



TURKEY

CSSPR Country Study Series



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Contents

Country Study — Turkey.....	2
Geographic Contours	2
1. Terrain.....	2
2. Climate.....	2
Historical Perception	2
Society.....	12
1. Demography	12
2. Languages	13
3. Social Structure	13
4. Religion.....	13
5. Education	13
6. Health Care.....	14
7. Sports	15
Government	15
1. Constitution.....	15
2. Government and Politics	15
Economy	16
1. Agriculture.....	16
2. Industry.....	17
3. Human Resource Management	17
Defence & Security.....	18
1. Law and Order.....	18
2. Security Concerns	18
Pakistan-Turkey Relations	19
1. Historical and Cultural foundations	19
2. Diplomatic Relations and Pakistan–Turkey High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council	19
3. Trade and the Pakistan–Turkey Free Trade Agreement	20
4. Arms Sale, Training, and Security	21
5. Aid-Exchange.....	21
Cooperation, Partnerships, and Geopolitics	22
1. Pakistan’s Neutrality and Regional Realignments	22
2. Turkey’s Support for Kashmir	24
3. Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)	24
4. Gulf-Israel Rapprochement and Emerging Threats.....	25
Endnotes	27

Country Study – Turkey

Turkey is a transcontinental country. Lying at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, it borders the Aegean Sea to the west, Bulgaria and Greece to the northwest, the Black Sea to the north, Georgia to the northeast, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Armenia to the east, Iraq to the southeast, and Syria and the Mediterranean Sea to the south.¹

Geographic Contours

1. Terrain

Turkey is situated between Asia Minor and southeastern Europe with a total land area of 7.8 million square kilometres.² The European portion is colloquially called as Thrace and the Asian portion as Anatolia, Asia Minor or the Anatolian Plateau. Thrace is separated from Anatolia by the Bosphorus Strait, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles Strait. Turkey is divided into seven regions: the Marmara Region, the Eastern Anatolian Region, the Southeastern Anatolian Region, the Central Anatolia Region, the Mediterranean Region, the Aegean Region, and the Black Sea Region.³ The Black Sea Region has an alpine landscape with thick forests; the Marmara Region consists of a densely-populated rolling plateau well-suited for agriculture. The Aegean Region is rich with low lying fertile farmlands, and the Mediterranean Region has coastal areas, recovered flood lands, and a parallel running Taurus Mountain range. The Central Anatolian Region's semi-arid highlands lie between two folded mountain ranges, the Eastern Anatolian Region comprises a rugged terrain with heavier rain showers and snowfall, and the Southeastern Anatolian Region is a rough region comprising rolling hills.

2. Climate

The eastern mountainous and rugged countryside has an inhospitable climate with hot summers and bitterly cold winters. The central region is shielded from Mediterranean winds and has a continental climate with dry summers and cold winters. The periphery of Turkey bordering the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas has wet, rainy winters and moderate summers. Average rainfall in Turkey varies across the regions from 580 to 1,300 millimetres, with the Black Sea coast receiving the most rainfall throughout the year.⁴

Historical Perception

1. Ancient

Turkey is an old country situated in an even older land. The modern Turkish republic that we know of now was founded in the years immediately after the First World War on the basis of a national consensus amongst its people. But the roots of this nation, its land and its people can be traced back to humble beginnings in late antiquity. The term "Turkey" was not adopted for any particular geographic or political entity until the republic's founding in 1923.

Many sites in Turkey provide evidence of thousands of years of cultural continuity along the Aegean Sea. Neolithic cultural traces in Asia Minor can be traced back to the seventh millennium B.C. During the "copper age", colonies of Assyrian merchants, settled in ancient Anatolia, sold metals to warring

Mesopotamian empires.⁵ Their trade correspondence and transactions are some of the oldest records of writing ever found. The famed city state of Troy - the epicentre of the Greek epic “Iliad” and the battleground for the Trojan War - is believed to have been the thirty meter high mound called Hisarlik. By the late 3rd millennium B.C, Hittites invaders crossed the Caucasus Mountains into the region. Their bronze weaponry and chariot-borne warriors swept the plains and conquered most of the central region. The Hittite Empire was later ravaged by the swift political and cultural changes that followed the destruction of numerous city states including their capital “Hattusas” between the twelfth and ninth centuries B.C.⁶ The Aegean world then fell into turmoil: an aggressive Assyrian Empire had risen in Mesopotamia; Greece had been invaded by the Dorians; wayfarers and bandits laid waste to the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean coastline.

Control of the region in this dark age was followed by the Phrygians and the Lydians, respectively. Ionian Greek refugees crossed the sea into Anatolia and settled in the area, founding many cities and expanding Greek culture. Persian kingdoms would soon exert influence over these Greek city states. By 334 B.C, Alexander the Great incorporated the region into his empire which at its height stretched from the Nile in the west to the Indus in the east.⁷ After Alexander’s death, his Macedonian generals vied for control of Anatolia, but the process of Hellenization continued.

In the following centuries, client kingdoms on the periphery of the Roman Empire served as a buffer to the border with Persia. The citizens of Anatolia were Roman subjects and were given due status in common legal systems. Byzantium became the capital of the empire for twelve centuries under Emperor Constantine. After the fall of its western half, the Roman Empire continued in the east as the ‘Byzantine Empire’. Christianity was introduced to Anatolia by Saint Paul’s missionary efforts. The hold of Christendom in Anatolia was personified by the construction of the basilica of Hagia Sophia by Emperor Justinian. Although the empire followed Greek culture and language, it was spiritually Roman in its laws and administration. For its long history, the empire was regarded as a non-denominational state: intended to encompass all Christian peoples and churches. At its territorial zenith, the empire included Greece, Egypt, Italy, Sicily, Syria, and the Balkans. By the seventh century, Syria and outposts in Northern Africa had been lost to Muslim conquests.

Early historical references to the ‘Turks’ appear in Chinese records dating back to 200 B.C.⁸ They were called the Hsiung-nu, an ancient form of the word ‘Hun’, who populated the central plains. A profound movement of large Turkish tribes out of Central Asia during the first millennium A.D. is considered one of the earliest recorded sources of Turkic history. The migration has been attributed to a number of factors: the burden of a growing population whose survival depended on a pastoral and nomadic economy, climatic changes, and threats of invasion from powerful neighbours.

Among those who migrated were the tribes of the prolific Oguz Turks, a people who had taken up Islam as their religion as early as the 10th century.⁹ Under their Khan, Seljuk, they set up camp around the city of Bukhara. Split by dissension among the tribes, one branch moved west and entered service with the Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad. These Turkish horsemen, famously called “gazis”, were organized to protect the borders of the caliphate, often against their own kinsmen. A Seljuk Khan named Tughril Bey conquered the city of Baghdad in 1055 with an army composed of gazis and mamluks (slave-soldiers). Tughril Bey forced the caliph in Baghdad to recognize him as the sultan – a temporal leader – of Mesopotamia and Persia. Tughril’s successor, Alp Arslan, the Heroic Lion, initially set his sights for conquering the Shia Fatimid caliphate in Egypt but was compelled to divert his attention to the powers in Anatolia by the gazis, otherwise his army would lose its mobile cavalry.

The gazis could also not be persuaded by the Seljuk elites to trade their adventurous warrior life with bureaucratic tasks of only patrolling trade routes and collecting taxes. They would extend their raids further into Byzantine territory, in search of booty and glory - as it was their tradition. In 1701, Alp Arslan

defeated the Byzantine army at Manzikert, clearing the way for the future Turkish conquest of Anatolia.¹⁰ The decisive defeat of the Byzantine army and the capture of Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes served to undermine Byzantine authority in Armenia and Anatolia, and allowed for the gradual Turkification of the region. This victory solidified the Turk's desire to move deeper westward into Asia Minor.

By the next decade, the Seljuk's controlled most of Anatolia. Though they had achieved remarkable success westward, the sultanate in Baghdad was subject to frequent Mongolian raids and had little to no authority over the Seljuk's in Anatolia. Successful parties of gazis split the conquered region amongst themselves under the nominal suzerainty of Baghdad. The strongest state among them was the Sultanate of Rum with its capital in Konya. Despite a change in the power elite, the society and economy were unchanged by the Seljuks; only the previous Christian Byzantine officials were replaced with officials that were Muslim and Turkish. The Seljuk sultans and their gazis were the mainstays in the Crusades and were later overtaken by the Mongols in 1243.¹¹ They remained as vassals of the Mongolian Khanate for the rest of the 13th Century. The disintegration of the Seljuk state left behind many small Anatolian beyliks (Turkish principalities) vying for political and military power. Among them were the Oguz Turks, who would later conquer the rest of Anatolia to found the Ottoman Empire.

2. The Ottoman Empire

Legendary accounts state that Ertugrul, Khan of the Kayi tribe of Oguz Turks, took service with the Sultan of Rum. For his efforts against Byzantine strongholds, he was granted territory by the sultanate. His son, Osman I, would later found the Osmanli Dynasty (called Ottomans in the west). Osman I's small emirate attracted an influx of battle-hardened, adventurous gazis who needed the spoils of war from Osman I's conquests to maintain their way of life. He organized a politically-centralized administration that governed the campaigns of the gazis to suit his expansive ideals for conquering territory. His immediate successor, Orhan, crossed the Dardanelles and established an Ottoman stronghold in Europe at Gallipoli.¹² Murad I annexed Thrace, circumscribing all land routes around Constantinople and moved the capital to Adrianople. Murad I crushed the Serbs at the Battle of Kosovo at the cost of his own life. Bayezid I achieved a series of victories in the Balkans, famously subduing Bulgaria in 1393 and defeating the crusaders at Nicopolis.¹³

This line of victories was cut short by the onslaught of the Mongols, led by Timur, who in 1402 crushed Ottoman forces at Ankara and captured the sultan.¹⁴ Bayezid I would die in captivity while his sons fought each other for what remained of Ottoman Anatolia. By the next two decades, the Ottomans had recovered enough militarily to begin new campaigns in Greece.

Constantinople, the symbolic power centre of the old Byzantine Empire was the last Greek stronghold to fall to Ottoman conquest. The city had been cut off by land since 1365, and depended on Venetian sea traders for commerce. The fifty-day siege of Constantinople and its subsequent conquest by Mehmet II was not a critical threat to Western European security, but the capture of the imperial capital carried great significance for the Ottoman Empire. Mehmet II saw himself as the successor to Byzantine glory and established his capital at Constantinople.

He rebuilt the city with Ottoman architecture and converted the cathedral of Hagia Sophia into a mosque. Eventually the city, later called Istanbul, replaced Baghdad as the centre of Islamic civilization. Istanbul remained the ecclesiastical centre of the Greek Orthodox, of which Mehmet II proclaimed himself the protector.

Selim I conquered Palestine, Egypt, and Syria, and was also recognized as guardian of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. His son, Sultan Suleyman, the Magnificent, became renowned for his codification

of the 'Seriat'. He conquered Belgrade and Rhodes by 1522, took control of Budapest on the Danube by 1526 and gained control of Northern Africa, Kurdistan and Mesopotamia by the 1530s.¹⁵ By the time Sultan Suleyman died in 1566, the Ottoman Empire was an organized world power.

The great Islamic cities of Baghdad, Tunis, Cairo, Damascus, Jerusalem, Mecca and Medina were under the sultan's crescent flag. Native rulers of Ragusa, Transylvania, Moldavia, Wallachia, and the Caucasus became vassal realms of the sultan. The Ottomans made lesser princes sign treaties and truces as a favour by the sultan, provided that a payment of tribute accompanied the settlement. But the Ottomans failed to swerve the changing tides of power in Europe. They did not stop European merchants from penetrating the barriers built to protect imperial autarky and the balance of trade inevitably shifted in favour of their adversaries, making the empire in time indebted clients of European producers.

Ottoman imperial decadence was halted by a notable family of imperial bureaucrats, the Koprulu family, which for more than forty years provided the empire with advisors and grand viziers. The Ottoman Empire took Crete and Lemnos from the Venetians while the Koprulu family pushed the Ottoman offensive against Austria to within 120 kilometres of Venice. Even though a previous attempt to capture Venice had failed in 1664, the Empire again tried to lay siege to city in 1683 but were defeated by a relief force led by the King of Poland, Jan Sobieski.¹⁶

The failed siege of Vienna was a watershed moment in Ottoman history. After a sixteen-year war against the Holy League (Venice, Poland and Austria) and Russia, the Ottomans were driven back east of the Carpathians and south of the Danube. Previously conquered regions like Hungary, Transylvania and Croatia were recovered by Austria while Russia gained the Azov region. When Mustafa II was forced to abdicate, Ahmet III took over. Ahmet III's reign was marked by period of struggle against Imperial Russia who sought to remove Ottoman presence in the Black Sea. The Ottomans had control of warm water ports on the Black Sea and Imperial Russia wanted access to the Mediterranean through the Ottoman-controlled Dardanelles and Bosphorus straits. Even though the Ottomans faced tremendous loss of life, Russia was not able to gain access to the "Ottoman lake".¹⁷

During most of the eighteenth century, the Empire was engaged in warfare with either Russia, Austria, Poland or Persia. The Russo-Turkish War (1768-1774) ended with the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kaynarja.¹⁸ Russian forces were successful in defeating the Ottoman armies and the treaty was signed with many concessions awarded to Russia. The Ottomans agreed to pay a large war indemnity and the Russians gained free access to Ottoman waters.

"The Eastern Question" became a popular phrase among European diplomats when referring to the periodic crisis of wars in Greece, the decline in Ottoman austerity, power, wealth and the rise of nationalism among its subject.¹⁹ The European elite faced a conundrum, where they had to dispose the Ottoman Empire without upsetting the power balance in Europe.

The Ottomans fought two more wars with Russia in the nineteenth century: the Crimean War of 1854-1856 and the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. The latter ended with a Russian victory and reducing Ottoman holdings in Europe. The late nineteenth century also saw the emergence of the Young Ottoman movement among western-oriented intellectuals who wanted the see empire have equal footing to the European powers. They wanted a centralized government, an elected parliament and a written constitution. Sultan Abdul Hamid II promulgated a constitution that created a representative parliament and guaranteed religious liberty, but despite his initial acceptance of constitutionalism, the sultan dissolved the empire's first parliament within a year. Unrest in Greece, Armenia and Bulgaria isolated the Ottoman regime from most European powers with the exception of Germany.

Abdul Hamid's repressive policies instigated disaffection among the western-educated young officers within the empire. Nationalist reform organizations (including the one organized by a young Mustafa Kemal) merged together in 1907 to form the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), also known as the Young Turks.²⁰ They sought to restore the 1876 constitution and unify the heterogeneous elements through greater government centralization under a parliamentary regime. Political instability instigated among army units in Macedonia resulted in Abdul Hamid II to approve parliamentary election in which CUP won the majority seats. Their government was split among nationalist and liberalist reformers, traditionalists and non-Turkish communities seeking autonomy. Abdul Hamid II abdicated the throne to his brother, Mehmet V. This sudden power vacuum before Mehmet V's coronation allowed neighboring powers to annex and seize portions of the empire. By 1912, the empire lost all of its European holdings except part of eastern Thrace.²¹

These losses resulted in severe political discord back home, where a coup led by Enver Pasha overthrew the liberal government in 1913. Once the second Balkan war broke out between Balkan allies themselves, the Empire exploited in the situation and regained Edirne, establishing the western boundary of the empire at the Maritsa River. Political power was now concentrated among the leadership of the CUP, especially the triumvirate of Enver Pasha, Ahmet Cemal Pasha, and Mehmet Talat Pasha.

3. World War I and the Republic of Turkey

As the winds of war blew closer Europe, Pro-German sympathies pronounced by Enver Pasha were gaining traction among the ranks in the army and bureaucracy. The Empire had no outstanding differences with Britain or France in the summer of 1914, but the reigning threat of Russia (an ally of Britain and France) was able to compel the Porte to align with Germany. Enver had concluded a secret treaty of alliance with Germany on August 2, 1914, but it was up to the Germany forces to provide the *casus belli*.²² Two German military vessels that had been previously caught by the Ottomans were put out to sea with German officers and crews flying the Ottoman flag.²³ They shelled Odessa and other Russian ports, in return Moscow declared war on the Ottoman Empire on 5 November, immediately followed by France and Britain. Within a period of six months, the Ottoman army was engaged in a four-front war that became part of the greater conflict of World War I.

Despite success in holding back Allied Naval and land operations in the Dardanelles, the Ottoman's lost Baghdad to British forces and were driven out of Mesopotamia. The Ottomans lost a series of battles to the Russians on the eastern front but Russia left the war after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.

The new Russian government concluded the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers in March 1918, under which the Ottoman Empire regained its eastern provinces. On the southern front, Sharif Husayn ibn Ali, the sultan's regent in western Arabia and Mecca, launched the Arab Revolt in 1916. Advised by T.E. Lawrence and aided by the British, the Ottomans lost control over Jerusalem and Damascus.

By the end of the war, the Ottoman resistance was exhausted and the Young Turk triumvirate had fled to exile in Germany. Mehmet VI sued for peace through a government headed by liberal ministers that signed an armistice at Mudros on 30 October, 1918.²⁴ In four years of war, the Ottoman Empire had mobilized about 2.9 million men, of whom about 772,000 were killed in battle.²⁵

Mustafa Kemal (later revered as Atatürk) returned to Istanbul at the end of the war, his reputation was untarnished, despite the defeat of the empire. Respected among the Turkish troops and masses, he soon emerged as a leading voice of the Turkish nationalist movement.

The Bolshevik government had renounced Tsarist claims when it made its separate peace at Brest-Litovsk, but Italy, France, Britain, and Greece all pressed their respective claims at the Paris peace talks in 1919. The Treaty of Sèvres was signed with the Allies, where Greece received the mandate to occupy Izmir, Britain got Palestine, Jordan and Iraq, while France received Lebanon and Syria. The Treaty of Sèvres was never enforced as such, as events in Turkey soon rendered it irrelevant.

The sultan was kept under the custody of the Allies, to ensure cooperation of Ottoman administration but an indigenous Turkic Nationalist movement led by Ataturk to resist the dismemberment of the Turkish land was gaining traction. Ataturk had been removed from the capital and sent to eastern Anatolia under the pretence of supervising the demobilization of Ottoman forces. Upon his arrival at Samsun in May 1919, Atatürk proceeded to rally support for the nationalist cause and to recruit a nationalist army.

A nationalist congress met at Erzurum with Atatürk presiding to endorse a protocol for an independent Turkish state in July 1919. Though the delegates pledged loyalty to the sultan, they also had pledged to maintain the integrity of the Turkish nation. The congress adopted the National Pact, which defined objectives of the nationalist movement that were not open to compromise. Among its provisions were the retention of Istanbul and the straits, a guarantee of minority rights and renunciation of claims to the Arab provinces. Negotiations continued between the Ottoman government and the nationalist congress but bore no initial fruit. Eventually the Ottoman parliament approved the National Pact in 1920. Consequently, Allied occupation forces seized the capital in response and deported many nationalist leaders.

The nationalists in return brought a quick response in defiance of the Allies and the Ottoman regime: they convened the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, and elected Atatürk its president. The Law of Fundamental Organization (also known as the Organic Law) was adopted in January 1921.²⁶ With this legislation, they proclaimed that sovereignty was to be exercised by the Grand National Assembly.

While Soviet Russia was the first European power to recognize the nationalists, their struggle against Allied forces improved after both Italy and France withdrew from Anatolia by October 1921. By September 1922, the Turks had successfully moved into Izmir to drive out Greek forces. The Grand National Assembly separated the offices of the Caliph and the Sultan, and abolished the latter. They also made it clear that the Ottoman regime of government had ended when the Allies took the capital in 1920, in effect abolishing the Ottoman Empire. Mehmet VI went into exile, and his cousin, Abdülmecid, was named caliph. The National Pact and its provisions were incorporated in the Treaty of Lausanne, concluded in July 1923.²⁷ With this treaty, the Allies recognized the present-day territory of Turkey and on 29 October, 1923, the Grand National Assembly proclaimed the Republic of Turkey. Ankara was made its capital and Atatürk was named its president. This contemporaneously modern republic reflected a successful struggle against external struggles but also a triumph over deeply rooted domestic traditions.

In 1924, the Grand National Assembly adopted a new constitution to replace the 1876 constitution that was used as the legal framework of the republican government. The 1924 constitution called for a unicameral assembly whose members were elected to a four-year term by universal suffrage. The president would be elected by the assembly and he in turn would appoint the prime minister. Throughout

his presidency, Atatürk governed Turkey essentially by personal rule in a one-party state. He founded the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi- CHP) in 1923 to serve as the vanguard party in support of his Six Arrows reform program.

4. Social Changes Initiated by Ataturk

The Republic of Turkey, at its founding, bore the indelible imprint of Ataturk. He had emerged from World War I as a national hero and his reputation was only enhanced by the War of Independence. He was a pragmatic leader with a desire for social reform in his country. His goal was to create a society patterned directly on the societies of Western Europe. He served to guide the new nation till his death in 1938. Though the president had few constitutional powers, Ataturk was a teacher to his people. His “Six Arrows”, republicanism, populism, nationalism, laicism, statism, and reformism, was the founding ideology of the new nation.²⁸ Secularism was and still remains the most significant and the most controversial aspect of Kemalism.

The Turks who would later establish the Ottoman Empire had converted to Islam by the tenth century. Throughout the next nine centuries, Islam was the primary guiding force in societal development. From societal customs to administrative institutions, from governance to ideas of citizenship, most aspects of life were influenced or regulated by Islamic laws. Islamic theology and folklore gained an important hold on Turkish imagination, best exemplified in the Sufism traditions in Turkey. Ataturk and his followers instead favoured secularism over this historical legacy. Following his rise to power, the government suppressed public manifestations and observances of religion that the secularist elite deemed detrimental to the development of a modern, European-style state. They closed religious schools and Sufi brotherhoods, replaced the customary Sharia law with European codes, adopted the Gregorian calendar and abolished the pervasive legal and administrative functions of the religious clerics and scholars. Ataturk discouraged or outlawed articles of clothing closely identified with Islamic traditions such as the veil for women and the fez for men. The use of the Arabic script was declared illegal, and was replaced with the Latin alphabet. For Ataturk, this process of secularization required an authoritative government to see things through. His successors would later move towards democratisation after Ismet Inonu, his successor, permitted the creation of a multiparty political system following World War II.

After Ataturk's death, İnönü was elected president by the Grand National Assembly. During his tenure in World War II, İnönü was determined to keep Turkey neutral. Turkey had signed a non-aggression pact with Germany four days prior to its invasion of Soviet Union in 'Operation Barbarossa'.²⁹ Despite German pressure, Turkey at no time permitted the passage of Axis troops, ships, or aircraft through or over Turkey and its waters, and the Montreux Convention was scrupulously enforced in the straits. Turkey did still trade in arms with both sides and purchased arms from both sides and sold chrome to the Germans. Turkey broke diplomatic relations with Adolf Hitler's government in August 1944, and, in February 1945, declared war on Germany, a necessary precondition for participation in the Conference on International Organization, held in San Francisco in April 1945, from which the United Nations (UN) emerged. Turkey, thereby became one of the fifty-one original members of the world organization.

5. Turkey after Ataturk

After their proposal calling for changes in Turkish law - to assure the domestic application of the liberties that the government had ostensibly subscribed to by accepting the Human Rights Charter in the wake of the United Nations emergence - was disallowed. Former Prime Minister Bayar and Adnan Menderes founded the Democrat Party (DP) in 1946. They contested the election of 1946, securing 62 seats out of 465.³⁰ By 1950, the Democrat Party had gained enough public popularity to win 408 seats against

CHP's 69 seats.³¹ Bayar became the new president and he named Adnan Menderes as his prime minister. By the late 1950s, tension between both parties in the assembly brought the parliamentary process to a standstill. Outbreaks of violence resulted in the Menderes government halting all political activity and imposing martial law. Though the military had always acted as a national institution, above partisanship and factionalism, it feared that the political tensions could erupt into a major conflict. The military elite saw themselves as the guardians of the constitution and Kemalism. As such, the military under the command of Cemal Gursel, launched a coup d'état and arrested the president, the prime minister and most of the DP representatives. They were charged with abrogating the constitution and instituting a dictatorship. An interim government was established under the Committee of National Unity (CNU), comprising officers who had organized the coup. High inflation and a heavy national debt were the first agendas for the CNU. A constitution was drafted and ratified in 1961, creating Turkey's Second Republic. The October 1961 election saw fourteen political parties' field candidates including the Justice Party (Adalat Partisi-AP), the New Turkey Party, and the Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi - MHP). Despite attempts to form a coalition government between the CHP and AP, an interim administration was set up to serve until the next elections. The 1965 elections saw the AP rise to power with Suleyman Demirel elected Prime Minister. Although the AP never disavowed Kemalism, it promoted the open expression of Islamic tradition among the general populace and renewed that influence in the public sphere.

The Demirel government's majority in the Grand National Assembly slowly dissipated, with many members regrouping or deserting the AP to form new parties. These parliamentary shifts weakened the AP's hold over the government and bureaucracy. Unrest, politically motivated violence and terrorism escalated in frequency. The then army commander, General Faruk Gurler, presented a memorandum to the President in March, 1971, demanding the installation of a "strong and credible government" to control the situation otherwise the army would be compelled to take over the state of affairs again. In reaction to this "coup by memorandum", Demirel resigned from his post.³² The elections of 1973 and 1977 failed to set up a single-party government all the while economic conditions continued to deteriorate. The government was defeated in a vote of confidence, leaving then President Koruturk to compel Ecevit to form a new government. The Ecevit-led administration faced a series of recurrent sectarian and political violence. The summer of 1980 was particularly chaotic, with the government at a standstill and the assembly having failed to elect a new president. The military elite was wary of rising sectarianism, an outright defiance of the constitution and Kemalism. On 12 September, 1980, the armed forces seized control of the country with little defiance or opposition from the public, who saw it as the alternative to anarchy.³³ While the previous two coups of 1960 and 1971 were driven by the need for institutional reforms, the coup of 1980 was undertaken to shore up the order created by earlier interventions. A new constitution was drafted to form Turkey's Third Republic. Martial law had been imposed throughout the country. Dissidents and suspected militants were arrested; the Grand National Assembly was dissolved, political parties were abolished and their assets were liquidated by the state. Reactions to the alleged human rights violations garnered a disapproving response from the larger European community. The new constitution was ratified after a national referendum in November 1982 under President Kenan Evren.

The first election under the new constitution was held with the participation of the National Democratic Party (NDP), the Populist Party (PP), and the Motherland Party (MP). Despite being the army's preferred choice, the NDP and the PP lost to the Motherland Party (MP) by more than half the margin. The MP was a heterogeneous coalition of Islamic, social democratic nationalists, and liberal groups led by a reputed authority on Turkish economy, Turgut Ozal. Under Ozal's leadership, state-control was limited and free-market principles were enacted. Though his initial years were economically successful, rising unemployment, high budget deficits and inflation caused Turkey's economy to deteriorate.

Despite periodic fluctuations, Turkey had an increasing economic growth with urbanization and mass production. Ironically, the pace of such fast economic change was an underlying cause of much of the political and social unrest in the decade. 1991's election winner was the Dimerel-led True Path Party (TPP), who formed a coalition government with Erdal İnön's (the son of İsmet İnönü) Social Democratic and Populist Party (SDPP). The new government, led by then-President Dimerel, expressed itself as a political compromise between the political liberalism of the SDPP and the economic liberalism of the TPP, but the lack of fundamental agreement made it difficult to tackle the economic and political problems that troubled Turkey. The Kurdish War was not abating, and political violence was on the rise again. After Ozal died, Dimerel was elected in his place, paving the way for Turkey's first woman Prime Minister, Tansu Çiller. The coalition government collapsed after the SDPP's withdrawal following protracted internal divisions in 1995.³⁴ Çiller failed to form another coalition government and called an election. The 1995 election was an upset in the political culture of Turkey, an Islamic party - the Welfare Party (WP) -with about one-fifth of the vote became the largest single party. This reflected a change in the influence of Islam in Turkish life as Islamic ideals and institutions were regaining popularity among the masses. Despite its electoral success, the WP was unable to find a coalition partner to form a government, and in March 1996 a coalition government of the MP and TPP was formed.

In the 2002 election, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi; AKP) a conservative party with Islamic roots, became the single largest winner. Its leaders were Abdullah Gul and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The biggest challenge the AKP initially faced was assuaging the secularist elite's apprehensions about Erdoğan's Islamist roots. Due to massive protests in Ankara in 2007, Erdoğan acquiesced to their demands, and allowed Gul the candidacy for presidency. Though Gul had a clear majority among the votes cast, it fell short of the quorum by a narrow margin. Later these election results were overturned in court. Erdoğan called for new general election, which saw the AKP win again. Gul was again nominated for the presidency and finally won by a wide margin. In 2010, the Turkish constitution was subjected to a number of amendments to strengthen democracy in line with EU standards. Turkey would also later be swept in a series of investigations after revelations of alleged ultranationalist networks plotting to overthrow the government came to the fore. The AKP was re-elected in 2011 with another term for Erdoğan as Prime Minister. Discontent against Erdoğan's policies were slowly erupting into riots and demonstrations. By the 2015 election, the AKP fell short of an absolute majority for the first time and negotiations to form a coalition government failed. Another snap election was called where the AKP regained its majority. In 2016, a small faction within the Turkish army launched a coup to usurp control from the government. Erdoğan rallied support using social media since official communications were blocked. The coup forces were overwhelmed by loyal military units and civilians, and the government regained control. The next year saw a wide purge and investigation of many Turkish citizens over suspicions of involvement in the coup. In 2017, voters approved constitutional amendments that expanded the powers of the presidency and ended the office of prime minister. These institutional changes were implemented after the 2018 election, which saw the AKP and the Nationalist Movement Party's (MHP) alliance gain a clear majority. Erdoğan later received an outright majority in the presidential contest. But this era of change was greeted by the 2018 Turkish currency crisis as the value of the Lira greatly plummeted. Employing economic reforms, the economy slowly got back on track. Amid a financial crisis and a devastating electoral loss for the AKP in the municipalities' election, discontentment within the party began to rise. Turkey also faced the economic and social brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 but with a renewed focus on human development, Turkey is getting back on track to becoming an economic power.

6. Aspirations for the European Union

Turkey has been trying to join the European Union since 1987, but the Turkish Republic does not meet the EU's qualification and negotiations have stalled over the past few years. The European Union-Turkey Customs Union has boosted trade between the two parties, but it does not cover agriculture, services or public procurement. According to the EU, Turkey does not meet the required qualifications, especially with regard to Human Rights, press freedoms, and democracy. Turkey falls in the category of a candidate country in the EU. Turkey's stand on Cyprus, its handling of the Kurdish situation, and its involvement in the Syrian Civil War have been some of the reasons why EU MEPs oppose Turkey's entry. But Turkey's biggest bargaining chip in negotiating with EU is that Turkey agreed to re-admit thousands of migrants who had passed through the country on their way to Greece and Western Europe. Europe requires Turkey's cooperation in the worst refugee crisis since WWII because of its geographic position near the conflict. Unless Turkey-EU relations improve their political foundations, especially on matters of migration and economy, no progress will be made for accession negotiations. Pundits have accused the EU of "delaying and deferring" the negotiations in an effort to buy more time simply because the source of all tensions with Turkey is political.³⁵

7. Cyprus, Kurds, and the Syrian War

Cyprus is an island nation in the eastern Mediterranean divided between the Republic of Cyprus to the south and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) to the north. Historically the island was populated by Greeks but around 1571, the Ottoman Empire conquered the island. A sizeable population of native Turks migrated to the island over the next three centuries of Ottoman rule. The island came under British provisional administration based on the Cyprus Convention in 1878, though it was officially still part of the Ottoman Empire. Britain annexed Cyprus during the First World War and Turkey recognized Cyprus's annexation in 1923 as part of the Treaty of Lausanne. Following the Second World War, the two communities (Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots) split based on nationalistic and religious loyalties. A number of assassinations were done along ethnic lines by radical organizations. In 1960, Cyprus gained independence from Britain with Greece and Turkey as 'guarantor states' which relieved some tensions, but after years of infighting their unity as a nation was tainted. Even though the UN had deployed peacekeeping troops in 1964, Greece continued to deploy troops in Cyprus to shore up pro-Enosis support. Enosis is a movement aimed at the political union of Cyprus and Greece. In 1974, a coup took place that ousted the Cypriot government, and was replaced by pro-Enosis nationalist, Nikos Sampson. Ankara became wary of the political situation, and its ally, London, had refused its offer to take joint action in accordance with the Treaty of Guarantee. As a result, Turkey intervened in an effort to stop the violence, the persecution of Turkish Cypriots, and the annexation of the island. Greek Cypriots, in turn, insisted on their claim of sovereignty over the entire island. In 1983, Turkish Cypriots formed their own state, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) recognized only by Turkey and Pakistan. The UN, two decades later, proposed to reunite the island and held a referendum. 65% of Turkish Cypriots were in favour of unification, but 76% of Greek Cypriots rejected it.³⁶ The UN and the EU have insisted that the island be home to both parties and a republic on its own. But even though the Greek Cypriots rejected the bid for unification, the EU declared them a representative entity of the whole island and accepted Greek Cyprus as an EU member. Though efforts to bring both parties together and renegotiations talks have continued, no major progress has been made as of yet.

The stability of the Middle East is balanced between Western European influences and traditional Islamic authority with Turkey smack-dab in the middle of this power struggle. Turkey has the highest population of ethnic Kurds, followed by Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Germany - the majority of whom are Sunni Muslims.³⁷ In the early 20th century, many Kurdish groups made calls for the creation of a homeland, "Kurdistan". No provision was given for an independent Kurdish state after World War I, when the former Empire's boundaries were rewritten after the Treaties of Sèvres and Lausanne. Kurds gained an

unprotected minority status in the countries their population were distributed among. In Turkey, the Kurdish separatist movement has repeatedly quashed any attempt at improving their relationship with the Turkish government. Resettlement and a crisis of identity have been detrimental to the Kurdish community's effort for political mobilization and representation. Kurds in Turkey were torn between integration, assimilation, or rejection by the republic. Turkey justified its tough stand on curtailing Kurdish identity as necessary due to armed uprisings from radical Kurds. For the government, the biggest problem lied with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a militant political organization and armed guerrilla movement who in the 1980s embarked upon a campaign of armed resistance. Clashes between the PKK and the Turkish military were a regular feature throughout the next two decades. The AKP government in 2002 embarked upon new reform initiatives to solve the "Kurdish question". By 2013, Turkey and the PKK maintained a ceasefire while negotiating the normalization of Kurdish politics within Turkey and attempting to secure PKK's military demobilization. The mutual efforts to sign a modus vivendi was a major signalling for peace from both sides. But these reconciliatory efforts were being carried out during regional crises, with the rise of the Islamic State (IS) in the Middle East and the situation in Syria deteriorating. After the Civil War erupted in 2011, Syria's Kurdish groups became intertwined in the conflict against President Assad's regime forces, anti-government rebels, and the Islamic State (IS). The Kurdish enclaves in Syria were controlled in large part by the Democratic Union Party (PYD). The PYD's militia, the People's Protection Units (YPG), gained U.S. military support and started to wrestle control of northern Syria from IS forces. The Turkey Government-PKK peace talks eventually stalled as the YPG drove IS out of north-eastern Syria and set up a quasi-government in the land it acquired. Turkey's apprehensions about the YPG continued to grow because Ankara feared that Kurdish autonomy in Syria could fuel the separatist movement in Turkey.

In August 2016, after being subjected to missile fires across the border that hit southern cities and killed residents, Turkey sent its military into Northern Syria under Operation Euphrates Shield against the Islamic State (IS), the People's Protection Units (YPG) and the Syrian branch of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Turkey had previously only supported opposition groups in the war against Bashar al-Assad's regime but as the war progressed, Turkey's involvement deepened. In 2017, as part of the Astana Process with Russia and Iran, Turkey set up observations posts near opposition held areas to monitor a would-be ceasefire deal. In 2018, Operation Olive Branch was carried out by the Turkish military against the YPG in northern Syria.³⁸ It was followed in 2019, by Operation Peace Spring, a further move to expel the YPG and in 2020, Operation Spring Shield was launched against President Assad's forces after Turkish positions in the city of Idlib came under attack.³⁹ Turkey opened its borders to the Syrian refugees and is helping many internally displaced people in northwest Syria by creating homes and safe zones. If violence in northern Syria does not abate, Turkey will likely remain involved in the war.

Society

1. Demography

The population of Turkey is around 82 million where Turks constitute almost 80% of the population, Kurds form around 10%, and remaining minorities cumulatively include Arabs, people from the Caucasus countries, Greeks, and Jews.⁴⁰ The most densely populated areas are found around the Bosphorus while small urban centres are scattered throughout the interior.

2. Languages

Turkish is the official language, spoken by most citizens and is the mother tongue of about 82% of the population. Kurdish is spoken by roughly 17% of the population while Arabic and Caucasian languages are spoken by small minority groups.⁴¹

3. Social Structure

a. Culture

Turkish culture is a combination of diverse heterogeneous elements of Oğuz Turkic, Anatolian, Ottoman and western influences. Instead of choosing competing identities of Islam, Ottamanism and Turkism, the modern Turkish citizens pride themselves on the history of an inclusive Turkish nationalism that was pieced together within the borders of the new republic. Though some factions solely promote “Europeanness” or traditionalist views, the new Turkish identity recognizes its glorious past but also its modern Kemalist foundations. The blend of modernity and traditions enriches Turkish culture. Central Asian Turkic, Islamic, and European traditions are reflected in modern-day Turkish music, for many genres, ranging from arabesque to hip-hop are popular in the country. Turkish architecture is a befitting representation of its diverse culture. Influenced by a confluence of architectures of Seljuk, Byzantine, and Arab origins, Turkish architecture took on a style of its own. Across centuries and periods, Turkish architecture evolved and morphed to accommodate these varied influences on its history and culture.

b. Women

Turkish women had the right to vote locally by 1930 and nationally by 1934, far earlier than most nations of the world. Political representation of women has increased throughout the decades, where women now make up 17.1% of the parliament with 103 MPs and 600 deputies.⁴² While the constitution calls for non-discrimination between genders, women are oftentimes subjected to discrimination, especially when it comes to work. Women have risen up the power ladder, as evidenced by the election of Tansu Ciller as the Prime Minister of Turkey in 1993.

4. Religion

About 99.8% of the population are nominally Muslim, predominantly belonging to the Sunni sect. While the remaining 0.2% are Christian or Judaism adherents.⁴³

5. Education

The tradition of education in Turkey dates back centuries, but the base of the modern education system was established in line with the reforms introduced by Ataturk after the War of Independence. It is a centralized and state-supervised system where compulsory education lasts twelve years. In Turkey, primary and secondary education is financed by the state and is free of charge in public schools. It is based on the “4+4+4” model: 4 years primary education at first level, 4 years primary education at the second level and 4 years secondary education.⁴⁴ Candidates are only permitted into universities upon successful completion of their high school education and are assigned to a university based on their performance in the national examination.

Turkey has the largest higher education student population in the European Higher Education Area of 8 million students who study at 207 universities, of which 78 are foundation universities and 129 are state funded.⁴⁵ Higher education is supervised by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) while the

Ministry of National Education (MoNE), is in charge of strategic planning practices at the central and local levels, directed by a five-year vision.

Education expenditure in Turkey increased by 6.38% of the GDP in 2000 to 8.2% of GDP by 2020.⁴⁶ Education markers for the general population have improved over the last two decades. The existing human capital base in Turkey has a high literacy rate of 96.2%.⁴⁷

Ataturk's extensive reforms were essentially based on western ideas of education in general and European philosophies in particular. Opponents to the Europeanization and westernization of the Turkish education system feared the liberalization associated with these reforms. To counter Kemalist foundations in the education system, they advocated for Islam-based reforms. Ironically, the EU-inspired liberalization posed a threat to Kemalism's historical emphasis on the virtue of obedience and in particular its stress on the overriding duty of each citizen to the state.

After Ataturk died, a major crack was opened in the wall against religion in public schools. In 1949, the Ministry of Education finally allowed a course on religion in 4th and 5th grades of primary school. Successive governments and politicians, influenced by the traditional leanings of its majority population, allowed religious teaching in higher grades. Eventually, by the 1980s, religious education made its way to the upper grades of high schools, despite Turkey's appliance of laicism to its constitution.

This divide between traditional and western orientation still lies at the heart of the education system's problems. As a consequence, Turkey's education system is afflicted with inconsistencies as its targets had been subject to change and it was restructured various governments alternating between the anti-Western conservatives and the pro-Westerners. Secondary and tertiary issues include exam-oriented and memorization-based education, quality of teachers, financing, and ideological approaches.

CoHE had introduced intensive online programs for academics and students through their 'Digital Transformation Project at Universities' two years back. This provided them the platform and capacity to digitize their education system in light of the restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Around 10,000 of Turkey's academic staff have been taught courses in digital course material preparation, and a digital competency course was put on the curriculum of more than 80,000 students for credit.⁴⁸ Online access remains an issue for many students, but Turkey's education system has a roadmap for the academic years ahead in spite of the restrictions posed by the pandemic.

6. Health Care

Turkey's healthcare sector has come a long way from its humble beginnings post-independence and has achieved exceptional improvements over the last three decades. Turkey's healthcare system has undergone far-reaching reforms under the 2003 Health Transformation Program (HTP) and radical changes have taken place in the provision and financing of healthcare services. Healthcare services are now financed through the General Health Insurance Scheme: a complex social security scheme covering the majority of the population within a complex web of public and private partnerships. The Ministry of Health provides primary, secondary and tertiary care through its facilities across the country. Before the 2003 reform program, Turkey's public health parameters were low; the infant mortality rate (IMR) was 117.5 per 1000 live births in 1980 and life expectancy was 65.49 years.⁴⁹ The HTP's most important reforms have come in the shape of improvements in citizens' health status, prompting a purchaser-provider split in the health care system, transferring the ownership of the majority of public hospitals to the Ministry of Health, the introduction of a performance-based payment system in the Ministry of Health hospitals, and the introduction of a family practitioner scheme nationwide. Despite

providing universal healthcare, Turkey's healthcare expenditure (as a percentage of the GDP) is the lowest among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries at 6.3%, much lower than the OECD average of 9.3%.⁵⁰ Through gradual improvements in public health, the average life expectancy reached 73.57 years for men and 78.46 years for women in 2021, the infant mortality rate (IMR) decreased to 19.87 deaths per 1000 live births in 2020 and the maternal mortality rate (MMR) was 17 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2017.^{51 52 53}

Despite these achievements, there are still discrepancies in several parameters between urban and rural areas. Persistent challenges to the healthcare system include introducing and extending public hospital governance structures that aim to grant autonomous status to public hospitals, improving the supply of health care staff, reorganizing and enforcing a referral system from primary to higher levels of care, and to address sustainability issues. The scarcity of health care personnel in Turkey in relation to its population is another area that the government is focusing on. The physician density is around 1.85 physicians per 1,000 people, which is lower than that of other Mediterranean countries such as Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece as well.⁵⁴ Despite its large size, significant effort has been made to improve the geographical distribution of health care personnel.

7. Sports

Though the traditional Turkish national sport is oil wrestling (Yağlı güreş), the most popular one is association football. Other popular mainstream sports include weightlifting, volleyball, and basketball. Football, by far, is the most popular sport in Turkey. Its football team has participated in the FIFA World Cup twice. In the 2002 World Cup, Turkey lost in the semi-final against eventual champions, Brazil, before clinching the third place. Bull Fighting is a much-awaited festival-cum-sport. The annual event is full of thrill, violence, and trauma. Further, Turkish athletes have featured in and won medals in Olympic Games.

Government

1. Constitution

Turkey has had four constitutions since its inception which are characterized by the establishment of a nation-state, democratization, recognition of international law and reforms. These 4 documents that have governed the state are: the constitutions of 1921, 1924, 1961 and the current constitution of 1982. The current constitution was ratified by popular referendum when the military junta of Turkey was in power (1980-1983). This constitution has undergone multiple amendments and modifications in light of contemporary political shifts. The most famous of which was the 2017 introduction of a presidential system instead of the previously opted parliamentary system following the 15 July coup d'état attempt. The constitution calls for a democratic, secular, and presidential system, divided into executive, legislative and judicial establishments, with legislative power vested in unicameral National Assembly consisting of 450 deputies elected every five years.

2. Government and Politics

The Government of Turkey is a unitary governmental authority over a parliamentary, democratic republic. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey is a single-chamber parliament of 600 members that holds legislative power to enact, amend and repeal laws, to declare war, to proclaim amnesty and pardon, to approve ratification of international treaties, and to adopt budget bills. The parliamentarians are elected for five year terms according to the D'Hondt method. The executive power is vested in the president of Turkey who delegates it to the members of his cabinet.

Operating within the framework of civil law, the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court, the Court of Jurisdictional Disputes, the Council of State, the Court of Cassation, hold judicial jurisdiction in the state. Universal suffrage over the age of 18 is given to vote in elections and to take part in referenda.

Following President Erdogan's AKP, the CHP (The Republican People's Party) is the second largest party in Turkey while the centre-right MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) is the third largest.

Economy

Turkey's economy is characterized as an emerging market economy and is often grouped together with newly-industrialized countries. The economy transformed from an underdeveloped agriculture producer to one where state and private-run enterprises (industry and services) are the most productive and rapidly expanding sectors. It ranks among the world's 20th largest nominal GDP and 11th largest GDP by Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).⁵⁵ Its diverse economy produces agricultural products, construction materials, motor vehicles, electrical appliance, and transportation equipment.

After independence, economic reforms were introduced under which development policies emphasized private accumulation. Despite a global crisis caused by World War II, state accumulation was still promoted. During most of the Cold War period, Turkey followed a strategy of state-guided industrialization based on inward-oriented import substituting protectionist policies, coupled with intensive government intervention. Accordingly, policies were mainly designed to protect domestic industry from foreign competition and increase government controls over the allocation of resources and production of goods. From the 1980s onwards, the economy was opened to liberal trade in goods, services, and financial market transactions.

As an oil-importing, middle-income economy, Turkey experienced a series of external shocks in the last two decades. Correspondingly, Turkey went through cycles of foreign borrowing and sequences of sharply altered policy phases. Though Turkey, for the most part of the period since 2000, achieved increased employment and incomes, in the past few years growing economic vulnerabilities and external stimuli have threatened to undermine those achievements. Reforms targeted at disadvantaged groups and neglected regions allowed for the poverty incidence to fall to more than half over 2002-2015. Turkey was able to accomplish dramatic urbanization, gain access to foreign trade channels and improved compliance to EU regulations and standards.

But a slowdown in reforms for the last few years, coupled with economic vulnerabilities, poses a dire risk to some of the progress made. In macroeconomic terms, the situation is vulnerable due to rising inflation, elevated financial vulnerabilities, contracting investment and unemployment. Geopolitical tensions due to Turkey's close proximity to the civil war in Syria also add to its external vulnerabilities. The economy was greatly impacted by the 2018 currency and debt crisis. The Turkish lira plunged in value, inflation and borrowing costs rose as well as loan defaults. Turkey's large current account deficit and private foreign-currency denominated debt were attributed as the leading cause of the economic crisis. President Trump's suddenly-enforced tariffs on steel and aluminium also contributed.

1. Agriculture

The agriculture sector of Turkey makes up around 23% of the economy, with nearly 3.5 million farms working on 20 million hectares of land.⁵⁶ An "old farming country", Turkey is the world's 7th largest agricultural producer where 50.6% of the country consist of agricultural lands and 14.6% forest.⁵⁷ The

agriculture sector is the largest employer, representing 25% of the workforce.⁵⁸ The 2018 debt crisis was followed by reduction in market price support emanating from a depreciation in the value of the Turkish lira. Turkey is a major producer of fruits (apple, watermelons tomatoes, hazlenuts, apricots, poppy seeds, figs, and cherries), sugar beet, potatoes, milk and wheat, soybeans and sunflower seeds. Turkey's top three agriculture export products are flour of wheat, tomatoes, lemons and limes.

Turkey is the world's fourth largest producer of grapes for wine production and the world's third largest producer of olive oil. Turkey's agricultural yield, especially cereal production, is heavily-dependent on seasonal rainfall and the country's indigenous irrigation system. Another characteristic of Turkish agriculture is the small farm size. 67% of Turkish farms own between 0.1 - 5 hectares of land while the remaining 33% own more than 5 hectares.⁵⁹ Farm output per year remains low in comparison to the enormous potential the agricultural sector has. Increases in input prices, high interest rates, inflation, and climate change- influenced rainfall and lack of efficient market mechanisms are leading to a rapid rural exodus. The unstable exchange rate increases the degree of price uncertainty faced by farmers, both in the export and domestic markets.

2. Industry

Turkish policymakers endeavoured to make an industrial system that would restore the country's economic might. Till the 1980s, the import-substitution strategy was aimed to facilitate indigenous industries to become independent producers of manufactured goods. The result was a striking unfolding of industry, where the sector grew at an annual average rate of 8.6 %, gradually expanding its share in Turkey's GDP. By the last 1990s, industry was broadly based, prioritizing rapid industrialization, and excessive protection minimized the attention given to efficiency and forestalled competition. This paradoxically led to home markets becoming more attractive. The rise of montage industries - where imported parts are used to assemble products like electronic goods, motor vehicles and consumer durables- meant that industrial growth required more imports. Hence, policy attempts focused on import-substitution paradoxically tended to alter the country's trade balance. The early 2000s saw an economic boom supported by the industrial sector. Turkey's industries were diversified with the addition of motor vehicles, construction materials, textiles, consumer electronics, and transportation equipment. In recent years, however, Turkey's economy has suffered due to significant changes in external factors such as an increase in Syrian refugees and impediments in pushing through economic reforms. The debt crisis of 2018, U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminium, and ever-changing oil prices have hampered its economic progress as well.

3. Human Resource Management

In the last 15 years, Turkey has endeavoured to maintain its competitive advantage in the global economic sphere. A shift from a predominantly agriculture-based economy to an increasingly industrialized and service-based economy exemplifies the country's effort to make the most of its able-bodied population. But longstanding reforms still leave room for improvement: of the youth bulge that is aged 15-25, nearly 25% is still unemployed while the overall rate stands at 12.7%.⁶⁰ Of the labour force in Turkey, the agriculture sector employed the least at 18.4%, industry at 26.6% and services at 54.9%.⁶¹ COVID-19 exacerbated structural challenges related to low labour force participation, and high unemployment. The crisis has hit informal workers and the self-employed the hardest because they are concentrated in labour and contact-intensive activities where social distancing is hard to employ. The number of jobs for women decreased strongly after the 2018 financial turmoil and the COVID-19 shock.

Defence & Security

1. Law and Order

The many institutions and agencies of law enforcement in Turkey all act under the command of the President or mostly the Minister of Internal Affairs. The General Directorate of Security is the high command of the police force and each district in Turkey also hosts a district directorate. The Gendarmerie are the fighting arm and military forces of law enforcement; they are weaponized, trained, and supplied by the army and work under the command of the Minister of Interior. The Askeri İnzibat military police is a small force that works directly under military's command. Cases relevant to military security and military crimes such as desertion and dodging the draft come under their jurisdiction. Each department of the law enforcement has a dedicated intelligence division. The Police Intelligence Department is the police force's premier intelligence wing and the Gendarmerie's is the intelligence arm of the Gendarmerie General Command. Their activities are coordinated by a national intelligence organization, the Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı, or MİT.

2. Security Concerns

The Turkish Army is the preeminent, main branch of the Turkish Armed Forces followed by the Turkish Air Force and Navy. The Turkish Army is nearly a century old, having been formed on 8 November, 1920. It has fought in significant campaigns throughout the century including suppressing rebellions in Southeastern Turkey, participating in the Korean War, the 1974 invasion of Cyprus, the recent involvement in the Syrian Civil War, as well as its inclusion in the NATO alliance against the USSR during most of the Cold War.

With over 700,000 military personnel - nearly half of those in active military service - Turkey boasts the second largest army in the NATO alliance behind the United States.⁶² Conscription is mandatory for all males between the ages of 20 and 40 while women can serve but only as officers.

Over the last 10 years, the country's military spending has increased by 46%. At the current expenditure of \$18.2 billion, Turkey is the 15th biggest military spender in the world, with its military budget being around 2.2% of its GDP.⁶³ The Turkish Special Forces include the Army Commanders Special Forces, the Commanders Amphibious Marine Brigade, the Navy Commanders Underwater Offence, and the Defence Air Force Commanders. It is customary for a Chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces to have had prior appointment as the Commander of the Turkish Land Forces. Turkey has troops based in Qatar, Somalia, Iraq, and Cyprus.

The National Security Council is the principal government agency that handles foreign policy, national security and military matters, and coordinates their policies among various government agencies. This national security policy is expressed in the National Security Policy Department or "The Red Book". To curb military intervention in domestic politics and to meet the EU's political demand for membership negotiations, Turkey has passed a number of reforms aiming at strengthening civilian control over the military.

The country's tank fleet is currently made up of American M-48s and M-60s and German Leopard-1s and Leopard-2s, additionally they have also begun making their own indigenous battle tank, the Altay.⁶⁴ It boasts the strongest force in the eastern Mediterranean with 16 frigates, 10 corvettes and 12 submarines.⁶⁵ Construction is underway on the country's first aircraft carrier, the TCG Anadolu. The Turkish Air Force has 270 F-16 fighter aircraft, but Turkey's military hopes to build a new-generation of

dual-fighter jet fleet in time for the countries centennial in 2023 comprising American F-35 stealth fighters and the indigenous TF-X Air Superiority Fighter.⁶⁶ Turkey hopes to procure weapons from Russia as well. In 2017, Ankara signed a deal with Moscow to buy nearly \$2 billion worth of S-400 anti-aircraft missiles, much to the chagrin of Washington.⁶⁷ While Turkey has no nuclear weapons of its own, 50 U.S. B61 bombs are stored at its Incirlik Base.⁶⁸ The Incirlik Air Base also houses several thousand U.S. military personnel and is used for observing Syria and Iraq.

Turkey has a host of internal and external threats that require an efficient and capable army to ward-off the full spectrum of threats and challenges to its national security. Complex maritime, air and territorial disputes with Greece in the Aegean Sea, the controversial status of North Cyprus, Kurds in Eastern Turkey, tense relations with Armenia and the threat of the exceeding conflict in Syria reaching Turkish provinces are some of the main challenges to Turkey's security and territorial integrity.

Pakistan-Turkey Relations

1. Historical and Cultural foundations

Pak-Turk relations trace back to the cultural and historical connections that the people of Anatolia and South Asia shared. A distinctly non-Arab and rather more Turko-Persian culture dominates the lives of the people across this region. In the 19th Century, the Muslims of the Sub-continent supported the Ottoman Empire politically and financially during the Crimean War. The pinnacle of their multi-dimensional brotherhood in the early 20th century was reached during the Khilafat Movement. Muslims of the South Asian Subcontinent sent financial aid to the Ottoman Empire even though they were subjects of the British Empire. They saw the Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph of all Muslims and wanted to support caliphate against Western aggression.

This bond has allowed Pakistanis to enjoy a positive perception in Turkey and amongst Turks for many decades. Soon after its founding, Pakistan was immediately recognized by the Republic of Turkey, who also supported its successful bid to become a member of the United Nations. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founder, had expressed admiration for Turkey's founding leader Mustafa Kemal and desired to develop the newly founded state of Pakistan on the Turkish model of modernism.⁶⁹

2. Diplomatic Relations and Pakistan–Turkey High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council

Diplomatic relations between the two countries were initiated immediately after the independence of Pakistan in 1947, and due to the special importance paid to relations with Pakistan, Yahya Kemal Beyatli, a renowned poet, was appointed as Ankara's first Ambassador to Karachi, at the beginning of 1948. The Baghdad Pact (later called the Central Treaty Organization or CENTO) was the first Treaty that both countries signed were a part of. In July 1964, Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran formed the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) to strengthen the socio-economic cooperation between the three countries. Both countries are major parties in the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) and the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation. They both support each other's stands on different regional and international issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, Palestine, and Cyprus. Azerbaijan also serves as an intermediary in the relations between Pakistan and Turkey as it shares a strong cultural connection with Turkey and a conspicuously strong diplomatic relation with Pakistan. Turkey has stood by Pakistan during its economic woes in front of the international community.

Turkey, China, and Saudi Arabia together helped stop the U.K. and the U.S. to put Pakistan on a list of countries which had failed to stop terror financing. But the Financial Action task Force (FATF), a global terror-financing watchdog, put Pakistan on its grey-list after China and Saudi Arabia ended their support. Turkey was the only country there that continued to stand alongside Pakistan.⁷⁰ In return, Pakistan launched a “support Turkish Lira” campaign by buying Turkish currency after the U.S. imposed unilateral sanctions on the country. Pakistan was one of the few countries that immediately supported the government against the attempted coup of 2016. The Supreme Court of Pakistan also designated the Gülen movement as a terrorist group.⁷¹ The Gülen movement and its U.S.-based leader Fetullah Gulen orchestrated the failed 2016 coup in Turkey.

The High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) is the main political forum that guides bilateral relations in all fields between Pakistan and Turkey. To-date, six sessions of the HLSCC’s Joint Working Groups have been focused on the fight against terrorism, Islamophobia, regional issues (especially Kashmir issue and Afghanistan), energy cooperation, banking, communications, and education. Previously 60 agreements/MoUs have been signed under the HLSCC framework in various areas.⁷² The sixth session saw the two countries sign MoUs in new areas, including cooperation between the two countries’ state-run broadcasters’ (TRT and PTV), cooperation in railway, customs cooperation between postal services, halal accreditation and conformity assessment, a joint declaration on strategic economic framework and a declaration to increase trade to \$5 billion from current \$800 million.⁷³

3. Trade and the Pakistan–Turkey Free Trade Agreement

The first formal institution to promote and regularize trade between Turkey and Pakistan was the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) Organization. The RCD was dissolved following the revolution in Iran. The next two decades saw several agreements signed between the two countries, with the formation of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), allowing both countries to reiterate their commitments to improving trade.

