide Comfort, launched in April 1991, did the two armies actively cooperate in a humanitarian assistance program. The operation came after the mass influx of Kurdish refugees from northern Iraq to help them and to enable repatriation to their homes in northern Iraq. The operation was unique at the time as it involved creation of a safe zone north of the 36th parallel in Iraq, coercing the Iraqi military to stay out. Although the two military successfully cooperated in the operation's first stages, considerable tension emerged between Turkey and the United States over the purpose of continuing the operation.

At the urging of the United States, Turkey has participated in UN peace keeping and humanitarian actions. It was partly under the urging of the United States that Turkey took part in the UN operation in Somalia, where the forces were actually led by a Turkish general. Subsequently, Turkey participated in NATO sanctions' enforcement operation during the war in Yugoslavia and maintained a military unit as part of UNPROFOR in Bosnia. This unit

subsequently became part of the NATO forces deployed in Bosnia to implement the Dayton Peace Accords. Turkish units also participated in NATO exercises along the Albanian-Serbian border in a Western effort to deter Serbia from using force against refugees displaced as a result of the violence in Kosovo.

For the United States having the military of a predominantly Muslim country involved in these operations is seen as an important way of assuring the local Muslim population (in Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo) as well as the Muslim world, which otherwise might sit on the sidelines. This gives Turkey's government the chance to be seen doing something for Muslims in the Balkans, who most Turks see as descendants of once loyal Ottoman subjects. An added advantage for the Turkish government has been that its military's presence in such humanitarian and peacekeeping operation has helped to allay some exaggerated fears of Turkey particularly in the Balkans. These kinds of operations will probably remain an important area of cooperation between Turkey and the United States, though it is unlikely that Turkey will consent to operate outside its immediate region. The Turkish general staff declined to lead the UN peace keeping operations in Angola despite considerable U.S. urging.

At the same time, important areas of disagreement based on differing interests still exist over the status of northern Iraq's Kurdish region, sanctions over Iraq and relations with Iran. In other cases, frictions partly arose from the way Turkish political and bureaucratic culture perceives U.S. policies on Turkish human rights violations and weapons' acquisition programs.

An integral part of the Turkish political culture is the conviction that the outside world is conspiring to weaken and carve up Turkey. Turkey is often depicted as surrounded by enemies who are very efficient and can act in unison. This

phenomenon is often referred to as the "Sevres phobia," a fear that the Treaty of Sevres drawn up by the victorious powers at the end of World War I which carved up the remaining Anatolian provinces of the Ottoman Empire into small states and occupation zones, will be revived. U.S. policy on Turkish human rights issues and the federated Kurdish state in northern Iraq is often viewed through the lens of the "Sevres phobia" making the United States seem like an enemy state rather than an old strategic ally.

The Cold War's end and the escalation of human rights abuses as a result of confrontations between the PKK and Turkish security forces between 1992 and 1996 attracted congressional and public interest affecting U.S. foreign policy toward Turkey. This interest translated itself into legislation cutting foreign aid to Turkey as well as demanding the Administration prepare reports on the use of U.S. military equipment in situations of human rights violations. The powerful lobbying capacity of human rights and arms control groups together with anti-Turkish ethnic lobbies on the Cyprus and Armenian issues significantly reduced the executive branch's ability to shield Turkey. Indeed, the State Department's Office of Humanitarian Affairs and Human Rights found itself preparing reports undermining the Administration ability to pursue its close links with Turkey. As a result of these factors, there were substantial cuts in U.S. foreign assistance to Turkey during the mid-1990s and the transfer of remaining aid was conditioned on Turkey improving its human rights performance.

Arms exports have also been affected. The U.S. government found itself unable to deliver warships paid for by Turkey, and the Turkish government was forced to withdraw plans to acquire large number of U.S. attack helicopters. These helicopters were critical for the Turkish

military's ability to fight the PKK in the mountainous terrain of southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq. Further, such a helicopter force is also considered critical to balancing the larger armored forces of Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbors.

This situation has led many decisionmakers to interpret U.S. policy through the lens of the "Sevres phobia." Though many of them increasingly acknowledge that Turkey has human rights problems, they find U.S. policy in this area irreconcilable with a longstanding alliance relationship on several accounts. First, they frequently challenge the legitimacy of U.S. policy on human rights toward Turkey by accusing the United States of not being so vigilant in other cases such as in the former Yugoslavia, Chechnia, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, etc. Secondly, they find it puzzling that the U.S. government fails to issue export licenses for Turkish arms imports essential to fighting terrorism and the PKK.

