UNDERSTANDING THE DIPLOMATIC ABILITY AND INFLUENCE OF A REGIONAL POWER IN A TIME OF CONFLICT: TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY DURING THE YUGOSLAV WARS

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"Understanding the Diplomatic Ability and Influence of a Regional Power in a Time of Conflict: Turkish Foreign Policy during the Yugoslav Wars," a thesis prepared by Sarp Kurgan in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in History degree from the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University.

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Title: Understanding the Diplomatic Ability and Influence of a Regional Power in a Time of Conflict: Turkish Foreign Policy during the Yugoslav Wars

This thesis examines the diplomatic capacities of regional powers in their respective regions during the times of conflict and crisis. It has been widely argued within the International Relations scholarship that the influence of regional powers has been increasing both at the global and regional levels since the end of the Cold War. Considering the increasing diplomatic attention brought to a particular region by the international community, times of conflicts and crises serve us better to capture the true nature of diplomatic influence of a regional power. In order to analyze this issue, the thesis concentrates on the Turkish foreign policy towards the Yugoslav wars, analyzing in depth the diplomatic initiatives taken by Turkey during the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Through this analysis, this thesis aims at developing an understanding on the role of regional powers during the conflicts in their respective regions.

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Başlık: Bir Bölgesel Gücün Çatışma Zamanında Diplomatik Yeterliliğini ve Etkisini Anlamak: Yugoslavya Savaşları Sırasında Türk Dış Politikası

Bu tez, bölgesel güçlerin kendi bölgelerindeki diplomatik kapasitelerini, onların bölgelerindeki kriz ve çatışma zamanlarındaki diplomatik etkilerine bakarak incelemektedir. Uluslararası İlişkiler bilimi içerisinde, Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde bölgesel güçlerin etkilerinin hem bölgesel hem de küresel seviyede arttığı sıkça savunulmuştur. Uluslararası toplumun belirli bir bölgeye artan diplomatik ilgisi düşünüldüğünde, çatışma ve kriz dönemleri bize bölgesel güçlerin diplomatik etkilerinin gerçek doğasını anlamak için daha uygun fırsatlar sağlamaktadır. Söz konusu durumu analiz etmek için, bu tez Türkiye'nin Bosna-Hersek ve Kosova savaşları sırasındaki diplomatik girişimlerini derinlemesine ele alarak, Türkiye'nin Yugoslavya savaşları sırasındaki dış politikasına yoğunlaşmaktadır. Tezin amacı, bu analiz üzerinden, bölgesel güçlerin kendi bölgelerinde çıkan çatışmalar sırasındaki rollerine dair araştırmalara bir katkıda bulunabilmektir.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANAP: Motherland Party, *Anavatan Partisi*
BSEC: Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CHP: Republican People's Party, *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*
CoE: Council of Europe
COMECON: The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
DM: *Deutsche Mark*
DSP: Democratic Left Party, *Demokratik Sol Parti*
DYP: True Path Party, *Doğru Yol Partisi*
EC: European Community
EU: European Union
FYROM: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GDP: Gross Domestic Production
ICTY: International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IFOR: Implementation Force
IMF: International Monetary Fund
JNA: Yugoslav People's Army, *Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija*
KFOR: Kosovo Force
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
OIC: Organization of Islamic Cooperation
OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PKK: Kurdistan Worker's Party, *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê*
RP: Welfare Party, *Refah Partisi*
SFOR: Stabilisation Force
SHP: Social Democratic People's Party, *Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti*
TBMM: Grand National Assembly of Turkey, *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*
UÇK: Kosovo Liberation Army, *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës*
UN: United Nations
UNPROFOR: United Nations Protection Force
USA: United States of America
USD: United States Dollar
UK: United Kingdom
USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

World politics in the 1990s went through important changes, as the end of the Cold War resulted in a transformation in the international system in which the USA emerged as the only superpower of world politics. The transition period following the collapse of the communist regimes, however, was not smooth in several regions, as rising ethnic tensions and nationalist ideologies following the collapse of socialist ideologies resulted in intense conflicts in different regions. The most painful conflict in this period was the dissolution of Yugoslavia, resulting in 140,000 dead and almost four million displaced people.[1]

Another important change in the international structure was the increasing importance of regional politics. With the end of the Cold War and bipolar world structure, international politics have become progressively regionalized, mainly due to the end of superpower rivalry and ideological competition among superpowers. During the Cold War period, the ideological rivalry between two superpowers mainly had dominated the regional settings. In the post-Cold War world order, on the other hand, the regions were mostly set free, and thus became more influential in world politics. As a direct consequence, the importance of regional powers increased both at the regional and global levels.

[1] *Transitional Justice in the Former Yugoslavia,* International Center for Transitional Justice, Focus: The Former Yugoslavia, (2009).; Although there is no concrete evidence to show total number of dead and displaced people during the Yugoslav Wars, the latest estimations conclude these numbers as given in the text.

Although the regions with their own dynamics started to become freer from great power involvement or competition, however, it is still to be noted that at certain times, the attention of the great powers is still directed at particular regions. Times of conflict and crisis often constitute periods in which the involvement of the great powers increases in regional affairs. In such periods, the logical expectation would be a decrease in the influence and diplomatic capacity of a regional power. This led me to the main question asked in this thesis: How can we claim then that there has been an increased influence of the regional powers if they cannot be influential in the most problematic periods in their own regions?

In order to answer this question, the diplomatic influence and capacity of a regional power in times of conflict and crisis in its own region were examined, arguing that capturing the influence of a regional power in such scenario would lead to a profound understanding of the true nature of its diplomatic capacities. I carried out my research by means of a case study, in which Turkish foreign policy during the Yugoslav dissolution wars, primarily concentrating on Turkish diplomatic initiatives in the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, were analyzed in depth. As the Balkan region has always been an important part of Turkish foreign policy due to both strategic and identity based concerns, during the Yugoslav conflicts Turkey pursued an active diplomacy in the region.

The case of Turkey to analyze this issue was chosen for various reasons. First, the Balkans during the 1990s became the top item in international politics, thus the region attracted the attention of almost every great power. Second, the active foreign policy of Turkey during that period in addition to emergence of Turkey as a regional power in the 1990s was intensely debated during that period, both within the international community and International Relations scholarship. Third, Turkey is

geographically located in a place where many regions intersect, such as the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East. Moreover, all of these regions were conflict prone in the 1990s. As a result, Turkey had to take on a role of an active regional diplomacy and aimed to be perceived as a regional power in all these regions. For that reason, to carry out a research on regional powers, Turkey presented a perfect example.

By analyzing Turkish foreign policy during the Yugoslav conflicts through theoretical studies on regional powers, I aimed at answering several questions, not only concerning regional power studies, but also concerning Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans in that particular period. What are the capabilities of a regional power during a conflict in its own region? What is the nature of relations between a regional power and great power in a conflict-prone region? What are the main policy options of a regional power to be influential in the region in such a scenario? What were the main determinants of Turkish foreign policy during the Yugoslav conflicts? How can we make a critical evaluation of Turkish foreign policy regarding the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo?

Throughout my research, I benefited from qualitative and quantitative sources, such as Turkish humanitarian aid and economic assistance, Turkish trade relations with the regional countries, Turkey's regional initiatives in the Balkans, bilateral diplomatic visits, activities in the international organizations, and diplomatic, trade or military agreements. A thorough content analysis of the primary and secondary sources served as the basis of my methodology.

In terms of primary sources, Grand National Assembly of Turkey (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*, TBMM) records regarding the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo were analyzed in detail in order to better understand the motives and

activities of Turkish foreign policy during that particular period. I also examined documents from various international organizations of which Turkey is a member, such as the UN, NATO, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In addition to documents from these organizations, the activities of Turkish foreign policy makers and diplomats in these organizations were also analyzed for this thesis. Regarding secondary sources, I benefited mainly from three different areas, namely theoretical studies on regions and regional powers; studies on Turkish foreign policy, especially regarding the Balkans; and studies on Yugoslav dissolution and conflicts following the dissolution.

Due to the rising importance of regional powers in world politics, there has been a considerable increase in studies regarding such studies in the discipline of International Relations, especially in the last 25 years. Yet, studies concerning regions in the International Relations can still be regarded as a new area, thus these studies do not cover several important aspects regarding regional powers. Although these studies almost exclusively argue that the importance of regional powers increased in world politics due to the progressive regionalization of the international structure, there are few studies available that consider the influence of regional powers in times of conflict and crisis. Therefore, one of the main purposes of this thesis is to develop an understanding of a more or less ignored area within the discipline of International Relations.

In Chapter 2, a theoretical analysis is presented, in which I discuss the post-Cold War world order and the rising importance of regional powers in it, together with a survey of the existing literature on regional powers. In that chapter, the changing roles of both regional and great powers in the post-Cold War world order are also analyzed. After carrying out a discussion of the influence of regional power

in its respective region in a time of conflict, it will be argued that the diplomatic ability of a regional power to make a difference decreases in proportion to the increase of diplomatic attention brought by the great powers to that particular region. Nevertheless, as is emphasized, there are still several policy options for a regional power in such a scenario that signify the importance of its diplomatic abilities. A careful analysis of the Turkish example in its foreign policy initiatives during the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo became the primary basis of these policy options.

As Chapter 2 constitutes the theoretical framework of this thesis, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 constitute the main body of it. In Chapter 3, Turkish foreign policy initiatives towards the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina are analyzed. It is underlined in Chapter 3 that as the international community failed to address the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina adequately, Turkey as a regional power, became influential in regional affairs. However, as the great powers and especially the USA started to assume responsibility in conflict resolution and peace settlements, the influence of Turkey started to decrease. The determinants of Turkish diplomacy in the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a critical evaluation of Turkish foreign policy are also discussed here.

Chapter 4 focuses on Turkish diplomatic initiatives towards the conflict in Kosovo. It is stressed that the international community was quick to address the conflict this time through lessons learned from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and therefore the diplomatic influence of Turkey in the war over Kosovo was considerably less. Nevertheless, Turkey still tried to pursue an active foreign policy during this period, mostly through negotiation with regional and global actors. It is also shown in Chapter 4 that, unlike the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey

faced several constraints in the Kosovo War that prevented its diplomatic efforts from following a more active and influential foreign policy. The determinants and constraints of Turkish diplomacy are discussed and a critical evaluation of it is made in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 5, an analysis on the political structure in the Balkan region during the 1990s is presented, stressing that the collapse of the communist regimes, the implementation of the New World Order by the USA, and the violent breakup of Yugoslavia constituted the most crucial changes in the Balkan politics during that period. Considering the importance of regional and global actors shaping the political structure of the region, an analysis of the perspectives of major global and regional actors on the conflicts in Yugoslavia is also given. In Chapter 5, it is argued that the Balkan region entered the 1990s as a separate region with its own security dynamics, but gradually started to be dominated by European power dynamics, and decisively with the end of the war in Kosovo.