Pakistan’s imports from Turkey have been increasing over the past decade while Pakistan’s exports to Turkey have been depreciating. In 2019/2020, Pakistan’s exports to Turkey were US \$328 million while imports were at US \$570 million resulting in a trade deficit of US \$242 million.⁷⁴ But overall the trade volume between Turkey and Pakistan has risen over the last five years from around \$600 million to \$800 million.⁷⁵

Additional duties imposed by Turkey on imports have contributed to this declining trend. Pakistan exports cotton, plastics, beverages, apparel, fibres, optical instruments, raw hides and skin and toys. Pakistan’s imports from Turkey include machinery, boilers, ships, plastics, electrical machinery, iron and steel, chemicals, dairy produce and furniture.

By the late 1990s, Turkey had attained a customs union with the EU, whereas Pakistan had been only granted GSP+1 status in 2013. Pakistan wanted to secure a similar GSP+ status from Turkey but due to the latter’s reluctance, Pakistan had to compromise with a possible bilateral FTA. The decision to initiate FTA negotiations began after the fourth meeting of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council. Nine rounds of negotiations have been carried out, with both finalizing the Pakistan-Turkey Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) and Action Plan in 2020.

The trade balance between both countries fluctuated continuously for the last ten years, reaching a deficit for Pakistan twice in 2016 and 2018. Turkey’s share in Pakistan’s exports and imports is more significant than Pakistan’s share in Turkey’s exports and imports. Pakistan’s largest exports by numbers

are textiles that have lower value-addition and worth, while Pakistan imports huge quantities of machinery from Turkey. If negotiations between the countries are successful in establishing a free trade agreement, then significant concessions must be given on Pakistan's top exports to Turkey to allow Pakistani products to compete in the Turkish market. Turkey applies a protective textile duty, and Pakistan's top export to Turkey are textiles. Employing the SEF, the two countries need to reevaluate tariff policies to allow both countries to exploit their competitive advantages. Alternatively, entitlement under the GSP+ should allow Pakistan with unilateral access to Turkish market.⁷⁶ In the joint statement released after the sixth session of the HLSCC held in 2020, both sides committed to finalizing and concluding the FTA in a manner through which the economic sensitivities of both countries are taken care of.

4. Arms Sale, Training, and Security

Owing to a very multipolar Eurasia, time is opportune for both countries to continue cultivating a partnership in the national defence and military sphere. Turkey's growing arms industry needs a bigger and reliable market, allowing greater opportunities for defence deals with brotherly nations. During the Cold War, Turkey could only provide upgrading services to Pakistani hardware, now it directly sells indigenous arms to Pakistan. Turkish arms transfer to Pakistan from 2016-2019 were around \$112 million.⁷⁷ During that time, Pakistan was Turkey's third-largest arms export market while Turkey was Pakistan's fourth-largest source of arms. As Turkey makes good on the promise of sale of arms to Pakistan, nearly exceeding \$3 billion, future acquisitions will possibly include the purchase of four MILGEM Ada-class corvettes, and 30 T-129 Atak helicopters.⁷⁸ The T-129 deal is riddled with delays because of U.S. reservations as Congress has blocked export licenses Turkish Aerospace Industries (TUSAŞ). Both are almost inclined towards one another because of decades old history of American sanctions. Turkey is in attempts to develop its own prototype for the TEI TS1400 engine that could replace the T-128 helicopter's LHTEC T800-4A turbo shaft engine if its relations with Washington do not improve.⁷⁹ While China will continue to remain Pakistan's biggest source of defence equipment, Ankara provides a possible route to circumnavigate French and U.S. inaccessibility and ease Pakistan's dependence on China alone. The Pakistan Navy commissioned a 17,000-ton fleet tanker from Turkish defence contractor STM in 2018.⁸⁰ Pak-Turk naval cooperation has been given a great fillip by the Milgem project under which four corvettes will be built for the Pakistan Navy. Two of those will be built in Turkey while two will be built in Pakistan. More than 1,500 Pakistani military personnel have received training in Turkey since a bilateral agreement was signed in March 2001.⁸¹

Ankara, on the other hand, is interested in buying MFI-17 Super Mushshak aircraft from Pakistan, but no major progress has made as of now.⁸² Turkey has also procured drone parts and hardware from Pakistan. The transfer of technological information is another avenue that this entente is focusing on. Turkish Aerospace Industries (TUSAŞ) has set up its first office in Pakistan's National Science and Technology Park, focusing on radar technology, drones, and cyber warfare.

5. Aid-Exchange

Turkey had repeatedly provided Pakistan with aid to help out the growing economy in the spirit of brotherhood. The Recep Tayyip Erdogan Hospital Trust is running four major hospitals and two blood transfusion centers in Punjab.⁸³ Turkey aided Pakistan during one of its worst natural disasters, the 2005 earthquake in Kashmir. The Turkish Red Crescent and the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency have distributed ration among families in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.⁸⁴ Flood victims have been provided housing facilities by the Turkish government in southern Thatta district.⁸⁵

Cooperation, Partnerships, and Geopolitics

1. Pakistan's Neutrality and Regional Realignments

Fault lines in the Muslim world are threatening the long held status quo with new blocs and alliances. The idea of maintaining cooperative relations with other Muslim countries has been a key guiding foreign policy principle for Pakistan ever since its inception, but this policy option has been challenged by warring parties and states in the Muslim world. Pakistan, for most of its 74 years, was kept diplomatically and militarily afloat by partnerships that helped it obviate the threat from its adversary, India. But neutrality in an age where the status quo maintained by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states as the leaders of the Muslim world is now being challenged by the growing closeness between Turkey and Malaysia. It would be an understatement to say that Saudi Arabia and Turkey have a 'tense' working relationship. Both countries have fluctuated from periods of cooperation to those of mutual distrust. This enmity is rooted deeply in history since the Saudi resurgence during the Arab revolt of 1916 pushed out the Ottoman's out from the area. The two states established diplomatic relations in 1932 after Saudi Arabia's independence and subsequent regional conflicts like the Iran-Iraq war and the later invasion of Iraq did not stem mistrust at the time. The Arab Spring and the subsequent chaos in Libya, Syria and Egypt started to peel away the diplomatic façade and showcase the cracks in their relationship. The first instance came with the 2013 Egyptian coup where Turkish backed then-President of Egypt, Mohammad Morsi was forcibly removed by pro-Saudi Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. In 2014, Turkey lost the bid for the U.N. Security Council's non-permanent member seat, a move successfully opposed and campaigned by Saudi Arabia.⁸⁶ These isolated instances started to expose the increasingly contentious frictions between these nations. The 2017 Qatar diplomatic crisis greatly soured the relationship even further where the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, called Turkey, Iran and the Muslim Brotherhood Organization as the "triangle of evil".⁸⁷ A turning point came with the murder of The Washington Post writer Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Arabia consulate in Istanbul in 2018. Though Saudi Arabia tried to dispel accusations of a rift between the two nations, President Erdogan accused the Saudi Government of having killed the journalist on Turkish soil. Turkey also has a stake in the Iran-Saudi Arabia proxy conflict because of its regional proximity to the proxy warfare that plays out in Yemen, Libya, Iraq, Syria, and the Caucasus. Turkey is bound by geography and history to play a role in the unfolding Syrian Civil War. Though both countries have the same stance when it comes to the Bashar al-Assad regime, divergences on whether to support the radical or moderate opposition forces is a source of tension between them. The Saudis have since taken a more conciliatory approach with Damascus whereas in Libya, both countries back opposite sides. This rivalry over the leadership of the Islamic world and Saudi Arabia's asseveration about Erdogan's alleged Neo-Ottoman expansionist agenda have only served to showcase how thin the veneer is of a diplomatic constructive relationship between both states.

In the case of Turkey's relationship with the Gulf States, Ankara's attitude with Riyadh sets the tone for whether the Gulf States and Turkey are amicable to each other or not. During the Qatar diplomatic crisis, there was a clear divide of where the Gulf States stood and where Turkey stood with Qatar. Turkey provided Qatar with food aid, diplomatic and military support in defiance of the Saudi and Emirati-led bloc. The Turkish parliament even passed a legislative act in June 2017 to allow Turkish troops to be deployed to a military base in Qatar.⁸⁸

The Al-Ula Declaration has allowed the relationship to improve but reconciliation and openness are still subject to regional developments in the Middle East. The Emirates thawing relationship with Qatar will only leave Ankara further isolated in the region. But there can be no reconciliation between Ankara and Abu Dhabi without an agreement to seek common ground regarding geostrategic approaches in the

region. Provided the Saudis give their seal of approval, the price of reconciliation for Ankara could be moderating its approaches across the Arab world and exercising restraint in Libya, Syria and Iraq. But persistent conflict in the Middle East only allows Turkey to remain pragmatic with its choices going forward.

On the economic front, the Saudi Kingdom imposed an informal boycott on Turkish imports in 2020 but after the resolution of the Gulf Crisis, there are early signs of a shift in attitudes. A shift exemplified in the Saudis interest in purchasing Turkish-made unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for military use. In another development, two Saudi arms firms will be co-producing Turkish-made Karayel-SU drones under licence.⁸⁹

Turkey, in its bid for leadership of the Muslim world, found a partner in Malaysia against the Gulf -Saudi bloc. Kuala Lumpur and Ankara's inter-diplomatic foundations are based around the 19th century connections between the Malay Sultanate and the Ottoman Empire. Both have inked a number of security-related agreements recently but the most significant measure taken by both countries was convening the Kuala Lumpur Summit (later called the Perdana Dialogue) in 2019. The Summit was conceived on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, and emerged out of frustration with the underwhelming response to India's clampdown in Kashmir by prolific Muslim-majority countries. The immediate reaction in the media was confounded with allegations that it was meant to displace the Saudi-led Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). The official agenda of the conference included matters affecting the Muslim world based on seven broad pillars, including governance, culture, security, trade, and technology. Successful or not, holding of the Summit itself was a testament to the fact that both countries are serious about showcasing their leadership to the Muslim Ummah. The conference did more to signal the changing alignments in the Muslim world than actually signing strategic agreements between participant countries. Pakistan was an initial participant in the core group, but decided to opt out of the Summit, primarily due to Saudi reservations.