Thirdly, given Turkish leader's reluctance to consider any solution other than a military one to the Kurdish question--which they define as a problem of terrorism--U.S. support for political solutions such as official recognition of the Kurds' ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity is considered blatant interference in Turkey's internal affairs and an attempt to undermine the Turkish state's unity. These aspects of Turkish perceptions of U.S. policy aggravate the "Sevres phobia" and produces public statements at the highest level of a U.S. intention to weaken and cause the dismemberment of Turkey.

Another issue aggravating the "Sevres phobia" is U.S. policy on northern Iraq's status. The safe haven there was created in large part at the prompting of a Turkish government desiring the immediate repatriation of almost a half million Kurdish refugees who had fled to Turkey in 1991. However, the holding of elections and

declaration of a federated Kurdish state within Iraq by the two leading Kurdish groups there, with U.S. support, met considerable Turkish resistance. Although the Turkish government, with U.S. backing, developed some cooperation with one of these Kurdish groups in an effort to weaken the PKK, Turkish decisionmakers always remained wary of U.S. intentions.

A diplomatic tug of war existed between a United States, which preferred a united Kurdish front in northern Iraq able to pressure Saddam Hussein, and Turkey, which preferred a weak Kurdish front. Turkey seemed reasonably content as long as some conflict existed between the two main Kurdish groups preventing their unity, but did not want to see conflict escalate to create a political vacuum which the PKK could fill. Turkey also repeatedly stressed that whatever solution was found for northern Iraq had to respect Iraq's "political as well as territorial" integrity.

Again, since any entity in northern Iraq resembling a Kurdish state could jeopardize Turkish territorial integrity, any U.S. policy supportive of Kurdish administration there is often presented as part of a broader scheme to weaken Turkey. This is probably best captured by a retired Turkish colonel who remarked: "The United States, under the pretext of protecting human rights, is assisting the formation of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq which eventually will demand land from Turkey." (Kocaoglu, 1995, 327) M. Kocaoglu, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Isiginda Ortadogu* [The Middle East in the light of International Relations], Ankara, 1995).

There were also considerable differences between Turkey and the United States over their approaches in dealing with Iran, Iraq and Syria. Turkish decisionmakers also want a change in those countries' regimes and policies, but they follow a different approach which tends to oppose sanctions on Iran and Iraq. The fact that

Turkey is a neighbor of Iran, needs Iranian oil and gas, and must take account of Iran's interest in Central Asia very much induces Turkey to develop the most pragmatic bilateral relations possible.

Downplaying ideological differences and emphasizing pragmatism has been a well established pillar of Turkey's relations with Iran. However, the traditional military and foreign policy elite were deeply disturbed by the brief period of courting between Iran and the leader of the Islamic Welfare Party, Necmettin Erbakan, when he led a coalition government during 1996-1997. Erbakan, in meetings with Iranian counterparts, heavily emphasized Islamic solidarity and openly ignored some traditional sources of conflict frequently raised by Turkey concerning Iranian support for the PKK and Islamic fundamentalist groups in Turkey. Otherwise, Turkish decisionmakers feel uncomfortable with U.S. unilateral sanctions that complicate the building of pipelines between Iran and Turkey.

Similarly, while Turkey supports the idea that Iraq must comply with UN resolutions its own immediate interests demand at least a relaxation of trade sanctions which have deeply hurt the economy of southeastern Anatolia, the region most affected by the violence accompanying the Kurdish problem. Also though Turkish decisionmakers have become increasingly concerned about Iraq's weapon capabilities they are generally opposed to using force against Iraq. In this regard, public opinion plays a very important role and there is great reluctance to be seen as a tool of U.S. policy in the region, particularly at a time when the Arab world is critical of Turkey's close relations with Israel and sometimes the United States itself.

Further, Turkish decisionmakers are also very much against interference in the internal affairs or territorial integrity of Iraq

or Iran. In principle, such non-interference is a well-established norm of Turkish foreign policy and this tradition, too, heightens Turkish decisionmakers' discomfort over U.S. policy toward northern Iraq and support for the Iraqi opposition. At the same time, all the divergences between the United States and Turkey tend to be balanced by a recognition by Turkish decisionmakers that Turkey will always need U.S. support in counter-balancing these two countries' military capabilities.