The importance of regional powers has been gradually increasing in world politics since the end of the Cold War. As times of conflict and crisis often constitute the most problematic periods in a region, they play a significant role in determining the diplomatic capacity of any nation state. For that reason, I believe a study on such a topic would also contribute to the International Relations field, as it would bring further explanation to the true nature of diplomatic ability and influence of a regional power. The conflicts in the Balkans with the dissolution of Yugoslavia will present a good example to carry out this research, as the Yugoslav crisis attracted the attention of almost every great power and highly influenced the construction of post-Cold War security relations. Moreover, the events in Yugoslavia constituted the most violent conflict on the European continent since World War II. The significance of these

conflicts also contributes to the importance of this thesis, as they played a very crucial role in determining the post-Cold War world order.

CHAPTER 2

THE INFLUENCE OF REGIONAL POWERS DURING TIMES OF CONFLICT IN THE POST-COLD WAR PERIOD: THE TURKISH EXAMPLE

After the Cold War, the bipolar world structure was replaced with a unipolar structure in which the United States emerged as the hegemonic power of world politics. This may constitute the most striking change in world politics, since polarity of the international structure also determines the balance of power structure of international politics, which is often considered as the main determinant of world order.

Another crucial change in world politics since the end of the Cold War, however, has been that the importance of regional politics has become more apparent and world politics has become more regionalized. Conflicts in this new structure have become regionalized as well, as the possibility of a global scale war between the great powers has decreased. As a direct result, the importance of regional powers has increased both on the regional and global levels. Consequently, research on the concept of regional powers has increasingly attracted the attention of International Relations scholars as well. Still, there are several missing points in the literature and I believe it is safe to argue that their importance is still underestimated. Therefore, the primary aim of this thesis is to bring a further explanation to the influence of regional powers in their own respective region.

In order to carry out my analysis of the influence and diplomatic abilities of regional powers, I have chosen to concentrate on the diplomatic influence of a

regional power in a time of crisis and conflicts in its own region, since those periods often constitute the most crucial examples for understanding the diplomatic influence of an international actor.

As stated in Chapter 1, my research focuses on a case study in which I analyze the foreign policy of Turkey during the Yugoslav breakup process, concentrating mostly on Turkish diplomatic initiatives during the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. Through such analysis, I aim to develop an understanding both on the policy options and the diplomatic influence of a regional power as its region enters war.

In this chapter, first I will discuss the emergence of the New World Order and how it affected regional powers and politics. I will underline how the unipolarity of the system made the world structure increasingly regionalized, thereby increasing the importance of the regional powers and politics. In the next part, I will present a literature survey and different explanations of the definition of region and regional power. I will also discuss whether Turkey should be regarded as a regional power in the Balkans during the 1990s. After the literature survey, I will move on to an analysis of the changing roles of regional powers, great powers, and challengers in the post-Cold War world order.

In the next part, I will make a critical analysis of the influence and policy options of a regional power in the conflict zone. This analysis is particularly important for the purposes of this thesis for three main reasons. First, as stated above, times of conflict often are the most crucial examples to analyze the influence of an international actor. Second, during a period of peace and stability, a region is often left to its own dynamics; thus, the involvement of non-regional global actors is often limited. As a direct consequence, the influence of regional powers proves to be more

visible. During a time of conflict, on the other hand, the attention of the international community is directed to the problematic region, increasing the great power involvement and simultaneously reducing the influence of regional powers. Third, despite its importance, there are few studies available within the International Relations scholarship on this particular issue.

As stated above, this thesis analyzes the Turkish example in the Balkans during the 1990s. For that reason, the last two parts of this chapter examine the Turkish foreign policy determinants with the end of the Cold War, and the determinants of Turkish foreign policy regarding the Balkans during the 1990s.

The New World Order and Its Influence on Regional Powers and Politics

It has been widely argued that international politics became progressively regionalized in the end of the Cold War and the end of bipolar world structure.[2] The end of the Cold War and superpower rivalry brought a new world order. I should start by noting that I will not concentrate on the general effects of this process, but mostly focus on its effect on how it made world politics more regionalized. Thus, my main analysis in this part will be of how the end of the Cold War increased the importance of regions and regional politics.

At first glance, the answer is obvious. The end of the Cold War also brought an end to the superpower rivalry and the bipolar world structure. The end of the superpower rivalry between the USA and the USSR removed the security overlay

[2] For a full discussion on this topic, see Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).; David A. Lake and Patrick M. Morgan, *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).; Douglas Lemke, *Regions of War and Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).; Andrew Hurrel, "One World? Many Worlds? The Place of Regions in the Study of International Society," *International Affairs*, 83, no. 1 (2007).

that dominated many parts of the world. The regions were set free and regional logics came to dominate both the production of insecurity and the management of insecurity.[3] Still, the autonomy of regions did not emerge with 1989. From the time of the decolonization process, the regional level of security had become more autonomous and prominent, but the end of the Cold War accelerated this process.[4] The Domino Theory of the USA during the Cold War and the European integration prove the importance of regional politics during the Cold War.[5] Still, the end of bipolarity and the New World Order set by the USA increased the importance of the regions, and the rising influence of the regional powers can only be understood within this framework.

Buzan and Wæver, speculating on the effects of the end of the Cold War on the position of regions, argue that the end of bipolarity lifted the superpower overlay in Eurasia and brought 15 new states, lifted the ideological level of great power competition, and shifted the nature of security by including a range of non-military issues.[6] This new structure brought the regions to a more important position in the international system.

Another important reason for this change in the roles of the regional structures within the international system was the shift in the distribution of power in the post-Cold War world structure. The end of the Cold War dramatically changed the polarity of the international system and created its own balance of power structure. While the Cold War structure is often described as a bipolar structure in which the USA and the USSR competed for global supremacy, the post-Cold War world order

[3] Hurrel, One World? Many Worlds? p. 131.
[4] Buzan and Wæver, p. 3.
[5] Ibid., p. 469; The Domino Theory signifies the importance of regions in the Cold War period as this theory speculated that if one country in a region comes under the influence of communism, then other countries in that region would follow that country with a domino effect.
[6] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

is more difficult to define. This is mostly because the new world order has only one superpower, and thus can be defined as unipolar, on the one hand, but on the other hand, the importance of the great and regional powers in world politics dramatically increased and for that reason can also be defined as multipolar. Buzan and Wæver describe the new world structure as one superpower, plus four great powers, which are Japan, the EU, in which the UK, France, and Germany are the most preeminent powers, China, and Russia.[7] Samuel Huntington, on the other hand, defines the post-Cold War world as a uni-multipolar system with one superpower and several major powers.[8]

Literature Review on Regions and Regional Powers

Before moving on to an analysis of the roles of the regional powers, great powers, and challengers in the New World Order, I will first present the existing literature on regional powers by discussing different definitions of the concepts of region and regional, and then discuss whether Turkey was a regional power in the Balkans during the 1990s. Even though the concept of regional power is not novel and has been applied to various countries for a long time, the term is still contested. Within this research area, there is a low degree of consensus on what makes up a regional power, which makes the term look questionable in terms of its usefulness.

The fact that these concepts are conceptualized very differently in the International Relations literature, with great variation in their meaning, makes it a very difficult task to define what a regional power is. On that account, Detlef Nolte states that realist, liberal, or constructivist approaches to International Relations

[7] Ibid., p. 17.
[8] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," *Foreign Affairs*,78, no. 2 (April 1999). p. 36.

studies are not sufficient to capture the complexity of the matter.[9] Let alone the concept of regional power, the concept of region itself is hard to define with a consensus. Björn Hettne argues that the International Relations studies need to move beyond geographical aspects, yet geographical boundaries still remain important to define a region.[10] It is obvious that geographic explanations alone are not sufficient to define a region. Amitav Acharya argues that the regions are increasingly viewed in non-geographical terms. Physical proximity or shared cultural, linguistic, political, or economic ties are no longer considered to be sufficient to constitute a region. He argues that newer approaches that emphasize the social structure of regions bring more persuasive explanations.[11]

However, basing the explanations on regions to social structures misses several important points, more specifically the security level of the story. Buzan and Wæver claim that a region must be composed of geographically defined, clustered sets of units and these clusters must be embedded in a larger system that has a structure of its own.[12] In the end, it is important that apart from the geographical aspect, a region must have a structure of states that their security along with other aspects must be interrelated and integrated with each other. Buzan and Wæver develop a theory on that issue called the Regional Security Complex, stating that this theory distinguishes between great and regional powers. They argue that most of the threats to a region come from the near distances, and therefore constructs regionally based clusters, named regional complexes. Security in a region can be penetrated by a great power, yet the regional dynamics have a substantial degree of autonomy from the patterns

[9] Detlef Nolte, "How to Compare Regional Powers: Analytical Concepts and Research Topics," *Review of International Studies*, no. 36 (2010). p. 883.
[10] Björn Hettne, "Teori ve Pratikte Güvenliğin Bölgeselleşmesi," *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 5, no. 18 (Summer 2008). p. 88.
[11] Amitav Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics," *World Politics*, 59, no. 4 (July 2007). p. 634.
[12] Buzan and Wæver, p. 27.

set by the great powers.[13] In other words, Regional Security Complexes are socially constructed by their members, whether consciously or not, by the ways in which the securization or desecurization interlock with each other.[14]

Lake and Morgan extrapolate on a security-based approach to describe a region and argue that security externalities bind the members of a region together, in such a way that the members are so interrelated in terms of their security that actions taken by any member state or any significant security-related developments inside any state have a major impact on the other states.[15] In another paper, Lake describes regions as pluralistic security communities in which cooperation is understood to have emerged spontaneously from anarchy. They are described as regional hierarchies, in which peace and conflict regulations are the products of the authority of a dominant state.[16] In the end, I take a similar approach to the regions and argue that it is mainly the security interdependence of the members that marks a region. This, however, does not mean that social structures, economic relations or geographical terms do not matter in defining the regions, but the security relations are the most important markers.

On identifying regional powers, Destradi provides the most common characteristics of a regional power within the International Relations studies as belonging to a region, superiority in the region in terms of power capacities, and being influential in regional affairs.[17] Building on Destradi, Nolte argues that a regional power should have enough material power to stand up to any coalition of other states in the region, and has to bear a special responsibility for regional security

[13] Ibid., p. 4.
[14] Ibid., p. 481.
[15] Lake and Morgan, p. 12.
[16] David A. Lake, "Regional Hierarchy: Authority and Local International Order," *Review of International Studies*, no. 35 (February 2009), p. 35.
[17] Sandra Destradi, "Regional Powers and Their Strategies: Empire, Hegemony, and Leadership," *Review of International Studies*, no. 36 (2010). p. 905.

and for order maintenance within the region. Moreover, internal dynamics should allow it to play a stabilizing and leading role in its respective region. A regional power should also demonstrate its willingness and capacity to assume this role. Lastly, it must be accepted as such by its neighbors.[18] Martin Wight, on the other hand, identifies regional powers as states with general interests relative to the limited region and a capacity to act alone, which gives them the appearance of local great powers.[19]

Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll tries to understand the regional power concept in accordance with their roles within the region and argue that there are three different types of regional powers, regional leaders, regional custodians, and regional protectors. They argue that for all of these roles, the regional power needs material power and recognition from the region as a regional power.[20]

Buzan and Wæver claim that regional powers are countries that define the polarity of any given region, yet generally are excluded from the higher level calculations of system polarity.[21] Their argument is important for taking the polarity into account because state systemic structures are defined exclusively by material power by state and can be in three forms, which are multipolar, unipolar, or bipolar. Each system has a different wide range of possible varied configurations and needs different sort of analysis.[22] Lake describes the polarity of the regions and their effects, arguing that unipolar Regional Security Complexes are usually autonomous, are not greatly affected by external regional politics, and are effectively stabilized by

[18] Nolte, p. 890.
[19] Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Penguin, 1979). p. 65.
[20] Derrick Fraizer and Robert Stewart-Ingersoll, "Regional Powers and Security: A Framework for Understanding Order within Regional Security Complexes," *European Journal of International Relations,* 16, no. 4 (2010). pp. 741-742.
[21] Buzan and Wæver, p. 37.
[22] Edward A. Kolodziej, *Security and International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005). p. 28.

a single dominant power. Multipolar Regional Security Complexes are relatively autonomous but plagued by difficulties of conflict management, and the security is limited to the balance of power among the regional powers or regional power concerts. Bipolar Regional Security Complexes, on the other hand, will usually draw in outside parties and be highly competitive and conflict prone.[23] As the polarity of the region in power relations is quite important for defining the order within the region, arguing that regional powers are the countries that define the polarity of the region is quite logical.

In another approach based on the roles and behaviors of the great powers, Michael McGinnis argues that the great power behavior can be applied to regional powers as well and states that the policy makers of regional powers chose their policies to advance the security of the state within the region and increase the influence over the region. He argues that there is a resemblance between a great power in global politics and a regional power in regional politics.[24]

Other approaches to regional powers emphasize the importance of not taking these states as actors that behave in the same ways with the same aims. Miriam Prys argues that the International Relations studies should move away from the implied assumption about the uniformity of these actors and rather should begin to think about the concept of regional power as a variable that can take different forms and values.[25] Hurrel takes a similar approach as well and argues that rather than seeing intermediary powers in objective policy goals or by objective geopolitical and geoeconomical circumstances, we can identify them as self-created identities or ideologies that create a particular foreign policy ideology that can be traced

[23] Lake, p. 36.
[24] Michael D. McGinnis, "A Rational Model of Regional Rivalry," *International Studies Quarterly*, 34, no. 1 (March 1990). p. 112.
[25] Miriam Prys, "Hegemony, Domination, Detachment: Differences in Regional Powerhood," *International Studies Review*, no. 12 (2010). p. 479.

historically.[26] He further states that one side of a constructivist approach to intermediary powers would therefore look at the historical emergences of particular foreign policy ideologies or discourses. He nevertheless notes that the material side of the story still matters and historicity depends on this issue as well to a certain point.[27]

My review of the current debates in the literature shows that there is no consensus on what makes up a region and a regional power within this area. Regional studies is a relatively new area within International Relations; nevertheless, its importance is increasing as world politics become more regionalized. There are, however, important gaps within the existing literature. One of the most important gaps, I believe, is on the capacities of regional powers in times of crisis. As stated above, conflict resolution is a primary area for a nation state, whether claiming to be a great or a regional power, to prove its diplomatic ability and influence. For that reason, it is a crucial subject to explore in order to construct a satisfactory explanation on the nature and influence of regional powers, both at the regional and global levels.

For the purposes of this thesis, it is also necessary to discuss whether Turkey was a regional power in the Balkans during the 1990s according to the existing literature. First, I will discuss whether Turkey is a part of the Balkan region. Considering only three percent of Turkish territory is located in the Balkans, several accounts do not consider Turkey to be a Balkan country. Yet, on the other hand Turkey has deep historical and cultural roots in the region. Several Balkan countries

[26] Andrew Hurrel, "Some Reflections on the Role of Intermediate Powers in International Institutions," in *Paths to Power: Foreign Policy Strategies of Intermediate States*, edited by Andrew Hurrel, Andrew F. Cooper, Guadakupe G. Gonzalez, Ricardo U. Sennes, and Srini Sitaraman, (Washington D.C.: Latin American Program Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2000). p. 1.
[27] Ibid., p. 2.

that tried to build close relations with Turkey during the 1990s often emphasized this fact. In fact, several opponents of Turkey in the Balkans, such as Greece and Serbia, during that period also emphasized this fact, but with a negative meaning, accusing Turkey of following a neo-Ottomanist foreign policy that tried to build a hegemony in the region. On the security level, several scholars argue that it is the security interdependence that binds the members of a region together. On that account, it is safe to argue that the internal security dynamics in the Balkans deeply affected Turkish security. Indeed, the breakup process of Yugoslavia and instability in the region became important concerns of Turkish foreign policy makers during that period.

I believe it would be safe to argue that Turkey should be considered as a regional power according to the existing literature. Turkey was and still is the biggest economy in the region and possesses the largest military. Turkey tried to assume a leadership position in the Balkans during that period, and was accepted by several countries in the region as a regional power. Indeed, every Balkan country during the 1990s excluding Greece and Serbia tried to build close relations with Turkey. Several Balkan countries which experienced security problems, such as Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, immediately sought Turkish support. In addition to that, Turkey was also accepted as a regional power by the international community as well. The next chapters will give more elaborated examples of these issues, yet for the moment it is enough to state that the existing literature on regional powers also confirms that Turkey should be regarded as having been a regional power in the Balkans during the 1990s.

The Changing Roles of Regional Powers, Great Powers, and Challengers in the post-Cold War World Order[28]

The New World Order and the roles of international actors within this structure need further elaboration. At this part, I will discuss the roles of the USA, the only superpower of the contemporary world structure; the great powers, by also taking into account the great powers that challenge the current international regime in one way or another; and of course the regional powers.[29]

A superpower can be defined as a state that possesses first class military and economic power together with the ability to be accepted and behave as such.[30] Henry Kissinger states that with the end of the Cold War, the USA dominated the international community and expressed its will to form a world order for the third time in the twentieth century; this time, however, the USA was the only superpower in the world.[31]

On the nature of the US foreign policy in the post-Cold War era, Brzezinski argues that the absolute aim of the USA is to build hegemony in Eurasia, and the way to accomplish this aim is defined by him as cooperation with others in order to block another superpower to rise in the world structure.[32] He argues that the global supremacy of the USA is unique in its domination of the oceans, passage points, and its terrestrial ability. In addition to that, the economic dynamism and the

[28] The term "challengers" in this context is used to describe the nation states in the post-Cold War structure that are seeking a form of revision in the international system to their benefit.
[29] The USA is analyzed at this part as the superpower of current international order as it shows distinctive features from other great powers with its supreme material capacities. Nevertheless, this does not change the fact that the USA is a great power as well, and in the rest of the thesis, it is referred accordingly.
[30] Buzan and Wæver, p. 34.
[31] Henry Kissinger, *Diplomasi* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 1998). p. 782.
[32] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Büyük Satranç Tahtası: Amerika'nın Küresel Üstünlüğü ve Bunun Jeostratejik Gereklilikleri* (İstanbul: İnkılap Yayınları, 2005). p. 14.

technological and cultural supremacy support the US hegemony as well.[33] Huntington also argues that even though the USA is the only superpower, it still needs the support and coalition of many other states.[34] Kissinger too states that the USA position was much more hegemonic in the 1990s comparing to its position in the 1980s; however, as the power in the international community was severely spread, the US ability to use its power to shape the rest of the world decreased in the 1990s.[35]

Several examples support these claims. During the 1990s, the USA continuously sought support for its policies from its allies, both in the Balkans and the Middle East. Another example could be the decreasing diplomatic ability of the USA in its decision to invade Iraq in 2003, when the USA failed to mobilize some of its closest allies to this campaign, despite the fact that the material capacity of the USA was more than adequate.[36]

The roles of the great powers and the emerging great powers need to be discussed as well. The former great powers, the three great powers within the EU and Japan, had possessed a great power status for a long period of time. In addition to that, countries such as Brazil and India had been showing significant growth rates and are considered by some accounts to be the future great powers of the international order. Countries such as China and Russia, on the other hand, have been long considered as great powers by the international community, yet continue to seek revisions in the international system to their benefit. Miles Kahler states that Brazil, India, and China have placed large bets on integration with the global economy, and

[33] Ibid., pp. 41-43.
[34] Huntington, pp. 36-37.
[35] Kissinger, p. 786.
[36] Neal G. Jesse et al., "The Leaders Can't Lead When the Followers Won't Follow: The Limitations of Hegemony," in *Beyond Great Powers and Hegemons: Why Secondary States Support, Follow, or Challenge*, edited by Kristen P. Williams, Steven E. Lobell, and Neal G. Jesse, (California: Stanford University Press, 2012). p. 11.

each aims for a larger regional and global role. He further argues that preferences and capabilities of these countries with the "incumbents" of the system, which are defined as the USA, the EU, and Japan, will determine the international order in the future.[37]

Today, more and more accounts claim that their importance in the near future will increase. Leading developing powers are much more integrationist in their outlook and approach to the global political economy. This reflects a growing confidence in their ability to advance their agendas on the world stage, but also the significant presence of several important sectors of these states in the global economy.[38] According to Nel, the main aims of these countries are to gain prestige, in terms of how nations are treated; redistribution, in terms of who gets what in the international system; and recognition, in terms of esteem for specific developmental needs of developing countries.[39] According to Bisley, the important point is that the emerging powers do not simply wait for the international community to come to them; they are taking advantages of the current system while they are pushing new demands during the crises or any shortcomings of the current system.[40]

It is notable, however, that all of these emerging powers experience several important problems that might block their way to gain more power and influence within the international community. First of all, all of these countries experience regional problems and cannot always establish a stable regional order. Thus, regional instability and unresolved conflicts create problems for their claim of great power status. Furthermore, attempts to develop a global role would possibly raise the

[37] Miles Kahler, "Rising Powers and Global Governance: Negotiating Change in a Resilient Status Quo," *International Affairs*, 89, no. 3 (May 2013). pp. 711-712.
[38] Philip Nel, "Redistribution and Recognition: What Emerging Regional Powers Want?" *Review of International Studies*, no. 36 (2010). p. 973.
[39] Ibid., pp. 953-956.
[40] Nick Bisley, *Great Powers in the Changing International Order* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012). p. 148.

concerns of their regional neighbors.[41] At the domestic level, on the other hand, they face internal problems that will materially limit their capabilities, and these problems occasionally lead to clash of interests between them and the international community.[42] Kahler also argues that these countries pursue different policy goals within the international arena, most notably in security issues. They have different approaches on crucial issues such as the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destructions and peacekeeping missions in international conflicts.[43] These differences in foreign policy make it more difficult for the emerging powers to form a group, thus their influence in the international community decreases.

At this level, I would argue that Brazil and India possess positions between regional powers and great powers, and they have the ability to advance to great power position in the future. Japan, the EU, China, and Russia, on the hand, can be conceptualized as the great powers. According to one explanation, great powers do not need the abilities of a superpower and they are distinguished from regional powers as they are responded to by other states on the basis of system level calculations about the present and the near future distribution of power, and also their potential to become superpower in the short or medium term.[44] Bisley, on the other hand, states that there are three identifications of a great power, which are material capacities, the nature of their interest and their correspondence with the international system, and recognition as a great power.[45]

It is also important to note that the traditional role and functions of the great powers changed in the post-Cold War world structure. Even though, for example

[41] Andrew Hurrel, "Hegemony, Liberalism, and Global Order: What Space for Would-Be Great Powers?" *International Affairs*, 82, no. 1 (2007). pp. 8-9.
[42] Bisley, p. 160.
[43] Kahler, p. 716.
[44] Buzan and Wæver, p.35.
[45] Bisley, pp. 7-9.

Japan and Germany are considered to be great powers in the international system, they do not even possess a strong or functioning military, which in the traditional sense would be unacceptable for a great power.[46] As can be seen, the New World Order, among other things, changed the understanding on the great powers as well.

Considering the influence and capacities of great powers in the post-Cold War world order, it could be claimed that while they found themselves in an environment with considerably more field of maneuver due the end of dependence to superpowers for protection from the other superpower, their ability to influence or intervene decreased quite dramatically.

The same scenario can be applied to the USA as well. Even though the USA is considered to be a superpower with its superior material, economic, and ideological capacities, its ability to influence the rest of the world, and even some of its closest allies, has dropped due to the end of the superpower rivalry.

At this point, I shall analyze the influence of regional powers, both in their respective regions and in the global system. As it is a concept with characteristics that are hard to define, the regional power can be better understood through their methods and policies. In order to do that, the Regional Security Complex Theory of Buzan and Wæver and the establishment of a regional order must be analyzed further. Regional Security Complex theory is developed against the distinction of security at the global and national levels, arguing that security is a more relational concept. Consequently, the main level of analysis is security at the regional level.

The claim is that region refers to the level where states or other units link together close that their securities cannot be considered separate from each other. The regional level is thus considered as the place where the extremes of national and

[46] Edward N. Luttwak, "Where Are All the Great Powers? At Home with the Kids," *Foreign Affairs*, 73, no. 4 (August 1994). p. 27.

global security interplay with each other and where most of the action occurs. The general picture accordingly is to be understood through the conjunction of the national and global levels.[47]

As Buzan and Wæver claim, a Regional Security Complex is a set of units whose major processes of securization, desecurization, or both are so interlinked that security problems cannot be analyzed or resolved apart from one another. The substantial parts of securization and desecurization process in the international system are manifested in regional clusters, which are distinct from the global level.[48] The claim is that the security interdependence in a Regional Security Complex is so high that even though an external involvement enters into the region, the great power involvement can be grasped through regional security dynamics alone. In such environment in a region that is distinct from the global level to a certain degree, a regional order arises, in which the regional power is the responsible for the protection of the order. In the end, it is the regional orders that describe how states within a Regional Security Complex manage the security relations.

As the importance of Regional Security Complexes increases in the international system, the influence of the regional powers within their own regions provides them with an opportunity to become more active and influential at the systemic level as well. As it the responsibility of a regional power to establish and keep the order within the region, they also become able to gain prestige in the international arena.

Still, the influence of a regional power in maintaining the order within its region needs to be further discussed. According to Lake, a regional order within a Regional Security Complex might have different forms, such as balance of power,

[47] Buzan and Wæver, p. 43.
[48] Ibid. p. 44.

regional power concerts, collective security organizations, pluralistic security communities, and integration in the region.[49] Regional orders emerge because of the strong positive externalities of social order and economies of scale in its production, and the mutually reinforcing legitimacy accorded to the regional power by the local lesser powers.[50] The regional powers in such environment provide order and in turn make demands on other states; whereas the lesser powers benefit from the order and regard the demands of the regional power necessary for that order. Key is that both the regional powers and the lesser powers understand that the dominant state has the right to make certain demands rooted in special responsibilities for social order and subordinate states have an obligation to comply with these commands if made.[51]

This line of arguments gives a picture of regional orders and the relation between the regional power and the lesser powers in a region. However, the issue is not always that simple as the relation between the two sorts of powers is more complex and the regional hierarchy or dominance of a regional power is not always accepted so easily by the lesser powers. It is important to understand that the presence of a materially stronger power does not necessarily lead to some sort of hegemonic behavior or outcomes, thus the regional powers or the lesser powers cannot be always treated as actors who have the same values and manners.[52]

In a constructivist approach, the status of a regional power or middle power depends on the recognition of this status by other states. Regional powers thus depend on the cooperation, or at least toleration, of both the secondary regional powers and the regional middle powers when they try to assert their interests in the

[49] Lake, p. 36.
[50] Ibid., p. 35.
[51] Ibid., p. 38.
[52] Prys, p. 481.

regional or the global level.[53] In the end, it is crucial to understand that as the great powers as the leading nations in terms of power need coalition and followers, the regional leaders need regional followers as well.[54] At the global level, a hegemon's power and influence is very much contingent on the policies of lesser powers.[55] This is very much the same at the regional level as well. It is exactly for this reason important to understand the different policies and methods of regional powers to assert their interests in the region.

Destradi argues that what is missing is a single, generalisable conceptualization of regional powers that is able to grasp the commonalities of these countries, and at the same time account for different foreign policy strategies these states can pursue in dealing with their neighbors.[56] She states that the problem of the existing literature on regional powers is that it does not concentrate on an actor-centered approach.

According to Destradi, there are three different policy types for a regional power. First is imperial policy, which is composed of highly aggressive and coercive strategies. In this strategy, the regional power is clearly dominant in terms of power resources and has the option of creating security for itself in an environment perceived as anarchical according to realist perspective. Throughout the unilateral pursuit of its own national interests, the regional power sustains this hegemony through coercion and the actual use of force if necessary.[57] The second strategy is hegemony, which could take shape of hard, intermediate, or soft hegemony depending on the material power of the regional power and the internal dynamics of the region. In the hegemonic strategy, the regional power employs strategies that are

[53] Nolte, p. 892.
[54] Ibid., p. 894.
[55] Jesse et al., p. 11.
[56] Destradi, p. 908.
[57] Ibid., pp. 909-910.

more subtle than those employed by the states behaving as imperial powers.[58] In such strategy, the regional power tries to pursue its own policy goals by presenting them as common goals between the subordinate and the hegemonic state.[59] The third strategy is leadership, in which the regional powers leaders lead a group of states in order to realize or facilitate the realization of their common objectives. In addition to that, the leadership strategy might be initiated by both the leaders and the followers.[60]

Nolte notes the importance of regional followers for the regional powers and argues that regional powers need to establish a cooperative hegemony through strategies, such as power aggregation, which depend on the capacity to convince a sufficient number of states in the region to rally around its regional project, power sharing vis-à-vis weaker states in the region, and commitment to a long-term strategy of regional institutionalism.[61]

Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll argue that security orders within a Regional Security Complex are driven by three variables, which are regional structure, regional power roles, and regional power orientations. They argue that there are three different regional power roles, which are leadership, custodianship, and protection for the region. In accordance to these roles, the regional powers might have three preferences, which are protection of the status quo, cooperation with the lesser powers in the region, and long-term design for the region.[62]

All of these roles, preferences, and strategies would require a different type of political structure within the given region, and would also require different types of regional power orientation. These methods are given to understand the levels of analysis of the regional power behavior within the regional politics. On the global

[58] Ibid., p. 912.
[59] Ibid., p. 920.
[60] Ibid., p. 921.
[61] Nolte, p. 895.
[62] Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll, pp. 731-732.

level, regional powers may also chose integration within the region in order to increase its bargaining capacity in the globalized world.[63] The important point to understand is that every region has its own characteristics and therefore the regional powers in these regions must find different strategies and means to pursue their goals for their national interests and regional structure, depending on its capabilities.

In accordance with my findings based on the existing literature, it is safe to argue that the influence of regional powers along with the regional politics increased both at the regional and global levels with the end of the bipolar world structure. Yet I believe there still are important questions to ask to capture the true influence of a regional power, one of them as I believe is the diplomatic abilities of a regional power in its own respective region as the region enters into warfare.

Understanding the Abilities of a Regional Power during the Times of Conflict and Crisis within Its Own Region

At this part, I will try to develop an understanding on the regional power structures in times of crisis and conflict. For that end, I will first discuss the regionalist aspect within the post-Cold War security studies. Later on I will concentrate on the influence of the great powers in regional affairs, and lastly discuss the influence and capabilities of regional powers in such circumstances.

Regionalist approach within the post-Cold War security studies has two main dimensions. First, the end of the bipolarity in the world structure reduces the penetrative quality of great power interests in the rest of the world. Second, the great powers turned out to be "lite powers" with less material influence over the lesser

[63] Hurrel, One World? Many Worlds? p. 139.

powers.[64] While, this approach argues that at the contemporary world structure the great powers have less ability to intervene into regional affairs, since the inner construction and relations of the region play the dominant role, it also argues that restricting the level of analysis creates problems in understanding of the international structure, since it cannot be understood without considering the rising influence of regional affairs and regional power clusters.

In another aspect, Lemke argues that the International Relations knowledge is based on the analyses on the great powers and of course on the intellectual culture of the West.[65] He claims that restricting the analysis to the great powers creates a problem as there might be something different about the great powers compared to the states that possess less power, and by missing these links we might exclude ourselves from understanding the true nature of the states with less power.[66]

As a result of the increasing importance of lesser powers in the world structure, the analyses of these powers must also increase in order to bring a satisfactory explanation to their natures. In the political environment of the post-Cold War period, the lesser powers have more opportunity to resist to the demands of the great powers through several strategies such as balancing, balking, blackmail, and leash slipping.[67] Although these strategies did not pop up with the end of the Cold War, the end of the risk of global conflict and ideological concerns allowed the nation states with lesser powers to possess a better position to resist against the demands of the great powers. The main reason for this situation can be understood through the security concerns of states. As the Cold War ended, the possibility of direct security

[64] Buzan and Wæver, pp. 10-11.
[65] Lemke, p. 3.
[66] Ibid., pp. 6-7.
[67] For a more detailed analysis of these strategies, see: Jesse et al.pp. 12-15.

threats from one side has ended, thus the states found themselves in a more secure position to pursue their own national interests.

Still, this obviously should not mean that the influence of the great powers perished completely. In the case of Regional Security Complexes, for example, Buzan and Wæver state that there are three possible evolutions for a Regional Security Complex, namely the maintenance of the status quo, internal transformation, and lastly the external transformation.[68] As this theory follows, the absence of a Regional Security Complex in a region is only possible through a process in which the great power interests transcend mere penetration and come to dominate a region so heavily that the local pattern of security virtually ceases to operate. Africa under European colonization or Europe after the immediate years of World War II where the US hegemony was extremely dominant can be given as examples of this situation.[69] Such structures no longer occur in the contemporary regional structures, since the great power dominance cannot arise at these levels.[70] Still, the involvement of the great powers in a region at a time of crisis can and usually does shift the power relations within a Regional Security Complex.

In their involvement, the great powers also pursue their own strategic goals in a regional conflict. In such situations, the dominant external power in the region may take the opportunity to exploit regional conflicts to its own advantage and to engage in offshore balancing in precisely the way in which the neorealist approach would predict.[71] But what can the great powers actually do in regional conflicts? How do they influence the situation? And last, why do they choose to intervene?

[68] Buzan and Wæver, p. 53.
[69] Ibid., p. 61.
[70] Although such domination does not occur at regional levels anymore, it should still be noted that it can still occur at nation state level.
[71] Hurrel, Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order, p. 9.

The conflicts within a region have been one of the top concerns of the international community in the post-Cold War period, the possibility of spillover being among the primary concerns.[72] As the USA emerged as the only superpower of the post-Cold War international order, I will start my analysis with the US foreign policy concerning regional conflicts and its involvement in these events. Brzezinski argues that only alternative to the US hegemony in the world is international anarchy, and therefore the USA intervenes in conflicts at the regional level to prevent the rise of anarchy or rise of another power.[73]

Kissinger also states that the dissolution of the ideological threats has the opportunity to create the new order similar to that of the nineteenth century European order.[74] This obviously is not a desirable end for the USA. If a great power, or a superpower, intervenes in regional affairs, the first reason can be argued as direct strategic interests within the given region. However, for the USA there is another aspect, which is the necessity of US diplomacy to prove its leadership in the international arena. Huntington, for that reason, argues that the major regional powers try to block US interventionism to pursue their own national goals, whereas the secondary regional power seeks the superpower assistance to resist against the major regional power.[75]

This approach, however, has some problematic parts, considering the realities on the ground. The US is mostly open to cooperation with regional powers in its regional policies and some of the major regional powers are its close allies, even though their interests may contradict each other from time to time. Nevertheless, with the end of the Cold War, the conflicts among the Third World states have been a

[72] Hettne, p. 90.
[73] Brzezinski, pp. 266-268.
[74] Kissinger, p. 782.
[75] Huntington, p. 46.

problem for US diplomacy, and in its policies, the US has needed to engage diplomatic relations with the regional powers and regional organizations.[76] The necessity for the US to seek diplomatic cooperation with the regional forces has two main reasons. First, the end of bipolar system reduced the material influence of the great powers within the world structure; and second, the inner dynamics of a region play a dominant role in the regional affairs and conflicts, thus the USA has needed to cooperate with the regional powers.

The motives for great powers to get involved in regional conflicts are similar as well. Direct national interests constitute the first motive, and securing their great power status is an important motive as well. In some cases, the pressure of the media and public opinion can constitute a reason for intervention, as well for the great powers, as it did in the Balkan conflicts throughout the 1990s.

Concerning the effects of great power involvement in a regional conflict, it could be argued that the regions constitute their own power dynamics and form integrated, security interdependent units. For that, if a crisis occurs within the power dynamics of a region, the resolution of the conflict usually relies on inner region dynamics as well. Thus, the great power involvement cannot cause or terminate regional conflicts, but it can have the effect of intensifying or mitigating the existing conflicts.[77] Yet it should also be kept in mind that as the involvement of the great powers in regional affairs increases, they over time manage to surpass the regional dynamics and to become the most preeminent actors in the given region.

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[76] Thomas P. Thornton, "Regional Organizations in Conflict Management," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Resolving Regional Conflicts: International Perspectives, no. 518 (November 1991). p. 134.

[77] Benjamin Miller and Korina Kagan, "The Great Powers and Regional Conflicts: Eastern Europe and the Balkans from the Post-Napoleonic Era to the Post-Cold War Era," *International Studies Quarterly*, 41, no. 1 (March 1997). p. 51.

Benjamin Miller argues that there are three different types of great power involvement in a region, the hegemony of one great power, cooperation among the great powers, and competition among the great powers. According to his model, the hegemony of one power or cooperation among the great powers can bring a change in a region from war prone to cold peace, and competition among them intensifies the existing conflict.[78] He argues that the great powers can be helpful in promoting regional conflict reduction, so long as they, not the local parties, play the critical role in the peacemaking process. Nevertheless, this situation only involves the moderation of the dispute, and thus creates a cold peace. The durability of this situation depends on the strength and continued presence of the great power influence in the region. Collapse of cooperation among the great powers or disengagement of the hegemonic power might lead to end of the cold peace and start the conflict in the region again.[79]

Following the model of Miller, my argument is that when a region enters into a conflict, it is mainly due to the inner power relations within the region. Thus, after the conflict begins, it is quite difficult for the local actors to mitigate the conflict by their own efforts, as the reduction of conflict usually depends on classical political – military logic of international relations in such scenarios. The position of the regional power (considering the regional power itself did not enter the armed conflict) here is important. If the regional power strong and influential enough in the region, it can reduce the conflict by its own accounts, but the cases for that are very rare. In most cases, the regional power itself is a part of the conflict, and if not, it still is not easy for the regional power as well to stop the conflict, considering it could not prevent it from starting in the first point. In the end, it is usually the great power involvement

[78] Benjamin Miller, "The Global Sources of Regional Transition from War to Peace," *Journal of Peace Research,* 38, no. 2 (March 2001). p. 201.
[79] Ibid., p. 207.

that ends the conflict with a cold peace.[80] At this point, however, an important question is asked by Amitav Acharya: How can regions have autonomy if the great powers or the sole superpower play such dominant roles in shaping them?[81]

Considering the fact that conflict resolution is among the primary policy areas where a nation state can prove its power status, the ability of a regional power in such environment is also crucial to understand in order to develop a satisfactory explanation of the true nature of regional powers. Moreover, as argued above, the regional powers have a responsibility for the maintenance of the order in a region, so their ability in such scenarios becomes more important.

At this point, my findings mostly indicate that even though the regional powers have the ability to influence the course of events in their own region, their ability to make a difference decreases in proportion to the increase of diplomatic attention brought by the great powers towards that particular region. Miller and Kagan in their model argue a similar point on the influence of regional actors and the involvement of the great powers.[82] It is a fair point, obviously, but still there are possible modes of actions for a regional power. At this point, I will try to understand the influence of regional powers through its means and methods in such environment, where there is a conflict in the region that does not directly involve the regional power and the involvement of the great powers is attracted to the region.

Considering it still is the power that plays the most prominent role in international relations, it is obvious that the regional powers cannot be the only decision makers in such an environment, since the great powers become involved in the conflict. But still, there are other alternatives for the regional powers, which I will be exploring next.

[80] Ibid., p. 201.
[81] Acharya, p. 640.
[82] Miller and Kagan, pp. 56-57.

Not counting the option of entering in the armed conflict, there is one primary option for a regional power in such environment, which is negotiation within the international community. Through negotiation, the regional power tries to increase its influence and persuade regional and global actors to a decision that is close to the policy goals of its own. Increasing its negotiating capacity is therefore the most important aim for a regional power, and there are possible policy options for a regional power in order to increase its negotiation capacity.

The first policy option for a regional power is mediation between parties. This is tried by the great powers as well, and the conflicting parties usually take the great powers more seriously, as they look to them for the reduction of the crisis rather than to the regional power. But in some circumstances, the regional powers might be more effective in these negotiations. First of all, they can use the advantage of belonging to the respective region, as the regional powers themselves are inside the autonomous power dynamics of the region and can perform better at the negotiation table using this advantage. Second, if there is more than one great power involved in the conflict, it is usually not easy to find a harmony among them. Therefore, in most cases, the great powers support the claims of one side and therefore experience problems at the negotiation table. If a regional power is able to follow a more neutral policy that does not side with one party directly, it can perform a better mediation role at the negotiation table, thus increases its position in the region and its capacity at the negotiations.

As the second policy option, the regional power can mobilize the support of the regional parties through traditional regional party practices. If the state is recognized as a regional power in its own region, its ideas and policies are respected by the

regional states as well. This situation expands the ability of the regional power as it mobilizes more support for its foreign policy goals.

Related to this policy, the regional power can also try to initiate integration within the region, using the regional parties that are not engaged in the conflict. The regional conflicts usually have the spillover effects and instability is not usually welcomed by the parties that are not involved in the conflict. Migration, economic problems, and threats from different sides create problems for every party within the region. Integration in such an environment makes the region more interdependent and as the leading party of the regional integration, the negotiation capacity of the regional power increases. These arguments all have one common point. If the regional power manages to increase its influence in the region during the time of a conflict, it will also increase its capacity of negotiation with the great powers in the resolution of the conflict and reshaping the region.

It should be noted, however, in regions that enter into warfare, integration is usually not a viable solution, as the countries of the region might have different policy lines regarding the conflict, such as siding with different sides of the opposing powers, or trying to remain aloof from the conflict. Still, even in that scenario, a regional power can still use its superior diplomatic ability in the region to form close alliances with relatively weaker regional countries that are close to its own policy lines. Again through such methods, a regional power can increase its influence both at the regional and global levels.

There are also possible policy options for the regional powers at the global level. Nolte states that regional weaker states consider regional institutions as important since they establish the main rules and practices for the stronger states and

the weaker states get the opportunity to make their interests known in the forums.[83] Regional powers, on the other hand, tend to use the international organizations at the global level to make their interests and the situation in the region known to the rest of the international community. Thus, effective diplomatic usage of international institutions can provide a better bargaining position to the regional powers. Moreover, regional powers are usually taken seriously by such organizations, as they are prominent actors of the region. Thus, they might enjoy being quite vocal in international organizations in a crisis environment. Moreover, through active diplomacy in the UN, the regional powers may be granted the opportunity to participate in the peacekeeping missions in the region, thus have an opportunity to increase their influence in their own respective regions.

Another possible option for a regional power is to form an alliance with the superpower or great powers that are involved in the region. During the conflicts, the regional powers might enter in coalition with the dominant power, which in most cases is the US as it involves in most of the regional conflicts in one way or another and it frequently seeks alliances of the regional powers. Through this process, the regional power can increase its bargaining capacity as it starts to bandwagon with the dominant power. This, on the one hand, increases the credibility of the regional power within the region by being supported by the dominant power, and, on the other hand, it increases the material and diplomatic capabilities of the regional power. More importantly, through this alliance the regional power can make its interests known to the dominant power and therefore is able to find a better opportunity to accomplish these goals.

[83] Nolte, p. 895.

However, this alliance might bring some problems as well. The perception and therefore the diplomatic credibility of the great power might be low in that particular region and thereby makes it difficult for the great power to influence the regional dynamics of the particular area. Or the regional powers might find themselves left to assume most of the burden when the dominant power decides to go home or when the domestic opinion in the dominant power changes.[84] However, if the policy goals and interests of the regional power and the great power overlap, it is one of the primary options for the regional power to form an alliance with the dominant power to pursue its own foreign policy goals and national interests.

Another option for a regional power in such scenario might be to increase its influence in the region through several soft power elements. Using their historical and cultural connections to the region, on the one hand, and their superior material capacities, on the other, the regional powers can increase their diplomatic influence in crisis zones by several methods such as humanitarian aid or economic assistance. Such soft power elements often serve the nation states with superior capacities to influence the international affairs to a greater extent.

I should still note that all of these options do not capture the importance of a regional power in its region during the times of conflict. These policies can be applied by any state in the region, and only difference of the regional power is that it has more material and discursive power over the region, thus more diplomatic ability. It does not answer why the regional powers matter in the regional conflicts in which they do not actively engage.

The regional power may use some or all of the policies stated above to increase its bargaining capacity and pursue its own foreign policy goals. But it does not

[84] Hurrel, Some Reflections on the Role of Intermediary Powers in International Institutions, p. 7.

explain why the great powers should take the regional power as an important actor. As discussed above, the great power involvement in a region that is in active conflict does not resolve the conflict permanently, but only can bring a cold peace to a region, since regions are mostly autonomous sets of units and the conflicts among them can be resolved through the power dynamics within a region alone. For that reason, the importance of the regional power starts after the establishment of cold peace, since a cold peace is not enough to normalize the region and build a regional order, but a warm peace is necessary.

The regional power is among the most important elements here, since it is the regional power(s) that constitute a regional order. Thus, as the great powers are aware of the importance of the regional powers at this process, they have the obligation to take them more seriously at the bargaining table, considering the later roles of the regional powers in their own respective region. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that, especially during the final negations for conflict resolution, the great powers usually take full responsibility, and exclude regional elements from the negotiation table. Still, as regional powers are closely connected to the region and its dynamics, they can never be fully excluded and often consulted even though they are not included in the peace negotiations. In the end, it is the extreme importance of the regional powers in establishing and maintaining the regional order increases the diplomatic influence of the regional power both at the regional and global level, and thus increases its negotiation capacity. As the maintenance of the order within a region highly depends on regional powers, they often manage to increase their diplomatic ability in the post-conflict periods.

To briefly conclude my arguments stated in this part, the great powers involved in regional conflicts become the most preeminent factors to bring an end to the

conflict, yet as the main reasons of the conflict depend on the internal dynamics of an interdependent region in terms of security, their resolution often brings a cold peace to the region. Still, in such scenario, the ability of a regional power decreases as the great powers take more responsibility in the region. After the establishment of ceasefire, however, regional powers start to play a more important and influential role as they have a special responsibility in the maintenance of the order in a given region. Still, it should be remembered that this is still dependent on the continuity of presence of great forces in that particular region. As the influence of the great powers does not decrease in the region, the ability of a regional power would still be to a limited degree.

Another important note to be added here is that every region has its own dynamics; thus, it is often dangerous to make generalizations on regional politics. Indeed, it might not always bring a reliable outcome to expect same results from two completely different and separated regions.

At this point, I should note that even though the existing literature on regional studies and regional powers led me to conclude such outcome on the influence of regional powers in the post-conflict period, my research on the Balkan conflicts during the 1990s led me to another outcome on the influence of Turkey in the Balkans after the conflicts.

This was mainly due to the internal elements of the Balkan region, since with the collapse of the communist regimes in the region and the dissolution of Yugoslavia, more and more Balkan countries turned their faces to the West, and over time, the Western powers started be increasingly influential in the regional affairs in the Balkans. In fact, several accounts here even claim that with the 2000s, the

Balkans ceased to be region in its own and became a sub-region of Europe.[85] For the moment, this might be an exaggerated conclusion, as the EU still has not completely taken over the political, economic, and social dynamics of the Balkans. Still, it is an undeniable fact that it has increased its influence in the region continuously, and still maintains a deep influence on its affairs. For that reason, as I will emphasize in the next chapters that Turkey could not manage to increase its influence in the region in the post-conflict period. Yet it still should not mean that Turkey ceased to be an influential actor in the region, considering the fact that Turkey even in the 2000s and early 2010s continued to pursue an active diplomacy in the region and continued to be regarded as a regional power in the Balkans.

My main point here is that even though my research on the existing literature led me to conclude that the influence of regional powers increases in the post-conflict period considering the decreasing attention of the great powers and increasing importance of internal dynamics to establish a permanent peace, due to the internal dynamics of the Balkan region, this was not the case, since the involvement of the great powers did not decrease, but on the contrary increased in the Balkans after the conflicts. Mainly due to the first reason, the internal dynamics of the Balkans started to be deeply influenced by the Western powers and European Regional Security Complex, which was not only aimed at by the Western powers alone, but by the regional countries as well.

Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy during the 1990s

[85] See, for example, Buzan and Wæver, and John R. Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe: A Century of War and Transition* (Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

The end of Cold War affected the whole international community and every nation state had to adapt to the new circumstances. Consequently, Turkey had to revise its foreign policy as well. It should be noted that the effect of the change in the international order was considerable on Turkey, as it is located at the intersection of many regions that experienced transition problems and conflicts following these changes. In addition to security problems, the cultural and historical connection of Turkey with these regions was a contributing factor leading Turkish foreign policy makers to pursue an active foreign policy towards its neighboring regions.[86]

In order to discuss the changing patterns of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s, I will first briefly analyze historical determinants of Turkish foreign policy since the foundation of the republic. As a newly founded republic after more than six centuries of imperial heritage, population of which had survived but had also been devastated by a series of wars that had lasted more than ten years, foreign policy carried great importance for the founders of the Turkish republic. As a country that more or less had achieved its goals in the War of Independence, Turkey became a status quo power during the interwar period and followed a strict neutrality policy in World War II until the very last days of the war. The main characteristics of the Turkish foreign policy during the governments of Atatürk and later İnönü were detachment from the imperial heritage with risk-free and peace promoting policies.[87] Furthermore, the nation-state building process by the principles of Atatürk, along

[86] Kemal Kirişçi, "Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri," in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, edited by Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998). p. 618.
[87] Barry Rubin, "Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Alanda Değişen Rolü," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, edited by Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002). p. 2.

with the social and economic development, constituted the most important issues for the Turkish political elites during that period.[88]

With the end of World War II, Turkey faced immediate security threats from the USSR, and consequently sided with the Western camp during the Cold War. In addition to the Soviet threat, it should also be noted that the Turkish political elites were already Western-oriented. During the Cold War years, Turkey mainly followed a NATO-oriented foreign policy and avoided stepping out from Western-oriented policies.

Still, Turkey's relations with the Western camp and the USA had several low points during the Cold War years, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, after which the Turkish political elites came to realize that the USA might sacrifice Turkey for its own political interests as the US foreign policy makers decided to remove nuclear war heads from Turkey without informing Turkish officials following a Soviet demand; the Johnson Letter in 1964, in which President Johnson implied in a letter to Prime Minister İsmet İnönü that NATO might not continue to guarantee Turkey's safety against the USSR if it took military action on Cyprus; the Opium Crisis between 1970 and 1974, in which the USA forced Turkey first to reduce its opium production in 1970, and later on to forbid opium production completely in 1971 until the abolition of prohibition on opium production in 1974; and lastly Turkish military intervention in Cyprus in 1974 after which the USA imposed an arms embargo on Turkey between 1975 and 1978. Still, the constant Soviet threat prevented Turkey to follow a more independent foreign policy and Turkey continued to its NATO oriented policy during the Cold War years.

[88] Ibid., p. 2.

As Turkey was concentrated on its security problems and relations with the Western camp, it could not follow a strong foreign policy regarding its neighboring regions. In fact, Turkish regional policy was more or less absorbed by global ideological rivalry between the two sides. Considering Turkey's neighboring regions, the Balkans was absorbed strongly by two camps of the Cold War period, excluding Yugoslavia; the Caucasus was Soviet territory; and in the Middle East, the rivalry between the USA and the USSR in addition to the regional dynamics of the region, which were considered dangerous by Turkish foreign policy makers prevented Turkey to follow an influential foreign policy. This is not to claim that Turkey did not have a regional policy until the 1990s. Considering the rivalry with Greece, and the Turkish minorities in the region for example, Turkey could not exclude itself from Balkan politics. Its interests were at a considerably lower degree than in the post-Cold War period. As Şule Kut states that it is hardly Turkey's fault that it could not follow a strong regional policy, since in the bipolar world structure it was hardly possible for any nation state to be an efficient regional power.[89] With the end of the Cold War, Turkey faced an opportunity to become a regional power in many different regions.

With the dissolution of the USSR, Turkey found itself in a changing international structure. The possibility of a global conflict was replaced now with the regional conflicts, and after more than three centuries, Turkey no longer shared borders with Russia. This changed the threat perception of Turkish political elites, which had been considered from one side only during the Cold War. Gencer Özcan argues that the end of the Cold War changed Turkey's threat perception in three ways. First, Turkey had to turn from global politics to regional politics. Second,

[89] Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dış Politika Anahtarları," in *En Uzun On Yıl: Türkiye'nin Ulusal Güvenlik ve Dış Politika Gündeminde Doksanlı Yıllar*, edited by Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut, (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1998). p. 54.

increase in usage of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction changed the conventional means of war. Third, the ethnic conflicts in the Middle East and the Balkans made Turkey more interested in regional politics.[90] Kemal Kirişçi further states that after the Cold War, Turkey faced mass refugee movements from the conflict zones. This not only created security problems, but also strained the limited resources of the country.[91]

Oral Sander argues that in addition to the fact that Turkey was a direct neighbor to the regions that experienced transition problems, it had to revise its foreign policy for two other reasons. First, with the 1990s Turkey's neighbors were changed from a superpower and its allies to newly independent, relatively small and unstable countries. Second, Turkey's cultural connection with these countries led it to follow a more active foreign policy.[92] He further argues that ideological bloc-based policies and the deterrence of nuclear weapons were replaced with regional conflicts. In addition, as the global threat decreased, so did the US security guarantee on Turkey. The fall of communism also led to ultranationalist and fundamentalist religion-based policies in many countries, and as a result, Turkey had to concentrate on regional policies.[93]

Barry Rubin, in a similar approach, writes that the variety of the problems and regions Turkey had to face in that period constituted the most dramatic and special aspect of Turkish foreign policy, as it had to follow an active foreign policy towards the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Russia, without failing

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[90] Gencer Özcan, "Türkiye'nin Doksanlı Yıllarda Değişen Güvenlik Ortamı," in *En Uzun On Yıl: Türkiye'nin Ulusal Güvenlik ve Dış Politika Gündeminde Doksanlı Yıllar*, edited by Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut, (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1998). pp. 13-15.
[91] Kirişçi, Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri, p. 622.
[92] Oral Sander, "Yeni Bir Bölgesel Güç Olarak Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Hedefleri," in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, edited by Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998). p. 607.
[93] Ibid., p. 608.

to preserve its former alliances and strong relations with the West and especially with the US.[94] In the end, it was a combination of direct security threats from, and cultural connection with, these regions that led Turkey to follow a region based foreign policy in that period, and in the end allowed it to become a regional power.

I should note that the change in the Turkish foreign policy started earlier in terms of the economic perspective when Turkey started to take a neoliberal economic turn in 1980, transforming its economy from its import substitution model to an export-led growth, and therefore started to improve relations with the neighborhood regions in order to find new markets and increase exports.[95] Due to strong security considerations, it could not follow a political economy-based foreign policy and therefore could not manage to increase economic influence as it was expected. From 1983 to 1998 it managed to double its exports; however, that was far less what was hoped for, since during the same period Mexico, Brazil, and South Korea managed to quadruple their exports.[96] During the 1990s, it could be claimed that Turkey could not benefit from the economic opportunities provided by the New World Order. Most notably, it could not meet the import demands of former communist countries as was expected.[97] It is, however, also notable that an important reason of this inefficiency was the conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East, as they had devastating effects on Turkish trade.[98]

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[94] Barry Rubin, "Türkiye'nin Yeni Dış Politikasını Anlamak," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, edited by Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002). p. 374.
[95] Mine Eder, "Küreselleşme ve Türkiye'nin Değişen Ekonomi Politiği," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, edited by Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002). p. 284.
[96] Ibid., p. 291.
[97] Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, "Yeni Dünya Düzeni ve Türk Dış Politikası," in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, edited by Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998). p. 641.
[98] Kirişçi, Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri, p. 623.

It should be noted here these changes were considered to be dangerous threats and opportunities at the same time by Turkish foreign policy makers. As the instability with the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the USSR, and the conflicts in the Middle East created new threats towards Turkey, the new situation was also considered an opportunity to increase Turkish influence in these regions. On the one hand, these changes were almost a nightmare for stability seeking foreign policy attitude of Turkey.[99] But, on the other hand, Turkish foreign policy makers expected Turkey to become an influential power in world politics in the short run following these changes.[100] President Demirel stated on that the end of the Cold War provided Turkey with promising conditions, and Turkey was doing its best to benefit from these opportunities.[101] Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Hikmet Çetin stated that by following a consistent, dependable, and reliable foreign policy, in addition to Turkey's active role in conflict resolution in many conflicts from Bosnia to Somalia, it managed to increase its influence at the regional and international levels.[102]

The Cold War policy determinants were inefficient and insufficient for Turkey in the new environment. As a result, it had to strengthen its ties with the Balkans and the Middle East.[103] Passive or reactive policies had to be replaced with more active policies in the 1990s. As Şule Kut describes, a regional power is a country, whose ideas and interests are respected by the other players in the region, and Turkey

[99] Kut, Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dış Politika Anahtarları, p. 48.
[100] Tanıl Bora, "Turkish National Identity, Turkish Nationalism and the Balkan Question," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 116.
[101] Süleyman Demirel, "21. Yüzyılın Eşiğinde Türk Dış Politikası," *Yeni Türkiye*, Türk Dış Politikası Özel Sayısı, no. 3 (1995). p. 10.
[102] Hikmet Çetin, "Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Öncelikleri," *Yeni Türkiye*, Türk Dış Politikası Özel Sayısı, no. 3 (1995). p. 55.
[103] Rubin, Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Alanda Değişen Rolünü Anlamak, p. 4.

achieved this goal with the 1990s.[104] Faruk Sönmezoğlu with a similar aspect argues that in the context of post-Cold War world order, a country's role at the international and regional level is determined by its capability to influence through military, economic, political, or ideological aspects.[105] At this point, it could be stated that Turkey managed to increase its influence in the regional politics during the 1990s.

As a result of Turkey's active foreign policy that aimed to increase its influence however, it was argued by several circles that Turkey was a coercive power in the 1990s. Discourses of several Turkish politicians; such as President Demirel's discourse claiming Turkey as the leader of the Turkic world from the Adriatic to the Great Wall of China, or President Özal's neo-Ottomanist and overly activist claims, doubtlessly strengthened these accusations. Such claims were regarded as too ambitious for Turkey and led to accusations on the prospect of hegemony building attempts by Turkey in different regions. Still, these discourses had very little resonances in the countries with which Turkey tried to establish better relations using its cultural ties. Moreover, despite these claims, Turkey mostly managed to be realist in this period.

Still, as Turkey faced important security threats, it from time to time had to follow a coercive foreign policy. The threats from internal and external sources led Turkey to follow a security-based and army and bureaucracy-led foreign policy. Therefore, the its foreign policy in the 1990s was sometimes considered as being the policies of a coercive regional power, or a post-Cold War warrior.[106] In fact, the Two

[104] Şule Kut, "1990'larda Türk Dış Politikasının Anahtarları," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, edited by Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002). p. 13.
[105] Faruk Sönmezoğlu, "Turkey and the World in the 21st Century," in *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War Era*, edited by İdris Bal, (Boca Raton, FI: Brown Walker Press, 2004). p. 86.
[106] Kemal Kirişçi, "The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 40 (Spring 2009). p.31.

and a Half Wars Doctrine of Şükrü Elekdağ, undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, claiming that the country must at all times be ready to confront war on two and a half fronts, became an important determinant of Turkish foreign policy in that period.[107] In such environment, it was a crucial aim for Turkey to prevent any alliances formed by its rivals such as Syria, Greece, or Armenia.[108]

Despite Turkey's security-based foreign policy, it would not be fair to claim that Turkey was an aggressive power during that period. Among its new neighbors, it only experienced problems with Armenia and built very close relations with its other neighbors. Moreover, many of the new neighbors of Turkey also tried to establish close and positive relations with it.[109] In this problematic period, it tried to continue to be a status quo conservative country, yet the conflicts forced it to follow a more active policy.[110] In all of the neighboring regions, building stability was an important part of Turkish foreign policy, thus it took diplomatic initiatives in different regions to find a just and fair solutions to the existing disputes.

Regarding Turkish foreign policy during this period, it should be mentioned that in any of the regional conflicts, avoiding any unilateral use of force was an important principle. Such action was regarded as dangerous, as it would most probably intensify the conflicts and harm Turkey's reputation in the international community. Instead, Turkey tried to mobilize support and pressure groups within international organizations, most notably in the UN and the Organization for Security

[107] Ibid., p.31.; Two and a half wars doctrine was mainly developed against direct security threats to Turkey during the 1990s, which were according to this doctrine Syria, Greece, and the PKK.
[108] Sönmezoğlu, p. 91.
[109] İlhan Uzgel, "Türkiye ve Balkanlar: İstikrarın Sağlanmasında Türkiye'nin Rolü," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, edited by Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002). p. 117.
[110] Kut, Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dış Politika Anahtarları, p. 58.

and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).[111] Barry Rubin says that it successfully managed to avoid direct involvement in the conflicts, without failing to protect its national interests.[112] On that point, by describing Turkish foreign policy, President Demirel argued that Turkey was an element of stability by providing active support for the solution of existing conflicts in the interaction points of the world's most problematic regions.[113]

An important point is how to determine the new characteristics of the new Turkish foreign policy. As discussed above, Turkish foreign policy became considerably more active with the 1990s, compared to the Cold War period. Kut writes that in the changing environment, Turkey followed a multifaceted, supportive of interventions in the conflict zones, but only with the international community, much more active in international organizations, quite active but also cautious and realist foreign policy.[114] Furthermore, recognizing the independence of newly founded states, conducting diplomatic relations with them and sending economic, military and humanitarian aid became the primary means of Turkish foreign policy during the 1990s.[115] Indeed, such policies would possibly have been too active for Turkey in the bipolar world structure with a constant Soviet threat.

Turkish foreign policy makers were initially not enthusiastic about the changes in the international system, due to the prospect of conflicts and transition periods following these changes. Nevertheless, they were also aware of the opportunities provided by the new order, thus they aimed at protecting Turkish national interests and increasing Turkish influence, while at the same time trying to reduce the

[111] Kirişçi, Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri, p. 619.
[112] Rubin, Türkiye'nin Yeni Dış Politikasını Anlamak, p. 379.
[113] Demirel, p. 8.
[114] Kut, Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dış Politika Anahtarları p. 58.
[115] Ibid. p. 49.

conflicts in the neighboring regions and build stability. The new circumstances I would claim, forced Turkey to follow a more active regional policy at all fronts, almost irrespectively of the wishes of its political elites.

An important question here is whether these new determinants of the foreign policy were a structural change in historical determinants of the Turkish foreign policy or were they a mere continuation of earlier policies. There is no question that the new international structure demanded new strategies from Turkey, as it did from all countries. Nevertheless, the determinants in the new era did not result in a radical disengagement of its historical foreign policy determinants.

Mustafa Aydın lists several historical determinants of Turkish foreign policy, which are first, sensitivity to conflicts regarding their constant threat to the security of the country; second, avoiding economic or political dependence to any country in any form; third, being an intersection point between the East and the West; fourth, the desire to become a developed country; fifth, the importance of the legality of its actions; and sixth, the importance of improving the reputation and image of Turkey in the international community.[116] Kirişçi states that the evolving foreign policy did not change the historical foreign policy determinants, as protection of territorial integrity and national security remained as the primary aims of Turkey. The main change according to Kirişçi was that during the Cold War these aims led Turkey to follow a passive and reactive foreign policy, whereas in the post-Cold War structure led it to follow a much more active foreign policy in order to protect these aims.[117] After examining these determinants together with the changes in Turkish foreign policy following the end of the Cold War, I would claim that these changes did not

[116] Mustafa Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Seventy Five Years of the Turkish Republic, 35, no. 4 (October 1999). pp. 180-181.
[117] Kirişçi, Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri, p. 631.

represent a radical break with the past determinants or a structural change, but were an adaptation to the new international order and regional circumstances.

Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans during the 1990s: An Overview

Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans in the 1990s needs to be analyzed in detail in order to develop a satisfactory understanding of the foreign policy determinants of Turkey throughout the 1990s. Indeed, Turkish diplomatic efforts in the Balkans give important insights on these particular determinants. Moreover, as the Balkans became a main focus point of Turkey, these diplomatic efforts also became a direct constituent of its foreign policy determinants in the 1990s.

It should be noted however, in the immediate post-Cold War years, Turkey's main attention was directed at Central Asia and the Middle East. It was, in fact, due to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina that the Balkans became the main attention point of Turkish diplomacy.[118] The Balkans were relatively weak in terms of market size or natural recourses, and the strategic importance of the Balkans for Turkey was not as important as the Caucasus or the Middle East.[119] In terms of classical strategic considerations, namely direct security threats, Gencer Özcan states that only Greece seemed to constitute a direct security threat, but definitely not as important as Iraq, Syria, or the domestic Kurdistan Worker's Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê,*

[118] Aydın Babuna, "İç Politikadan Dış Politikaya: İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyete Balkanlar (1908 - 2008)," in *Yüzüncü Yılında İkinci Meşrutiyet'in İlanı ve Makedonya'ya Etkileri* (Skopje: Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2011). p. 340.
[119] Barışa Çağrı, p. 27.