Pakistan has historically maintained pragmatic neutrality to avert any rifts in the Muslim world. However, Pakistan's ties with the GCC countries have been stronger than those with Iran. Pakistan has found it difficult to fully engage with Iran due to its strategic ties with Saudi Arabia. That said, Pakistan has lately taken steps to turn a page in its ties with Iran while also ensuring that it is not seen as the one involving itself in a zero-sum game in the Middle East. A similar predicament could be faced by Pakistan if GCC countries continually see a potential Malaysia-Turkey alliance as a strategic threat. Pakistan would have to continue adhering to its foreign policy principle of non-partisanship and neutrality in the Muslim world. But South Asia has a number of problems, ranging from sectarianism, extremism and shifting geopolitics to Narendra Modi's hindutva ideology to the neighbouring Middle Eastern Cold War. All under the shadow of the rising dragon in the east, Pakistan has found a renewed friendship with Turkey. Pakistan has begun to identify more closely with Turkey's brand of Islam-inspired modernity. Even in the case of soft power dynamics, Turkey's *Ertugrul TV* show has won the hearts of the people of Pakistan compared to Saudi Arabia and the UAE's joint production of *Kingdoms of Fire*, a show about Arab resistance to the Ottoman Empire.

Pakistan - owing to its economic woes - has to tread diplomatic waters carefully, lest it becomes part of the problem and not its solution. This policy of neutrality has its own far-reaching consequences as far as Pakistan's security paradigm and economic growth are concerned. Pakistan needs to act as the peace broker between these evolving blocs, help mend the fences and maintain brotherly relations with each of these nations keeping its national interests as its overriding concern and priority. Under Prime Minister Imran Khan, Pakistan has conveyed to the world two concomitant messages. One, it is not into bloc politics. Two, it would like to put out fires in the Muslim world. PM Khan made efforts to mediate

between Saudi Arabia and Iran while also pressing upon Washington and Tehran to mend fences, for he believed that, an escalation of hostilities would not only harm Pakistan but also engulf the entire region.

2. Turkey's Support for Kashmir

Though geopolitical realities impose considerable costs on would-be champions of global Muslim causes, Turkey has not sidestepped on its stand regarding Jammu & Kashmir. Unlike Saudi Arabia and the Gulf state's subdued approach to the issue of Jammu & Kashmir, Turkey increased the tone and tenor of its criticism of India's illegal annexation and revocation of Article 370. President Erdogan has called the Kashmir conflict "a burning issue" and essential for peace in South Asia.⁹⁰ Ankara and New Delhi relations are at best cordial but sporadic tensions persist due to Turkey's proclivity to wholeheartedly support Pakistan, not only on the Kashmir issue but also in groupings in the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Addressing Pakistan's parliament in February 2020, President Erdogan condemned India's communications blackout in Kashmir. "There is no difference between Gallipoli and Kashmir," President Erdogan said, comparing the struggle of the Kashmiris to the Ottoman Empire's struggle against Allied powers during WWI.⁹¹

New Delhi's ties with Ankara soured after President Erdogan broached the subject of Kashmir at UNGA in 2019. Indian Prime Minister Modi countered this diplomatic offensive by holding meetings with Cyprus, Armenia and Greece on the sidelines of the UNGA. Prime Minister Modi, in a swift move, cancelled his planned visit to Turkey in October 2019 and dropped a \$2.3 billion naval deal to manufacture fleet support vessels (FSVs) in collaboration with a Turkish shipyard. The deal has now been given the go-ahead.⁹²

Overall Turkey's trade volume with India improved from \$505 million in 2000 to \$8.7 billion in 2018 with a heavy imbalance in India's favour.⁹³ Though it fell in 2019 to around \$7.7 billion - likely due to the diplomatic overtures Ankara took with regard to Kashmir - it has since steadily started to recover. In comparison, Pakistan's trade volume with Turkey in 2019 was \$803 million.⁹⁴

3. Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)

Initially organized under the name of Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) in 1964 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, the organization was rechristened as Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in 1985. The member states come from Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, Middle East and South Asia cumulatively representing more than 460 million inhabitants of the globe and covering 8 million square kilometres spanning the frontiers of Russia to the Persian Gulf and from Asia to Europe.⁹⁵ The overall objective of the Organization is the sustainable economic development of its member states through inter-regional trade and establishing a single market for goods and services along similar lines as the European Union. Inter-regional trade can allow isolated member states access to the Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean through the network of land routes in Central Asia.

Though numerous declarations and agreements have been signed, the persistent problem is that the framework of the ECO is still limited to a series of bilateral agreements and arbitration mechanisms. Pakistan and Turkey can lead the charge to expand the breadth of the ECO's trade agreements by focusing on the problems of poor infrastructure of the member states in the fields of transportation and communications, lack of technical knowledge, inconsistent economic and regional policies, and limited concentration of markets. Trade agreements once signed are not ratified by the member states leaving the project in limbo for a long time. The most notable progress recently made was with the declaration

of resumption of the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad (ITI) Train after a gap of almost nine years. The trial run of the service was launched in 2009 as a project under the ECO.⁹⁶

4. Gulf-Israel Rapprochement and Emerging Threats

The Abraham Accords Peace Agreement signed between the United Arab Emirates and the State of Israel was a diplomatic game-changer for the Persian Gulf in particular and the Middle East in general. The agreement came as last-ditch effort of then U.S. President Trump to gain political mileage before the election of November 2020. Israel, in turn, was asked to suspend plans for annexing parts of the West Bank. However, it has not unequivocally committed to doing that. This agreement was followed suit by the normalization of ties with Israel by Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco. Deemed as a realpolitik-induced damage to the Palestinian movement, Israel's embrace by Muslim countries has and will increase schisms and mistrust within the Muslim world.

Many Muslim majority countries looked askance at UAE's decision to normalize ties with Israel, including Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. Ankara's critique is unique since it was the first Muslim majority country to recognize the Jewish state. Turkey established diplomatic relations with Israel in 1949, at a time when Turkey was solely focused on a secularist Western-inspired foreign policy. Being Israel's closest Muslim partner had its own benefits as Turkey was able to push back Armenian and Greek lobbies in Washington. Turkey-Israel relations peaked in the 1990s due to cooperation in the intelligence and military sphere. Israeli Air Force pilots even trained over Turkish skies. The 2000s saw further rapprochement due to the "zero problems with neighbour" policy of the AKP, but relations began to sour in 2010, after the Mavi Marmara incident.⁹⁷

When the word got out that the UAE was seeking to normalize relations, President Erdogan said that Turkey might consider suspending its own ties with UAE. The subsequent agreement by Bahrain was given a similar response as well by Turkey. President Erdogan made it clear then that "they [we] side with the Palestinian people". Now Turkey's unique status as the most prolific Muslim majority country that recognizes Israel is no longer relevant in the halls of the White House. Ironically, the UAE will now receive F-35 fighter jets that Turkey was initially promised by the U.S. Turkey was removed from the U.S. F-35 strike fighter program because of its purchase of Russian S-400 air defence system. President Erdogan's stance may have garnered him support in the Muslim world, but it has ruptured Turkey's ties with the U.S. who is now ostensibly tilting in favour of the UAE. Turkey now has tense relations with NATO allies (France, U.S. and Greece), and is at odds with governments in Egypt, Iraq, and the Gulf States. Despite all this, commercial interests still persist as Turkey's exports to Israel in 2020 amounted to \$3.2 billion, the same as in 2019. President Erdogan has recently said that while the Palestine issue is a "red line" for Ankara, he "desires to improve our relations with it [Israel] as well".⁹⁸ The war in Syria, tensions in the Mediterranean, and internal security problems leave Turkey with the pragmatic choice of moderating rhetoric at the leadership level, and shifting focus towards trade and cooperation along realpolitik lines.⁹⁹ Turkey can also act as a mediator between Israel and Iran as Turkey has greatly improved its relations with Iran in recent years. However, Turkey's go-between role would be undermined by growing fissures within the Middle East and the overbearing U.S. factor.

On the other hand, Pakistan's Prime Minister, Imran Khan, has categorically said that the country will not recognize Israel absent a just settlement of the Palestinian issue. While hinting at the mounting pressure to recognize Israel, Khan has consistently said that Pakistan cannot deviate from the position that the country's founder, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, took on the issue while adding that accepting an oppressor in Israel will hamper the country's fight and struggle for Kashmir.¹⁰⁰ That said,

Pakistan should expect to come under more pressure if its major partners in Saudi Arabia and other GCC states recognize Israel going forward. Also, Pakistan must plan and strategize to respond to the challenge that Israel's closeness to Muslim countries, coupled with its even-otherwise strong strategic relations with India and the U.S., could pose. All this, along with Turkey's tough stands against Israel and Saudi Arabia, and simmering U.S.-Israel-Iran acrimony, could also affect Islamabad-Ankara relations.¹⁰¹

Rooted in cultural, religious, and historical affinities, Pak-Turk relations have the potential to become stronger, deeper, and strategic in nature. Further, commitments to strengthening and enhancing ties at the highest levels, coupled with growing people-to-people relations, augur well for the future. Therefore, both countries should work towards translating their strategic vision for this relationship into practical successes, by adopting a step-by-step approach while also ensuring that goals are tailored to match capabilities, needs, and the ever so volatile strategic landscape.

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