Syria is another country over which the United States and Turkey seem to differ, but this time with the roles reversed. Turkish decisionmakers would like more U.S. pressure on Syria concerning several issues and especially Syrian support for the PKK. Many decisionmakers tend to believe that the United States is more concerned about gaining Syria's goodwill to obtain its support for the peace process rather than pressing Syria to quit sponsoring terrorism. There is also concern that the United States might pressure Turkey on its water dispute with Syria in order to ensure that Syria can leave the water resources of the Golan Heights to Israel. However, the United States seemed more supportive of Turkey vis-a-vis Syria in the October 1998 crisis between the two states.

Finally, an important source of Turkish resentment toward U.S. policies on several issues--including Turkish human rights, the Armenian problem, Cyprus, and Greek-Turkish relations--stems from Turkish decisionmakers' failure to appreciate the role of the Congress and civil society in U.S. foreign policymaking. Often, Turkish decisionmakers do not understand that the U.S. executive branch cannot influence Congress's legislation on foreign policy and that non-government organizations can exert effective pressure on the executive branch concerning arms transfers and human rights. This frequently leads to great disappointment with the U.S. executive

branch's inability or failure to prevent legislation critical of Turkey or against Turkish national interests.

Equally, excessive Turkish demands to act against the influence of anti-Turkish ethnic lobbies produces considerable frustration in U.S. executive branch circles. Clearly, one disadvantage Turkey has in this regard is the absence of an effective lobby able to influence Congress. The stronger congressional role in foreign policymaking in recent years was to Turkey disadvantage since its main advocates were in the Defense and State departments and National Security Council, where strategic interests regarding Turkey usually prevail.

This problem will likely continue in future, only partly diffused by commercial and strategic lobbies supporting good relations with Turkey. Jewish lobby groups are seen by many Turkish decisionmakers and commentators as another means with which to counter anti-Turkish influence in Congress. In these circles there is a belief that this would be a natural outcome of enhanced Israel-Turkish relations. However, such an expectation seems to be exaggerated and Turkey could be disappointed.

Paradoxically, growing pressure for greater democracy and pluralism in Turkey has been accompanied by an increase in the political influence of Islam. The impact this could have on Turkish foreign policy manifested itself clearly during the government of Necmettin Erbakan. The traditional foreign policymakers prevented him from leaving any lasting mark on Turkish foreign policy but his rule gave a taste of how much Turkish foreign could change.

In spite of the Cold War's end, communism's collapse, and the USSR's disintegration there continues to be a strong basis for strategic cooperation between the United States and Turkey. Turkey's geopolitical location and Western, secular credentials are factors supporting strategic

cooperation. In turn, Turkey highly values cooperation with the United States to deal with partly adversarial relationships with Russia, Iran, Iraq and Syria, all possessing military arsenals that Turkey is unable to deter on its own.

Further, Turkey's own economy, combined with its access to the EU, Central Asian oil, and the Middle East is making Turkey increasingly attractive to the U.S. government and companies. Lastly, a half-century of strategic cooperation especially through NATO provides an important experience of working together, as manifested by U.S. enthusiasm for Turkish military units in UN and NATO peacekeeping operations. These are clearly important forces that will push both countries towards continued cooperation at the bi-lateral as well as regional level.

At the same time there are areas of divergence that at times undermine or adversely influence the long record of bilateral strategic cooperation. The influence of the "Sevres phobia" on Turkish decisionmakers, accompanied by U.S. policy toward Kurds in northern Iraq, frequently raise doubts about U.S. intentions towards Turkey. This is exacerbated by the politics surrounding congressional decisions and the ways Turkish decisionmakers perceive that situation. Turkey's failure to resolve its Kurdish problem accompanied by the problem of human rights violations and democratization make it much more difficult for the U.S. executive branch to block congressional influence and anti-Turkish lobbies.

**Kemal Kirisci is a professor at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Bogazici University, Istanbul. During the academic year 1997/98, he taught courses on Middle Eastern politics and international relations at the University of Michigan and the University of Minnesota. His publications*

include Turkey and the Kurds: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict (co-authored with G. Winrow) (Frank Cass, London, 1997) and The PLO and World Politics, (Frances Pinters, London, 1986). His most recent book co-authored with two other colleagues The Political Economy of Cooperation in the Middle East has just been published by Routledge of London.

+Paper prepared for conference on "America's Allies in a Changing World" November 9-10, BESA, Bar-Ilan University, Tel Aviv, sponsored by the BESA Center for Strategic Studies and the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies and made possible by the generous support of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation.