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The European Union's Foreign Policy

The Perceptions of the
Turkish Parliamentarians

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Rahime Süleymanoğlu-Kürüm



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Abstract

In this paper, we analyze the Turkish perceptions of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in an attempt to understand the EU's evolving character as a 'federal state' or an 'intergovernmental organization' or a 'cosmopolitan union'. The analysis of the Turkish perceptions of the EU's foreign policy is conducted through an investigation of the debates in the Turkish Parliament, the legislature in Turkish politics, from 2000 to 2010. We identified four different camps in Turkish politics, the right-wing nationalists, Islamists, liberals and the left-wing nationalists who are all politically represented in the Turkish Parliament in varying degrees. The proceedings in the Turkish Parliament enable us to analyze the different political camps' positions on the European foreign policy thoroughly. The different views of these groups vis-à-vis the EU's foreign policy is critical in mapping the Turkish perceptions, and in order to do so, we focused on these different deliberations in the Parliament. The contested development of the EU's foreign and security policy could also be reflected in the external assessments of this policy so the Turkish Parliamentarians' perceptions matter. Consequently, we expect to understand the Turkish perceptions of the EU in foreign and security policy - its CFSP and CESDP - as an outside assessment of the EU's direction towards any of the RECON models.

Keywords

CFSP/ESDP — Common Foreign and Security Policy — Enlargement — European Security and Defense Policy — International Relations — Political Participation — Security/external — Turkey

Introduction

In the post-Cold War era, the European Union (EU) has emerged as a new experiment in pooling sovereignty with aspirations to become an international actor on its own right. Having said that, there is an ongoing discussion as to what kind of an international actor the EU is: Is the EU formulating its own foreign policy, independent of the individual member states' foreign policies? Or, are the member states the main actors in foreign policy and the EU position conforms to an already formed foreign policy stance, representing a collective will? In other words, it still is vigorously debated as to whether the EU has a foreign policy of its own, independent of the individual member states. The key question here, of course, is whether there is a collective EU interest that the EU foreign policy would aim to promote. There is an ongoing contestation over the EU's ability to formulate a common foreign policy and its particular role in global politics. To some observers of the European Union, the 27 member state bloc does not yet resemble a coherent foreign policy making body (Smith, 2000; Hill, 2003). On the other hand, for others, the EU is acting as a unified bloc and it is possible to talk about an EU level foreign policy (Manners, 2002). Despite the ever deepening security and foreign policy integration on paper, there are question marks over the EU's role as a foreign policy actor in the traditional sense, as most foreign policy and security related decisions imply a move towards a federal state. It is without doubt that the adoption of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 1992, the Common European Security and Defense Policy (CESDP) in 1999 and the establishment of the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) and the European Battle Groups enhance foreign policy, security and defence cooperation in the EU. The EU's moves towards deepening in these areas are important in assessing the extent to which the EU is on the road towards a 'superstate'.

The outside perceptions of the EU foreign policy are important, although understudied¹ elements of the EU's evolution as a global actor. Whether the EU evolves into a 'superstate', 'an intergovernmental organisation' or 'a cosmopolitan union' does not only depend on developments within the EU itself but also on how third states perceive and consequently approach the EU in international politics. Of course, the impact of an outsider's perceptions increases with its political significance. This paper therefore investigates the Turkish perceptions of the EU's foreign policy. Accordingly, how the EU is viewed from the outside by Turkey, a player that is both negotiating for accession and a regional player on its own right, is important in assessing the evolution of the EU's foreign policy.

It has been long argued that the EU could be seen in a different light in global politics as a civilian power (Duchene, 1973), and as a normative, civilizing or ethical power (Whitman, 1998; Manners, 2002; Smith, 2000; Aggestam, 2004; Lightfoot and Burchell, 2005; Tocci, 2007). This is because the European approach favours diplomacy, persuasion, negotiation and compromise. The EU's foreign policy and security cooperation constitutes an important measure of the development towards the RECON models; in the first model, the EU would remain an intergovernmental body where cooperation would be shaped and determined by the member states' interests (Audit Democracy), in the second model, a federal multinational and supranational state would be expected to emerge (Federal Democracy) and the last model is about

¹ However, see Lucarelli and Fioramonti (2010) for a collection of studies on third states' perceptions of the EU.

the emergence of a regional, cosmopolitan power. If the EU acts with a unified voice in its foreign policy, then it might be possible to validate the arguments endorsing the EU as a new form of a state, in line with the RECON model 2, or if the foreign policy dimension remains weak and subject to the member states' preferences and national interests, then it would constitute empirical proof for RECON model 1 and finally if the EU's efforts in deepening foreign policy coordination emerges as a new model of foreign policy making, then it would be an interesting validation for RECON model 3. These different trajectories of the European integration process are connected to the possible evolution of the EU's foreign policy coordination. The perceptions from an acceding state in terms of these three different trajectories could be used to assess the relative strength of the different models and to predict where the EU might be evolving towards. This is why, the EU's image in its foreign policy by third parties such as Turkey, a country closely linked with the EU through its accession process as well as its membership in NATO since 1952, is an important empirical measure of the future development of the EU in line with these models. In other words, the Turkish perceptions of the EU's foreign policy making would be a valuable instrument to assess the empirical validity of the RECON models.

Consequently, we analyze the Turkish perceptions of the EU's CFSP in an attempt to understand the EU's evolving character as a 'federal state' or an 'intergovernmental organization' or a 'cosmopolitan union'. The analysis of the Turkish perceptions of the EU's foreign policy is conducted through an investigation of the debates in the Turkish Parliament, the legislature in Turkish politics, from 2000 to 2010. We identified four different camps in Turkish politics, the right-wing nationalists, Islamists, liberals and the left-wing nationalists who are all politically represented in the Turkish Parliament in varying degrees. The representation of these political groups in the Parliament also reflect the relative support they have among the Turkish public as it is the percentage of votes they get in the national elections which enable them to gain seats in the Parliament. This is why; we analyze the proceedings of the Turkish Parliament on foreign policy to map the Turkish political groups' perceptions of the EU's foreign policy. First of all, we have analyzed Parliamentary proceedings to find out whether the EU's foreign policy is actually one of the issues that act as an agenda setter in the General Assembly. We attempted to assess this by conducting a specific keyword research with the following: 'European Security and Defence' (*Avrupa Güvenlik ve Savunma*), 'European foreign policy' (*Avrupa Dış politikası*), and 'Common Foreign and Security' (*Ortak Dışişleri ve Güvenlik* and *Ortak Dış ve Güvenlik*). As we did not obtain any significant results (European Security and Defence Policy, ESDP, two times and CFSP not at all) with this keyword based analysis, we decided to use more general keywords such as 'EU-Turkey relations' and 'US-Turkey relations'. It is also noteworthy that in the Turkish Parliament, there are also no references to the individual member states such as France, Germany or the United Kingdom. We compared our results using these different keywords about the EU's foreign policy.

Secondly, we conducted a purposive case selection and analyzed budgetary proceedings within the Planning and Budgetary Commission on the one hand, and the General Assembly on the other hand. We chose to analyze the budgetary proceedings basically because the Turkish Parliament controls those budgetary allocations for all ministries, including the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Secretariat General for EU Affairs. We used both of these proceedings to assess the Turkish political actors' perceptions of the EU and its foreign policy. One should note

that there are procedural differences between these two debates: First, the Planning and Budgetary Commission meets before the General Assembly² and debates here are usually more comprehensive and last longer. Second, the Planning and Budgetary Commission proceedings are more detailed with respect to the government's position. That is because the Minister of Foreign Affairs speaks first, summarizing the previous year, and outlining the plans and positions on each issue for the coming year. Following the speeches of other parliamentarians, Foreign Affairs Minister also responds to the questions and criticisms. This is in contrast to the debates in the General Assembly where the Minister of Foreign Affairs speaks last, generally responding to the parliamentarians' criticisms and questions. Third, the budgetary proceedings of the General Assembly are debated on the same day together with all other ministries, so there are limitations in time for the speakers. On the other hand, the Planning and Budgetary Commission provides more time for each speaker, giving them the opportunity for a comprehensive overview of their intentions and priorities. These proceedings enable us to analyze the different political camps' positions on the European foreign policy thoroughly. The different views of these groups vis-à-vis the EU's foreign policy is critical in mapping the Turkish perceptions, and in order to do so, we focused on these different deliberations in the Parliament. The contested development of the EU's foreign and security policy could also be reflected in the external assessments of this policy so the Turkish parliamentarians' perceptions matter. Consequently, we expect to understand the Turkish perceptions of the EU in foreign and security policy – its CFSP and CESDP – as an outside assessment of the EU's direction towards any of the RECON models.

The Turkish Grand National Assembly: Parliament and political cleavages in the Parliament

Since the end of the Cold War, the role of parliaments in foreign policy making process has become an important area of scholarly inquiry. As countries become more democratic, we would expect a greater involvement for the parliaments in the foreign policy making process (Raunio and Wiberg, 2001; Reiter and Tillman, 2002; Kesgin and Kaarbo, 2010). In fact, Kesgin and Kaarbo (2010) argue that parliaments are more powerful than often assumed, especially when a single party enjoys the majority. This might be because the parliament's greatest power is not based on the formal provisions for foreign policy, but instead on its ability to supervise, scrutinize and investigate (Hill, 2003: 256). Although the role of the parliaments have not been very significant in the foreign policy-making process, it is important to analyze them as they constitute the main forums for discussion. In this process, the Parliament serves as the main forum for discussion and consultation among the political groups within the Parliament, reflecting the different points of view in its society.

This is also the case in the Turkish political system, and the reason why we analyze the deliberations in the Parliament from 2000 to 2010. Even though the Turkish Parliament is not the main venue for foreign policy-making, the parliamentarians and their perceptions of the EU foreign policy are important. This is particularly because the Parliament is the main body for the ratification and approval of the executive's decisions, and consequently acts as a veto player. The Turkish Constitution requires

² For the 2009 budgetary debates, the Planning and Budgetary Commission met on 21/11/2008 while the same issue is debated in the General Assembly on 23/12/2008.

that every government bill which is prepared by the Cabinet for foreign policy decisions – sending troops to other countries, allowing the Turkish allies to use the bases in Turkey, participating in NATO or EU led operations – needs to be approved by the Turkish Parliament by an absolute majority. This is usually not a major problem as the Turkish electoral system is designed in such a way that the party that has the highest percentage of the votes has the highest number of seats in the Parliament, and forms the government as well. With high levels of party identification, the parliamentarians tend to support their own parties so the governing party normally expects relatively low levels of opposition on the Parliamentary grounds. Having said that, the Parliament's approval of government bills is never automatic. This is why the deliberations in the Turkish Parliament are important in increasing the legitimacy of the government's actions and in providing the government with a snap shot of the public's preferences.

The Plenary assembly and the Planning and Budgetary proceedings provide us with a unique opportunity to see the Turkish political groups' views on the EU and its foreign policy. The four different camps in Turkish politics that we have identified for our analysis are all represented in the Turkish Parliament, these four camps are Islamists, which is represented in the Turkish Parliament by the Virtue Party until 2002, and then after 2002 by the AKP – Justice and Development Party. The left-wing nationalists are represented by the Democratic Left Party until 2002 and then after 2002 by the CHP – Republican People's Party – and the right-wing nationalists are represented by the MHP – the Nationalist Action Party. The last political group consists of the liberals which found some representation in ANAP –Motherland Party – until 2002 and to a lesser extent in the AKP after 2002. These political parties are more or less reflecting the different political groups in Turkey.

Turkish politics could be seen as an arena where two main cleavages play a determining role of Turkish domestic and foreign policy, the cleavage between the Islamists and the secularists and the cleavage between the nationalists and globalists. Both of these cleavages could be traced back to the end of the Ottoman Empire. Particularly important and problematic here is the norm of individual rights and liberties and their diffusion into the Turkish society. This problem stems from the inherent authoritarian tendencies in the Turkish political culture. There is a marked difference between the European and Turkish norms and values, and this marked difference causes the basis of the opposition and resistance to the EU in various segments of the Turkish society. One should mention here the nationalists' perceptions of the EU and its foreign policy. The nationalists matter significantly as they form the main opposition to the Turkish accession to the EU and have the highest level of reservations towards the EU.

On the one hand, the democratization process in Turkey as motivated by EU membership has brought the authoritarian tendencies in Turkey into the limelight; these authoritarian tendencies stem from political conservatism and nationalism, as the main reactionary movement. On the other hand, it created a paradoxical situation where the proponents of democracy in Turkey are the Islamists; and the defenders of the status quo, who are more authoritarian in nature, are the secularists. The two main cleavages in Turkish politics; the Islamists versus the secularists, and nationalists versus the globalists began to overlap with one another. One can conclude that a dominant fault line, cleavage in Turkish politics is the fault line between the Islamists and secularists. This dominant cleavage overlaps with the

second dominant cleavage, the one between the nationalists and the globalists, and it is now possible to see a blurring of these overlapping lines with some Islamists having nationalist tendencies and the secularists, especially from the liberal camp, who are globalists in their orientation. The fault line is not so straight forward as the Islamists' position is progressive on market economy related areas and the secularists firmly believe in social modernization. These cleavages play a significant role in terms of shaping the Turkish perceptions of the EU as a foreign policy actor.

One could place different political actors and the main political parties in Turkey, with respect to their positions on these cleavages. For example, the founding party of the Turkish Republic, the Republican People's Party (CHP), which is the current opposition party, is leaning more on the secularist and nationalist line. The CHP position also is further supported by the Turkish military which acts as the guardian of the secular Turkish Republic (Heper, 1985). The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is leaning more on the Islamist and the globalist logic whereas its predecessors National Salvation Party (MSP), the Welfare Party (RP), the Virtue Party (FP) were Islamist but not necessarily globalist. The Nationalist Action Party (MHP) is fiercely nationalist but it is harder to place it in the secular and Islamist divide. This does not mean that there are no nationalists in the AKP or no globalists in the CHP, but that these seem to be the generally shared views. The following table gives a clear picture of the electoral support to these, therefore their respective holds on the Turkish society. With the 2002 elections, a majority government under the AKP was established which was then re-elected in the 2007 and 2011 general elections, with a very impressive popular mandate. The CHP acts as the main opposition party since 2002 and the MHP has become the third major party in Turkish politics. An interesting development in this picture is the rise of the Kurdish party, the BDP - Peace and Democracy Party.

Table 1. November 2002 July 2007 and June 2011 National elections and the performances of Turkish Political Parties. Source: *Radikal* and *Milliyet*, Turkish Daily newspapers, November 2002, July 2007 and June 2011.

Name of party	Percentage of votes in 2002 elections	Percentage of votes in 2007 elections	Percentage of votes in 2011 elections	Number of parliamentarians 2007-2011
<i>AKP – Justice and Development Party</i>	34.28	46.60	50.00	334
<i>CHP – Republican People's Party</i>	19.39	20.80	26.00	101
<i>MHP – Nationalist Action Party</i>	8.33	14.29	13.00	72
<i>DYP/DP – True Path Party and Democratic Party</i>	9.55	5.41	n/a	2
<i>Independents</i>	1.00	5.20		7
<i>BDP - after 2007</i>			7.00	20
<i>DSP</i>			n/a	6

In the general picture between the Islamists and secularists, where there is a blurred line in terms of who constitute the pro-European groups and who the opposers are, an additional complication to that picture comes from the role played by nationalists in Turkey. Nationalists in Turkey are firmly grounded in both of the camps, providing an axis that cross cuts the above-mentioned cleavage. This, in turn, forms the basis of the second dominant cleavage – the globalists vs. the nationalists. The interesting combination of the cleavage between the secularists and the Islamists and their relative positions on the EU has led to the deepening of a new fault line in Turkish politics which has become the dominant cleavage; the cleavage of the nationalists versus the globalists (Domanic, 2005). Ziya Öniş (2007) has labelled this cleavage as one between conservative globalists and defensive nationalists, and the critical variable that makes the cleavage visible in Turkish politics are their respective stances on EU membership and Turkey's adjustment to EU norms.

We have found out in our analysis that the nationalist-globalist cleavage has substantial impact in shaping the Turkish perceptions of the EU's foreign policy. The emergence of a nationalist movement at the end of World War I was critical in building a homogenous, national Turkish state. The Turkish experience at the end of World War I when it was occupied by the Allied powers and had to fight a War of Independence from 1919 to 1923 under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's leadership form the basis of the main ideological filter through which the nationalists perceive international politics and the European Union. One of the main sources of struggle in this cleavage is that the nationalists perceive the economic and political integration with the world and specifically the EU, detrimental to Turkish security interests. A good illustration of the nationalist view is provided by the MHP leader, Devlet Bahçeli's declaration: 'The EU process is harming the Turkish national interests in all realms' (Hürriyet, 2008: 10). The globalists, on the other hand, favour Turkey's integration into the global markets and the global system (Öniş, 2007). This cleavage has got stronger with respect to Turkey's accession prospects to the EU as the European political conditionality requires political reforms that would undermine the national character of the Turkish Republic such as the recognition of the Kurdish minority.

We propose that the critical variable that makes the cleavage visible in Turkish politics are these political groups' respective stances on EU membership and Turkey's adjustment to EU political criteria. Even though, the nationalists are politically organized under a political party, the Nationalist Action party (MHP), there are nationalists inside every political party. MHP, however, has a distinct position on Turkey and the EU. 'The MHP and its leaders indeed appear to be the only group that opposes the Turkish efforts to fulfil the legal criteria regarding full membership to the EU' (Canefe and Bora, 2003: 132). The nationalist discourse in Turkey as put forward by the leader of MHP, Devlet Bahçeli, is interestingly very anti-European. For example, Bahçeli declared in 2002 that 'We – MHP – will not tire from fighting against the EU and its hostile games on Turkish politics' (Radikal, 2002: 9). This view is also reflected in another MHP parliamentarian, Ahmet Deniz Bolukbaşı's speech, 'I, humbly, do not perceive the EU as a serious project; it is a virtual project with a tendency to become a Brazilian soap opera'.³ However, it is not only MHP that puts forward this position, but the Republican People's Party, CHP, has a similar line; this

³ Ahmet Deniz Bölükbaşı, MHP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, 14/11/2007.

is also surprising that the CHP was the founding party of the Turkish Republic and the main force behind the extensive reform process of the early Republican period. However, CHP acts as a fervent opposer to Turkish democratization as well as the EU objective. Deniz Baykal, the former leader of the CHP, declared: 'We approach the Turkish EU membership with scepticism and we have given direction to our economy for years in line with the EU, but the EU is looking for an alternative to membership for Turkey' (Yilmaz, 2007). The deliberations between these political groups in the Turkish Parliament are important for us to assess the Turkish perceptions of the EU's foreign policy. Based on the main dynamics of the nationalist and globalist cleavage, we expect to see the highest level of scepticism towards the EU and its foreign policy from the nationalist camp. In the next section, we provide an analysis of the deliberations of the Turkish parliamentarians on the EU and its foreign policy, these parliamentarians all come from different political groups and their political affiliation also influence their perceptions of the EU's CFSP.

Analysis of the parliamentary proceedings

The data on plenary assembly proceedings and the budgetary proceedings from the library of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) from 2000 to 2010 reveal the different positions of the political parties in Turkey towards the EU's CFSP. Since there is a 10 percent national threshold to get seats in the Parliament, not all political parties were represented in the Parliament. Nonetheless, most of the political groups were more-or-less represented in the Parliament. The composition of the Turkish Parliament until 2002 elections was an important factor shaping the Turkish views of the EU as a foreign policy actor. Turkey was ruled by a coalition government composed of left-wing and right-wing nationalists until November 2002. This composition, in turn, was important in the Parliamentary deliberations on the EU and their perceptions of the EU as a foreign policy actor. However, there was a radical change with the 2002 elections when the AKP - the Islamist party - won the elections by a landslide majority of 35 percent which gave them the majority of the seats in the Parliament and the nationalists from both the left- and right-wing parties found themselves in opposition. The loss of popular vote to these parties was to such an extent that none of the coalition partners of the 1999-2000 parliament - Motherland, DSP and MHP - could pass the national threshold and enter the new Turkish Parliament in 2002. The Parliament for the 2002-2007 period was dominated by the AKP, the Islamists, and the CHP, left-wing nationalists; in the post-2007 Parliament, the AKP was still in the majority with a national popular vote of 47 percent, but the nationalist parties, CHP as left-wing and MHP as right-wing, found themselves in opposition. The diverging perceptions of the EU by these political actors were reflected in the Parliamentary deliberations. It is also during the AKP rule that the accession negotiations with the EU were opened in 2005 bringing the EU accession closer to the Turkish political scene.

Our analysis on the parliamentarians' deliberations included the deliberations on the budgetary proceedings as well, since foreign policy issues were also widely discussed in the Parliament when the annual budgets for the foreign ministry and General Secretariat for EU Affairs were set. Accordingly, we have analyzed the budgetary proceedings from 2000 to 2010, this is because during the budgetary proceedings in the Parliament, where budget allocations were deliberated, and the deliberations on

these allocations also reveal the policy makers' perceptions of the EU's foreign policy. First, we put together a file on the proceedings with regard to foreign policy and conducted a comparison for the debates on 'EU-Turkey Relations' and 'US-Turkey Relations'. The aim of this comparison is to understand to the extent to which the EU is considered as an important actor in foreign policy issues, and also assess the relative importance of the EU and the USA in the Turkish parliamentarians' perceptions. Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of the debates on Turkey-EU relations and US-Turkey relations. We found out that there is a peak for the deliberations with regard to both of these relations in 2003. This peak is most probably related to the USA's invasion of Iraq but as it is shown in the figure the deliberations in the Turkish Parliament over USA increase over time whereas there is a sharp decline with respect to the role of the EU after 2003. Interestingly, the only time when deliberations on the EU bypass the USA is in 2000, which is most probably related to the establishment of the CESDP.

Figure 1 indicates that in the Turkish Parliament, there seems to be a higher level of deliberations and a greater visibility for the USA and its role in Turkish foreign policy. The deliberations on the EU, therefore, its visibility as a foreign policy actor is very low, in addition most of the deliberations on the EU in the Turkish Parliament revolve around the EU's impact on Turkish political reforms and political changes whereas the deliberations on the USA were mostly on foreign policy issues and security matters. This is a significant difference that we were able to capture with respect to the perceptions of the EU as a foreign policy actor.



Figure 1. Plenary Assembly Proceedings on Foreign Policy: The Turkish Parliamentary deliberations on the Turkish-USA relations and Turkish-EU relations.

Interestingly, the database on proceedings reveals that even in budgetary proceedings, the discussions on the USA were singled out as 'US-Turkey relations', while none of these discussions were labelled as 'EU-Turkey relations'. This finding also fits well with our analysis recorded above where the USA is a more visible actor in global affairs and for Turkey's foreign policy compared to the EU. In other words, there is a clear correlation between the debates on the USA in the Parliamentary deliberations and the budgetary proceedings, whereas no such clear correlation exists on the EU.

When we summarize our key findings in our analysis of the proceedings and deliberations, and their reflections on the Turkish perceptions of the EU's CFSP, four main points emerge. First, there seems to be a relative lack of deliberations in the Parliament with regards to the EU's foreign policy, especially compared with deliberations on the USA. Second, there are no wide differences between different political groups' perceptions of the EU's foreign policy and its possible impact on Turkish interests. Third, the deliberations on the EU centre mostly around the political impact of the EU membership and on foreign policy matters, its possible impact on NATO and Turkey's key interests over Cyprus and the Armenian issue. Fourth, the EU's foreign policy is debated mostly within the larger framework of the ESDP/RRF and the possible implications of the Turkish exclusion from the European security architecture. The deliberations in the Turkish Parliament with regards to the EU foreign policy centred mostly around the EU's security and defence policy, particularly as it related to the Turkish inclusion into the CESDP, albeit in a relatively weak manner. In our analysis of the database of debate proceedings from 2000 to 2009, we were able to find only two cases of deliberation directly on the EU where the ESDP was clearly the main subject of deliberation and parliamentary motion. This is a highly puzzling finding considering the fact that Turkey began accession negotiations with the EU in 2005 and it has been a NATO member since 1952. Is it because the Parliament is not the seat of decision making for Turkish foreign policy? Or is it because the EU is not perceived as a credible foreign policy actor? Our analysis tends to indicate that the second one seems more likely because if it were due to the Parliament's lack of involvement, we would not see deliberations on the USA or on other aspects of the EU either.

The first example of the deliberations on ESDP is from 2001 when Abdullah Gül, then in his capacity as a MP from the Virtue Party – an Islamist party – delivered a speech on the ESDP in the plenary session. Abdullah Gül declared 'the EU is establishing its own army by using NATO facilities and yet it does not allow non-EU members of NATO to participate in it. Hence, Turkey is also excluded in the decision-making mechanisms'. Gül's main point was that irrespective of political affiliation, all MPs should support 'the positions of the Chief of Staff and Foreign Ministry on the Turkish participation and voting rights in the Western European Union (WEU)'.⁴ The second example of a deliberation on the ESDP came in April 2007 when the Members of Parliament (MPs) discussed the government bill on the Turkish participation in EU-led operations.⁵ This is important because according to the Turkish constitution the government prepares bills for foreign policy issues which then need to be ratified by the Parliament. Thus, the Turkish Parliament had to vote on the government bills if Turkey was to participate in the ESDP. Turkish parliamentarians' positions on foreign policy were, therefore, important as they need to approve the governments' bill with an absolute majority.

⁴ Abdullah Gül's motion and off the agenda speech-Virtue Party (FP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Proceedings for Period 21, 3rd Executive Year, 42th Gathering in TGNA, 10/01/2001.

⁵ Draft Statute in General Assembly, General Assembly Proceedings, for Period 22, 5th Executive Year, 83rd and 93rd Gatherings in TGNA, 03/04/2007.

In 2002, several MPs attempted to give a number of motions to discuss EU-Turkey relations with foreign policy dimension but they were refused.⁶ This relative lack of deliberation on the EU as a foreign policy actor is a critically important finding. We were able to find out that the parliamentarians were discussing the EU's foreign policy role mostly in terms of its newly emerging security role and in terms of the possible consequences of Turkey's exclusion from the 'European force'. These two instances of deliberations of the ESDP were in the General Assembly proceedings where the ESDP is directly referred. Nonetheless, even though their correct names were not spelled out, we found significant references to the EU's security and foreign policy in the budgetary deliberations in the General Assembly and Planning and Budgetary Commission of the TGNA where the budget of each ministry is debated. These debates help us to assess the positions of different parties. Particularly important here is the fear about Turkey's exclusion from the new European security architecture.

For example, Ismail Cem, DSP parliamentarian and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2001, referred to the EU's attitude with regard to the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) as 'legally and ethically wrong'. He argued that 'Turkey is not seeking to fight, but it wants to be involved in the EU's new security organization. We consider our interests within this organization'.⁷ Similarly, during the 2001 budgetary negotiations on the Foreign Ministry budget, Kürşat Eser, an MP from the right-wing nationalist MHP, declared in December 2000: 'the EU is an important ally like the USA and it is a cause of concern for Turkey to be excluded from the European security architecture, specifically with the dismantling of the Western European Union, Turkey is not included in the European security and defence structures'.⁸ Tayyibe Gülek, an MP from the secularist and left-wing nationalist DSP, confirmed this stance and argued that 'the ESDP is unacceptable for Turkey unless the non-EU members of NATO are also included in the decision-making process as the crises zones that the ESDP wants to involve are largely located in Turkey's neighbourhood'.⁹ In 2000-2002 period, we were able to see some discussion on the new modalities of cooperation between NATO and the EU, especially with respect to the newly emerging Rapid Reaction Force and Turkey's possible exclusion from the new security architecture. Both views - one coming from a right-wing nationalist party and the other from a left-wing nationalist party - converged around the same perception that the emergence of an EU army is seen as a detrimental for Turkey's security interests.

Directly related to this perception, Turkish parliamentarians seem to fear that the newly emerging RRF would impact key Turkish national interests on the Aegean Sea issues and the Cyprus question. The Turkish parliamentarians' views on the EU's role in Cyprus converge and there are practically no visible differences between political actors on this issue. More specifically, the Turkish parliamentarians from all political

⁶ See motion's proposed, General Assembly Proceedings for Period 21, 4th Executive Year, 114th Gathering on 18/06/2002 and General Assembly Proceedings for Period 21, 4th Executive year, 115th Gathering in TGNA, 19/06/2002.

⁷ Ismail Cem, Foreign Affairs Minister, Planning and Budgetary Proceedings, TGNA, 02/11/2001.

⁸ Kürşat Eser, Nationalist Action Party (MHP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for 21st Period, 3rd Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 18/12/2000.

⁹ Tayyipe Gülek, Democratic Left Party (DSP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings, Period 21, 3rd Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 18/12/2000.

parties were concerned that the EU's ESDP would be used against Turkey in the Aegean Sea and Cyprus. Not surprisingly, various parliamentarians perceived the accession of Cyprus to the EU as a threat to Turkey's key national interests. This point was underlined by Yaşar Yakış, MP from the AKP and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2003, who declared that 'Turkey has to find a working settlement to the Cyprus question before Cyprus becomes a member of the EU and start using its veto against Turkey in the European Council'.¹⁰

Despite these concerns, some left-wing nationalists supported Turkey's inclusion into the EU and perceived this as a possible increase in Turkey's power. This is reflected in Gülek's declaration 'the EU is a prestigious organization and Turkey's accession would increase its power'.¹¹ However, both the liberals and the left-wing nationalists shared the right-wing nationalists' fear that the EU might have a hidden agenda over Turkey. This was also echoed in a speech by Oya Akgönenc, a parliamentarian from the Islamist camp who argued:

the EU member states would have the right in the decision-making and also veto rights but they do not make it clear what kind of decisions they would take in the future. It remains vague and uncertain what they will consider as a security threat. Turkey is asked to join this establishment with blind eyes with no rights to participate in the decision-making mechanisms.¹²

Similarly, Bülent Akarcalı, MP from the liberal Motherland Party, repeated the same sentiment when he declared 'A European army is being created that would have access to Turkey's assets without giving Turkey the rights it enjoys under NATO'.¹³ A similar concern was also raised by Saffet Arıkan Beduk, a parliamentarian from the centre right True Path Party, during the budgetary proceedings in 2002. Arıkan Beduk questioned the creation of 'a European army' and 'the Foreign Ministry's position towards the ESDP'.¹⁴

In these deliberations in the 2000-2002 period, the most pro-European position came from İsmail Cem, then Minister of Foreign Affairs and a parliamentarian from the left-wing nationalist DSP party. Cem stated:

We need to believe in the EU and have confidence in their ability to build a foreign policy similar to the EU's social policy which emerged only at the end of the 1990s [...] Turkey is important for the EU and both parties would benefit from their partnership.¹⁵

¹⁰ Yaşar Yakış, AKP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings, Period 22, 2nd Executive Year, 34th Gathering, in TGNA, 22/12/2003.

¹¹ Gülek, 2000

¹² Oya Akgönenc Mugisuddin, Virtue Party (FP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 21, 3rd Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 18/12/2000.

¹³ Bülent Akarcalı, Motherland Party (ANAP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for the Period 21, 3rd Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 18/12/2000.

¹⁴ Saffet Arıkan Beduk, True Path Party (DYP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for 21, 4th Executive Year, 34th Gathering in TGNA, 08/12/2001.

¹⁵ İsmail Cem, Foreign Affairs Minister and DSP parliamentarian, left-wing nationalists, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 21, 3rd Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 18/12/2000.

Despite this positive speech, it was, nonetheless, evident that the Turkish parliamentarians perceived the EU largely as an economic unit with limited political and/or foreign role or if indeed, it acquires foreign and security policy tools, they might be used against Turkey's interests. This view ties into our second main finding which is related to the perceptions of the EU as an economic actor rather than a political/security actor. Most of the parliamentary deliberations on the EU were centred on the EU's economic impact, its single market and the globalization issues. There were also debates centring on the common market and meeting the needs of global economy. The emphasis was on the European commercial norms and how Turkish business people would internalise these norms to improve their global competitiveness.

In contrast, the parliamentary deliberations under the AKP rule reflect a number of different conceptualizations of the EU and enable us to assess the views of Turkey's policy makers towards the EU. For example, in 2003, Mehmet Dülger, MP from the Islamist AKP, stated that:

Even though the EU is undergoing a deeper process of integration, it is not in a position to balance the USA which seems to be the hegemonic leader in the global order [...] However, we still aim at our main foreign policy objective of full membership in the EU.¹⁶

This is an important declaration as it demonstrates the dominant view in the Turkish Parliament at the time among the AKP parliamentarians, that the USA is most important security actor shaping global politics, whereas the EU is not an important actor in global politics, especially in terms of military power but it is important for Turkish economic interests. The same logic is reflected in Abdullah Gül's speech in 2003 then in his capacity as Turkey's Foreign Minister in the AKP government. Gül declared that: '[i]t is imperative that we join the EU and participate in its economic integration as well as its Common Foreign and Security policy'.¹⁷ Interestingly, Gül seems to be the only person in the post-2002 Parliament to refer to the CFSP and CESDP in terms of their correct names. Aydın Dumanlıoğlu, MP from the Islamist AKP, in 2004 argued:

the EU has intensified its efforts to set up a common security policy in the emerging multipolar world and Turkey is part of these policies historically, strategically and culturally. Similarly, Turkey's EU accession would enable the Union to be more effective in global scene, help the EU to diffuse its political norms and values and protect peace and stability.¹⁸

The common perception towards the EU among the AKP parliamentarians in the early years of the AKP rule seems to be a commitment to the goal of Turkish accession as a foreign policy objective despite the perceived lack of the EU's global power. However, the motivating factor here is the emphasis on instrumentality. The

¹⁶ Mehmet Dülger, Justice and Development Party (AKP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 10th Executive Year, 56th Gathering in TGNA, 26/03/2003.

¹⁷ Abdullah Gül, Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 1st Executive Year, 56th Gathering in TGNA, 26/03/2003.

¹⁸ Aydın Dumanlıoğlu, AKP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 3rd Executive Year, 29th Gathering in TGNA, 24/12/2003.

perceptions of the AKP party revolve around the utility dimension of the EU's foreign policy, providing empirical support to RECON Model 1.

A very interesting finding for us was the marked difference between the left-wing nationalists, and the Islamists/globalists and right-wing nationalists about the EU's foreign policy. The left-wing nationalists had a different perception of the EU, with their emphasis on the value-driven foreign policy of the EU, compared with the Islamists who tended to stress the instrumental aspects of the EU more. This is reflected in the following declarations: Halil Akyüz, MP from the left-wing nationalist CHP, argued in 2003: 'Turkey should support the EU's stance towards peaceful settlement of disputes rather than side with the USA. The EU with its emphasis on the peaceful resolution of conflicts and democratic values is a more exemplary international organization'.¹⁹ Akyüz also praised the EU as a normative power which values human dignity, universal ties of humanity and justice for all; accordingly he argued that the EU presents a role model for countries such as Turkey which could use the EU's principles and values to resolve its own problems in the Aegean Sea. This view of the EU as a normative power which formulates its foreign policy on soft power tools such as improving the living conditions in neighbouring countries in order to decrease immigration, or diffusing its own democratic principles to its periphery is firmly grounded in the CHP parliamentarians' perceptions.

Another CHP parliamentarian, Onur Öymen, who is a former diplomat, echoed similar arguments to Akyüz, and stressed in 2003 the need for Turkey to adopt the EU's modern, civilized and secular values not only in rhetoric but also in action.²⁰ The views of the CHP parliamentarians towards the EU's foreign policy, therefore, tend to revolve around the EU's soft power and acknowledge the EU as a democratic polity that stresses rule of law and justice for all. This is reminiscent of the EU's cosmopolitan values. When, for example, the CHP parliamentarians stress that the EU is a successful example of resolving such conflicts as German-French conflict through the trade, economic and political ties and the EU model could be used to resolve Turkey's conflicts in the Aegean Sea, they reflect their perceptions of the EU as a cosmopolitan, post-national order. This view is stressed by CHP parliamentarians, such as Onur Öymen who argued: 'The EU represents a collection of democratic, secular and civilized values and our membership would be possible only when we internalize these values'.²¹ The emphasis on the EU by the left-wing parliamentarians seems to be on the values and norms that EU symbolizes and there is a tendency among this group to view the European foreign policy as a tool to diffuse these values to its periphery. This perception of the EU and its foreign policy as a tool for diffusing cosmopolitan values provides us with empirical evidence for RECON Model 3. The view among the secular, nationalists in Turkey seems to revolve around the perception of the EU and its foreign policy as a value driven instrument and the emphasis seems to be on soft power tools rather than military action. At the same time, we could also capture a difference between the secularist, nationalists and Islamist, globalists in terms of their perceptions of the EU, the former stresses the

¹⁹ Halil Akyuz, Republican Peoples' Party (CHP) parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 1st Executive Year, 56th Gathering in TGNA, 26/03/2003.

²⁰ Onur Öymen, CHP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 1st Executive Year, 56th Gathering in TGNA, 26/03/2003.

²¹ Onur Öymen, CHP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 2nd Executive Year, 34th Gathering in TGNA, 22/12/2003.

values and norms driven aspect of the EU's foreign policy and the latter stresses the material capabilities and security implications of the EU's foreign policy.

Increasingly after 2002, the Turkish parliamentarians began to stress the importance of the EU's security policy as a newly emerging aspect of integration. This view is particularly strong among the ruling AKP, with the perception of the EU largely shaped by security concerns. Vahit Erdem, MP from AKP and a former diplomat, pointed out to the new complexities in European security with the emergence of the CESDP:

Both sides of the Atlantic are undergoing rapid transformation. Europe was largely incompetent on the massacre in Bosnia-Herzegovina and shown itself completely dependent on the USA and NATO for its security. This is why, there is an attempt to improve a European security and defence policy but this attempt is leading to differences of opinion within NATO. These developments are critical and deeply affect Turkey.²²

The emphasis here is on the relative lack of power of the EU's foreign and security policy. Ömer Abuşoğlu, ANAP parliamentarian, summarizes this view as: 'The European Union is very weak and its member states are tied to one another with very weak threads, there is as yet no European axis and the EU is not visible in the global stage'.²³ Yaşar Yakış, the foreign minister in 2002 and AKP parliamentarian, argues that: 'The European Union is enlarging and boosting its strength; but it is facing difficulties in building a coherent foreign policy and a political union, despite its relative success in trade and economics'.²⁴ These declarations reflect the ongoing contestation over the EU's foreign policy role in the scholarly circles as well. They also demonstrate that from an outside perspective, the EU does not look like a coherent foreign policy actor.

The changes in the Turkish EU relations in 2004 also led to certain refinements in the Turkish parliamentarians' perceptions of the EU and its foreign policy. First, the EU completed its most important enlargement, when 10 new members, from Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta joined the EU on 1 May 2004. This was the largest EU enlargement to date. The second important development was the signing of the Constitutional Treaty in October 2004. The Constitutional Treaty brought about significant developments with respect to deepening European Union's second pillar, specifically its design of a European Foreign Minister and a European Action Service. Both of these developments were critical in shaping the European foreign policy and Turkey's relations with the EU. We were able to observe a change in the tone of the deliberations among the parliamentarians in the post 2004 period. Directly related to that, then Foreign Minister, Abdullah Gül, argued that: 'The European Union is facing the difficulties of the structural changes on the one hand and the continuing

²² Vahit Erdem, AKP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 2nd Executive Year, 34th Gathering in TGNA, 22/12/2003.

²³ Ömer Abuşoğlu, ANAP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 09/03/2003.

²⁴ Yaşar Yakış, Foreign Affairs Minister in 2002 and AKP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 09/03/2003.

enlargement process on the other hand, and is having difficulties in its portrayal of regional actorness'.²⁵

Most importantly, Cyprus' accession to the EU on 1 May 2004 was an important development reinforcing the already deep suspicions among the parliamentarians' towards the EU's intentions. In fact, MHP parliamentarian, Harun Öztürk and DYP parliamentarian Oğuz Tezmen referred to the EU's position on Cyprus issues as a total contradiction. 'While Europeans fuel and encourage the creation and separation of nation-states into smaller states, for thirty four years, they tried to create a peaceful unitary state in Cyprus which actually consists of two distinct nations'.²⁶ Abdullah Gül, Minister of Foreign Affairs from AKP in 2006 reinforced this view and argued: 'If you look at the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the Greek Cypriot administration, there are two different democracies, ethnic groups and two separate economies. The EU is harming its own credibility by ignoring this reality.'²⁷ A harsher view was provided by the CHP parliamentarian Enis Tütüncü as: 'The European Union has been cheating on Turkish Cypriots and Turkey with its policies before and after the Annan Plan'.²⁸ Similarly, Oğuz Tezmen, a DYP parliamentarian in 2001 declared:

While the EU is taking an initiative for the creation of independent states in the Balkans based on ethnic difference, it asks the Cypriots to live together. However, there are differences among Turkish and Greek Cypriots on language, religion and ethnicity, and this is an inconsistency on the EU's part.²⁹

This was reinforced in the declaration by Hakkı Akalın, a CHP parliamentarian, as: 'The EU is recognizing Greek Cypriots as the only Republic on the island. It does not recognize the 1960 London and Zurich Agreements. This attitude is unlawful and despotic.'³⁰

The Cyprus issue further complicated the Turkish parliamentarians' views towards the EU after 2006. As a result, we observe a sharp decline in the deliberations in the Parliament on the EU on the one hand, and a change of rhetoric on the other hand after 2006. Specifically, the Turkish parliamentarians began to stress the Turkish power more and emphasize the need of EU accession less. A major turning point came with respect to Turkey's accession negotiations when the European Commission recommended the suspension of eight chapters in the negotiations process in response to Turkey's decision not to extend and implement the 1995 Customs Union agreement to Cyprus, despite the fact that Cyprus was one of the new accession countries to the EU (Müftüler-Baç, 2008). When the European Council adopted the recommendation in its December 2006 summit, there was an intense debate in the Turkish Parliament over this; partly because the fears that rose in 2004 with regard to

²⁵ Abdullah Gül, Foreign Affairs Minister and Vice Prime Minister, AKP, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 09/11/2004.

²⁶ Harun Öztürk, MHP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 21/11/2008.

²⁷ Abdullah Gül, Foreign Affairs Minister and Vice Prime Minister, AKP, Planning and Budgetary Commission, 14/11/2006.

²⁸ Enis Tütüncü, CHP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 09/11/2004.

²⁹ Oğuz Tezmen, DYP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Proceedings, TGNA, 02/11/2001.

³⁰ Hakkı Akalın, CHP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 9/03/2003.

Cyprus's accession to the EU seems to be fulfilled. Specifically, Gül, the Foreign Minister at the time from the AKP, claimed:

The Turkish Cypriots who voted for 'yes' in the referendum have expectations now, as the EU made certain promises to them and to the whole world. However, both Turkey and Turkish Republic of Cyprus are now waiting for the EU to keep its promises. There are regulations that need to be adopted by the EU, but this did not yet happen and neither the isolations were removed.³¹

For example, in his evaluation of the suspension of negotiations in eight chapters, Hüseyin Kansu, Parliamentarian from the AKP, argued:

Although Turkey has been participating in good faith, suspension of negotiations in 8 chapters is incompatible with the principle of equity and justice. The EU seriously lacks vision and faces a dilemma for being up-front global power or a closed, inward-looking regional cooperation organization. The EU's decisions to suspend negotiations are an indication of a passive actor who does not like to take risks, but despite this decision, in principle Turkey and EU needs each other.³²

It is also important to note here that Kansu was reflecting a perception of the EU along the logic of justification, i.e. a view of the EU as a cosmopolitan union. If the Cyprus question constituted an important factor shaping the Turkish parliamentarians' views on the EU and its foreign policy, the Kurdish problem was the other similar issue.

An additional complication to the parliamentarians' deliberations on the EU was introduced through the perceptions that the EU accession process is impacting Turkey's Kurdish problem. The Kurdish issue acts as a major source of debate on the impact of the EU on Turkish politics and brings the proponents of democratization in Turkey face to face with the nationalists. For example, the nationalists organized under the MHP opposes the adoption of the EU criteria on minorities, Kurdish cultural and political rights based on the notion that any rights that the Kurdish people acquire in Turkey, is a loss of Turkish rights and constitute a danger to Turkey's territorial integrity. This is summarized by the MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli's position: 'Turkey's national unity, national security and national interests come before everything else' (Milliyet, 2007: 12). This declaration demonstrates how the nationalists groups in Turkey perceive the EU as weakening the Turkish integrity and damaging Turkish national interests, especially with regards to the Kurdish problem. This view is furthered by Mehmet Gunal's speech, MHP parliamentarian, as: 'We need to make sure that the EU is aware of our sensitivities on the Kurdish issue, but while the EU seems to condemn separatist moves, they support the separatist activities of the Kurds'. The CHP also seemed to share this view as voiced by Onur Oymen, CHP parliamentarian, who claimed that: 'The EU's conditionality on minorities clearly resembles the Article 151 of the Sevres Treaty and the foreign

³¹ Abdullah Gül, Foreign Affairs Minister and Vice Prime Minister, AKP, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 14/11/2006. .

³² Hüseyin Kansu, AKP Parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings, Period 22, 2nd Executive Year, 39th Gathering, TGNA, 21/12/2006.

powers are dictating to Turkey how we should behave towards our minorities'.³³ This is, of course, a very strong nationalist impulse that both the MHP and the CHP strongly share which, in turn, shapes their views about the EU's foreign policy role.

On the other side of the coin, the Kurdish groups in Turkey are, not surprisingly, increasingly pro-EU and pro-European since 2002. In a survey conducted by the Economics and Foreign Policy Institute based in Istanbul in 2005, of those interviewees who voted for the now closed HADEP – the Kurdish party – in the 2002 elections 82 percent supported Turkey's EU accession; similarly of those interviewees who spoke Kurdish, 72 percent supported Turkey's EU accession (Domanic, 2005: 10-20). Thus, there is an interesting dynamic between the Turkish nationalists and Kurdish nationalists, with the EU's official position on the Kurdish problem acting as a major factor in rising Euroscepticism among the nationalists and increasing support among the Kurds. The same survey also found out that 'the common characteristics of low EU support are right ideology, high religious inclination, lower income and little formal education' (Domanic, 2005: 12). In another survey, Ali Çarkoğlu (2003) found similar results and an inverse relationship between nationalism and support to EU membership, with increased identification of oneself as nationalist leading to lower support to EU membership. Thus, one of the findings of our analysis on the deliberations by the parliamentarians, that the Turkish nationalists oppose the EU accession goal, is also verified by the nationalist leaders' declarations and these survey results.

This is because the political and cultural rights to be accorded to the Kurds are at the center of the nationalist debate. The EU pressure on broadcasting in languages other than Turkish has led to some legal changes in Turkey and since 2008; there are local radio, TV stations as well as state TV broadcasting in Kurdish. The nationalist position is complicated with the problem of Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorism. Since 1984, the Kurdish separatists organized under the umbrella of PKK, began to stage operations against the Turkish military and civilian targets. The PKK movement received a blow in 1999 when its leader Abdullah Öcalan was imprisoned for terrorism (Öniş, 2007). It is for this reason that before the 2007 elections, Bahçeli has campaigned with a demonstration of a 'rope' in his hands, symbolizing capital punishment, with the implication that once MHP comes to power, they will hang Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK, currently in prison in Turkey for his terrorist activities.

The Kurdish issue illuminates the extent to which the two cleavages in Turkish politics overlap increasingly as a result of the EU accession process. The AKP, representing Islamist and globalist tendencies, is in favor of advancing cultural and political rights for the Kurds. In the post 2002 period, the AKP government passed a number of political reform packages that would allow freedom of speech, freedom in broadcasting in one's own language and recognition of cultural rights (European Commission, 2008). It seems likely that the AKP is using these reforms to fulfill the EU's Copenhagen criteria as illustrated by the AKP leader Erdoğan's declaration: 'Kurds have the same political and social rights in Turkey as all other ethnic groups and we try to eliminate all forms of discrimination' (Milliyet, 2006). This, in turn, demonstrates that the AKP has been supportive of granting Kurds increased rights whereas the main opposition to that comes from the MHP. As such, this illustrates

³³ Mehmet Günal, MHP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA, 21/11/2008.

how the AKP, the Islamists/globalists and the MHP, the nationalists, are located on the opposite ends with respect to the Kurdish issue in line with the EU accession process. This dynamic is reflected with Bahçeli's declaration that 'The strongest defense against globalism is nationalism and the AKP has surrendered to EU demands in Kurdish separatism' (Tüm gazeteler, 2006). It would, therefore, be not far fetched to argue that the Kurdish issue is also one of the factors that led to a difference among the parliamentarians and their perceptions of the EU and its foreign policy. Thus, the nationalist opposition to the EU seems to revolve around the Kurdish issue and the Cyprus problem and possible impact of the EU's on deepening the Turkish problems and harming the nationalist interests. The AKP, on the other hand, seems to focus on the instrumental values of Turkey's EU accession, and as a result, aims to adopt the necessary changes in order to attain the goal of membership.

The mixed signals coming from the EU, the slowness in the negotiations all added up to a level of exasperation among the parliamentarians, especially after 2007. This is also when parliamentarians began to stress alternative areas for integration if the EU membership talks continue at the pace they are going. For example, Yaşar Yakış contended that: 'as a group in the Turkish Parliament, the AKP parliamentarians want to maintain stable relations with the countries in the region, but do not consider other ties as alternatives to Turkey's relations with the EU'.³⁴ Similarly, Egemen Bağış, MP from the AKP and the Chief negotiator since 2008, argued: 'Turkey is going through a transformation by maintaining good neighbourly relations and trying to mediate between the conflicting parties such as Israel and Syria, India and Pakistan, Lebanon [...] but these are complementary to the EU's efforts for maintaining regional stability'.³⁵ In a similar context, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, Abdullah Gül argued that: 'if the EU wants to be a global actor, it has to realize Turkey's power and its possible role in enhancing the EU's stance in global affairs'.³⁶ This is also repeated in a very similar fashion by Ahmet Davutoğlu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2008 as 'The EU needs to recognize Turkey's power and its role to enhance the EU's global power'.³⁷ This change in rhetoric is important because increasingly after 2006, mostly after 2007, we see an emphasis on the Turkish importance for the EU by the parliamentarians and that the EU is not treating Turkey in a credible fashion. This perception also correlates with the parliamentarians' views on the transatlantic relations. As transatlantic relations and the relative importance of the USA or the EU for Turkish foreign policy emerge as important factors shaping the parliamentarians' perceptions. Despite the acknowledgements about the changes in global power configurations and the EU's visibility as a foreign policy actor, Turkish policy-makers were careful in their speeches and refrain from contradicting the US while at the same time attempt to balance their policies with the EU's and their regional interests. We also need to keep in mind the external environment, especially the fact that Turkey's relations with the USA deteriorated following the American

³⁴ Yaşar Yakış, AKP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings, Period 22, 5th Executive Year, 39th Gathering in TGNA, 21/12/2006.

³⁵ Egemen Bağış, AKP parliamentarian, Period 23, 3rd Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 23/12/2008.

³⁶ Abdullah Gül, Foreign Affairs Minister, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 5th Executive Year, 39th Gathering in TGNA, 21/12/2006.

³⁷ Ahmet Davutoğlu, Foreign Affairs Minister, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings, Period 23, 4th Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 18/12/2009.

invasion of Iraq in 2003. Talking in the budgetary proceedings, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül stated that:

we managed to achieve our optimum foreign policy priorities and our diplomacy managed to achieve a consensus with the U.S., EU, Islamic world, and Middle East. Today, we follow a foreign policy towards Iraq that is based on deliberative diplomacy with the U.S., which does not contradict with the EU's interests either. This diplomacy was also welcomed by the Islamic world and Middle East with sympathy. In this way, we managed to maintain our friendly relationship with all the actors in the international arena who are seriously divided on Iraqi war.³⁸

Consequently, the Turkish parliamentarians began to stress that Turkey's friendly relations with its neighbours and its positive involvement in international organizations were strengthening its negotiating position towards the EU. According to Edip Safder Gaydali, MP from the liberal Motherland Party: 'Turkey has to set a foreign and security strategy parallel to its own strategic weight which will then determine the Turkish power on the negotiating table with the EU'.³⁹ The perception of the EU from this point of view was: 'The European Union is an economic giant, but it does not possess a political role or effectiveness in global affairs and the USA is preponderant power setting the main rules of global affairs'.⁴⁰ However, the AKP position was that Turkey does not need to choose between the USA and the EU as its main security partner but that these are complementary. On the other hand, Şükrü Mustafa Elekdağ, CHP parliamentarian, claimed: 'When there are difficulties in transatlantic relations, Turkey will be forced to make a strategic decision between the EU and the USA'.⁴¹ This is partly related to the fact that cooperation with the USA is important for Turkey's position in regional and global politics and the EU is important for Turkey's place in Europe. This is also why, Turkish parliamentarians' perceptions revolve around the notion that Turkey's accession to the EU carries significant impact in transforming the EU into a global power. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2008, summarizes this view succinctly as:

A European Union without Turkey is internal looking, economically stagnant and continental based power, with no future. A European Union with Turkey is economically dynamic, culturally heterogenous, global power with a future [...]. If the EU is not to remain a closed, continental power but become a global player, it needs Turkey's strength and power.⁴²

According to Gül: 'for the EU to increase its visibility in global affairs and act as a power, it needs to become aware of the contributions that Turkey's accession would

³⁸ Abdullah Gul, Foreign Affairs Minister, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 2nd Executive Year, 34th Gathering in TGNA, 22/12/2003.

³⁹ Edip Safder Gaydali, ANAP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 4th Executive Year, 38th Gathering in TGNA, 21/12/2005.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Şükrü Mustafa Elekdağ, CHP parliamentarian, Planning and Budgetary Commission, TGNA 09/11/2004.

⁴² Ahmet Davutoglu, AKP parliamentarian and Minister for Foreign Affairs, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings, Period 23, 4th Executive Year, 35th Gathering in TGNA, 18/12/2009.

make to its global power'.⁴³ This also fits well with the view that the EU is on the road to become a global player and a foreign policy actor, i.e. confirming the cosmopolitan view of the EU.

Conclusion

This paper presented an analysis of the different perceptions among the Turkish parliamentarians with regards to the EU's foreign policy making. This analysis of the parliamentarians shed light onto the Turkish elite's attitudes towards the European Union's foreign policy. By doing so, the paper attempted to assess the empirical validity of the RECON Models, audit democracy, federal democracy and the EU as a regional, cosmopolitan order. An interesting finding is that there seems to be a significant correlation between the EU's common foreign and security policy and the Turkish perceptions around the interest-based calculations. The Turkish parliamentarians, mainly from the center-right and nationalist parties, tended to perceive the EU's foreign policy from a utilitarian lenses. On the other hand, we found out that the left-wing parties tend to view the EU and its foreign policy from a normative perspective. Specifically, the CHP parliamentarians signal their perceptions of the European Union from a value and norm driven perspective. The EU's capacity to act as a global power is seen to be directly related to its civilizing norms. This perception, in turn, seems to support both the RECON Models 2 and 3. It is clear from the CHP parliamentarians' positions that they tend to view the EU as a cosmopolitan union and assess the EU foreign policy as fostering and promoting cosmopolitan values. Nonetheless, almost all the parliamentarians from all different political camps perceive the EU as not fulfilling its own obligations towards Turkey and excluding Turkey from the newly emerging European polity. Thus, the parliamentarians tend to stress that from the logic of justification point of view, Turkey's exclusion is problematic. This outside perception of the EU's inability of fulfilling its commitments is then projected into a loss of credibility for the EU and lessens its capacity to act as a normative player in international politics.

In short, our analysis of the Turkish Parliamentarians' deliberations on the EU's foreign policy revealed a number of patterns. The Islamists who are organized under the AKP are mostly globalists and approach the EU and its foreign policy from a utilitarian angle. Their deliberations reflect a perception of the EU not yet acquiring a significant role in global politics because of its relative lack of power. Nonetheless, the goal of accession is there but the emphasis after 2007 is increasingly on the Turkish contribution to the EU as a global power. The left-wing nationalists organized under DSP and CHP reflect a different view of the EU with the EU seen as a normative power which diffuses norms and values to its periphery and this is seen as its greatest strength in global politics. The right-wing nationalists see the EU and its foreign policy as a threat to Turkish interests and approach the EU with great scepticism. However, it is possible to perceive in all the political camps a greater degree of alienation from the European Union after 2007. This is partly due to the accession negotiations losing its momentum but also related to the ongoing crisis in the EU which decreased the attractiveness of the EU membership for the Turkish political elite and the Turkish public. These diverging perceptions of the Turkish

⁴³ Abdullah Gul, Foreign Affairs Minister and AKP parliamentarian, General Assembly Budgetary Proceedings for Period 22, 5th Executive Year, 39th Gathering, TGNA, 21/12/2006.

parliamentarians are important in assessing the EU's CFSP from an external point of view. The mixed and diverging views of the EU's foreign policy role as reflected in the Turkish parliamentarians' deliberations demonstrate that from an outsider point of view, the EU is not yet a foreign policy actor. This fits ongoing contestation over the EU's foreign and security role. Is the EU a 'federal' state or a 'cosmopolitan union'?

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