PKK).[120] Indeed, during the 1990s, Turkey's foreign policy makers were convinced that the main threat to the security of Turkey was from the Middle East.[121]

Thus, as the collapse of the USSR and war in Yugoslavia forced Turkey to be an active diplomatic actor in the region, it was not only because of security issues or the geopolitical weight of the region, but it was also related to the cultural connections with the region, most notably the Turkish nationals who had migrated from the Balkans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Turkish and Muslim minorities in the Balkans, and centuries of common history between Turkey and the Balkans.[122]

Tanıl Bora argues that the Balkans constitute a region that feeds the sources of the Turkish national identity through the losses of the provinces in the Balkan peninsula during the nineteenth century, which had a major influence on the political elites of the newly founded republic.[123] Moreover, the identity and cultural connection issue in Turkey's case could not be thought of separately from strategic considerations as well. The Muslim and Turkish minorities in Thrace, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Albania increased the influence of strategic factors on Turkish foreign policy regarding this region. At this point, it should also be mentioned that the assimilation policy of the Zhivkov government in Bulgaria aimed

[120] Gencer Özcan, "Continuity and Change in Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 292.
[121] Meliha B. Altunışık, "Güvenlik Kıskacında Türkiye Orta Doğu İlişkileri," in *En Uzun On Yıl: Türkiye'nin Ulusal Güvenlik ve Dış Politika Gündeminde Doksanlı Yıllar*, edited by Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut, (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1998). p. 333.
[122] Dimitar Bechev, "A Very Long Engagement: Turkey in the Balkans," in *Another Empire: A Decade of Turkey's Foreign Policy under the Justice and Development Party*, edited by Kerem Öktem, Ayşe Kadıoğlu, and Mehmet Karlı, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2012). p. 211.
[123] Bora, Turkish National Identity, Turkish Nationalism and the Balkan Question, p. 116.

at the Turkish population after 1984 made Turkey more sensitive regarding the interests of the Muslim and Turkish population in the Balkans.[124]

Still, it would not be correct to argue that the security and strategic considerations did not matter regarding Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans. On the contrary, as the region was located on Turkish trade routes to Western Europe, the strategic importance was considerable. Moreover, the instability in the region in addition to the dangers of ethnic conflicts constituted strategic threats to Turkish foreign policy. Thus, as will be elaborated with more detail in the next chapter, strategic elements were still an important if not the primary determinant in Turkish foreign policy. Moreover, the weight of historical connection between Turkey and the Balkans should not be exaggerated, considering the fact that it is not always a benefit for Turkey, but also constituted a constraint in Turkey's relations with several Balkan countries. Many Balkan countries that lived under Ottoman domination for centuries do not have a positive memory of the Ottoman past; thus, leaving the Muslims apart, many Balkan nations did not actually want Turkey back to the region with an influential and powerful role.[125]

During this period, Turkey had a variety of aims regarding the Balkans, but the main aim can be stated as establishing stability in the region through diplomatic means and if not possible through coercive power, but only with the international community. Thus, finding a just solution within the international norms and principles to the conflicts in Yugoslavia was the most important aim Turkey in that period.

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[124] Mustafa Türkeş, "Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim," *Avrasya Dosyası*, Balkanlar Özel Sayısı,14, no. 1 (2008). p. 255.
[125] J. F. Brown, "Turkey: Back to the Balkans?" in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, edited by Ian O. Lesser and Graham Fuller, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993). p. 155.

Another aim of Turkey during that period regarding the Balkan region was to promote its position as a regional power and became an influential diplomatic actor in the region. In that regard, it could be claimed that Turkey tried to fill the power vacuum in the Balkans that had been created following the dissolution of the USSR.[126] With that aim, it successfully established good and close diplomatic relations with every Balkan country, excluding Greece and Serbia.

The main means of Turkey in order to follow this foreign policy is listed by Uzgel as active diplomacy, keeping in line with the policy attitudes of international community and its Western allies, and close diplomatic relations with regional countries, mostly concentrated on military agreements considering the security demands of these countries in an instable region.[127] In addition to that, Turkey's close relations with the USA and membership in NATO became other attracting factors for the Balkan countries to build close military relations with Turkey.[128]

During that period, Turkey tried to mobilize support in a variety of international organizations to multilateral actions close to Turkey's interests. The diplomacy in international organizations were not carried only in the UN and NATO, but also in the OIC, as Turkey tried to mobilize support of Islamic and Turkic countries in that period as well.[129] Moreover, Turkey tried to follow a long-term foreign policy, aiming at establishing a stable order to replace regional instability and conflict, mostly through regional cooperation initiatives and organizations.[130]

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[126] İlhan Uzgel, "90'larda Türkiye İçin Bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alanı Olarak Balkanlar," in *En Uzun On Yıl: Türkiye'nin Ulusal Güvenlik ve Dış Politika Gündeminde Doksanlı Yıllar*, edited by Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut, (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1998). p. 403.
[127] Ibid., p. 404.
[128] Osman Metin Öztürk, "Türk Dış Politikasında Balkanlar," in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, edited by Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, (Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2001). p. 21.
[129] Kirişçi, Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri, p. 616.
[130] Ibid., p. 618.

A few points here must be added regarding Turkey's relations with the West. The end of the Cold War led to several considerations among Turkish foreign policy makers regarding the decreasing strategic importance of Turkey, as it no longer had a role to play as a block to Soviet influence. For that reason, Turkish political elites made considerable efforts to preserve Turkey's alliances with NATO and the USA in the 1990s. Indeed, Turkey's increasing activism in the regional politics was not in any way regarded as an alternative to its alliances with the West. The Balkan region constituted an important element of this policy, since it became the second area of cooperation between Turkey and the USA after the Gulf War in the aftermath of the Cold War.[131]

At the end, there is no question that the Balkan region constituted an important element of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s, providing strong insights into the determinants and aims of Turkish foreign policy in that particular period. Thus, to analyze the foreign policy of a regional power towards its respective region, understanding Turkey's policy towards the Balkans could provide important insights for theoretical debates within studies on regional powers and their influence in the times of crisis. Aydın Babuna states that one of the most efficient methods to analyze Turkey's post-Cold War Balkan policy is to understand Turkey's attitude towards the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo, which devastated the peace and stability in the region for almost a decade. As he further argues, the crisis management efforts of Turkey would provide important insights on Turkey's foreign policy as well.[132]

[131] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alanı Olarak Balkanlar, p. 409.
[132] Babuna, İç Politikadan Dış Politikaya, p. 340.

CHAPTER 3

THE WAR IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND TURKISH DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES

After a series of economic and ethnic based social problems, Yugoslavia entered into a disintegration process in the 1990s. This process and the following wars came as a shock to the international community. No regional or great power was actually prepared for such devastating events on the European continent. In fact, the international community was dealing with the dissolution of the Soviet bloc and the Gulf War at the time and for that reason was unprepared for such conflicts in the Balkans.[133] Moreover, the European powers were dealing with domestic problems and priorities during the late 1980s and early 1990s such as economic recession and European integration, whereas the US did not consider the Balkans as tied to its own direct interests.[134]

Turkish foreign policy as well was not ready to meet such a challenge as the crisis in Yugoslavia started and as the events developed and spread more quickly than anticipated, its foreign policy makers had to establish a policy for Yugoslavia. As former Turkish ambassador İsmail Soysal states, Turkey's main areas of focus regarding the Balkan region was actually concentrated on the fall of communism and

[133] Misha Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers* (London: Granta, 2000). pp. 634-635.
[134] Joyce P. Kaufman, *NATO and the Former Yugoslavia: Crisis, Conflict, and the Atlantic Alliance* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002). p. 61.

reevaluation of the region as a new area of cooperation.[135] For that reason, similar to many other countries, Turkish foreign policy was determined as the events proceeded. Only six months after the outbreak of the war, the crisis assumed a serious international dimension. As a result, the US, the UK, Germany, France, Russia, as well as Turkey pursued different positions towards Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.[136]

In this chapter, I will discuss and analyze Turkish diplomatic initiatives towards the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In first part of the chapter, I will analyze the immediate reaction of Turkish diplomacy as the disintegration process was in its early stages. Later on, I will concentrate on the Turkish reactions to war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the next part, I will discuss Turkish motives, such as strategic aims or identity based explanations, in its foreign policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina, and then I will make a general evaluation of Turkish foreign policy. In the last part, I will claim that Turkey, as a regional power, did not possessed the diplomatic capacity or influence to bring an end to the conflict and it was the actions of the great powers, most notably the USA, that brought this conflict to an end. Nevertheless, I will also argue that a regional power, namely Turkey in this instance, could play an active and influential foreign policy and had a determining role in the shape of the events, such as mediating between the Croat and Muslim Bosnians, through its active diplomacy.

The Initial Reactions of Turkish Diplomacy towards the Dissolution of Yugoslavia

[135] İsmail Soysal, "Günümüzde Balkanlar ve Türkiye'nin Tutumu: Kronoloji ve Genel Bilgiler (1989 - 1992)," in *Balkanlar/ Ortadoğu ve Balkan İncelemeleri Vakfı* (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1993). p. 189.
[136] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 638.

The problems in Yugoslavia that led to a disastrous dissolution mainly developed during the 1980s. The reasons for the dissolution and the problems of Yugoslavia experienced in this period are many, but they are not the subject of this thesis and therefore will not be discussed here. There are some matters, however, that need to be mentioned. The economic problems in Yugoslavia together with economic inequality among the republics led to an increase in ethnic social tensions. The GDP of Slovenia in the late 1980s was six times that of the GDP of Kosovo. Slovenia with only 8 percent of the total population constituted 20 percent of GDP and 30 percent of exports.[137] International debt, unemployment, and high inflation constituted major problems of the Yugoslav economy. By 1988, the living standards in Yugoslavia declined 70 percent of the 1978 level.[138]

It is not difficult to imagine how these economic problems led to political and social problems among the different nationalities. Thus, as Sabrina Ramet argues, it was not the religious differences that impeded interethnic social contact until the Serbian politicians began to manipulate religious sensitivity and history.[139] Such manipulation was only possible after deep economic problems that Yugoslav people had been suffering for years. Misha Glenny agrees, arguing that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not start because of a breakdown between the three national communities in social relations but because national commitment dominated the

[137] Ivan T. Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe 1944 - 1993: Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). p. 293.
[138] Atilla Agh, *Emerging Democracies in East Central Europe and the Balkans* (Michigan: Edward Elgar, 1998). p. 168.
[139] Sabrina Petra Ramet, "War in the Balkans," *Foreign Affairs,* 71, no. 4 (Fall 1992). p. 81.

elections in 1990. It was the collapse of political relations between the parties that led to a war.[140]

During the 1980s, Turkey was aware of the problems within Yugoslavia and minority politics of the Yugoslav government, but still tried to keep good relations with Yugoslavia, and in line with its traditional policy, accepted Yugoslavia as a single country.[141]

As the events in Yugoslavia at the start of the 1990s showed strong signals of dissolution, Turkey adopted a foreign policy that supported the territorial integrity of this country and advocated a loose federation. Two Yugoslav republics, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, also favored a loose federation, but they were reluctant to stay in a federation in which Croatia and Slovenia would not be present.[142] Out of six Yugoslav republics, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro were the weaker ones. Considering Montenegro was the closest ally of Serbia, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina did not want to stay in a federation in which they would be considered as minority and suppressed by Serbian nationalism. On the third anniversary of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the country was still in war, President Alija Izetbegovic declared that Bosnia stood at a historical breaking point at that point, either to become a part of greater Serbia or to gain independence despite all the risks.[143]

On 10 April 1991, Borisav Jovic, the last president of Yugoslavia, paid a diplomatic visit to Ankara and met with his Turkish counterpart, Turgut Özal. Özal

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[140] Misha Glenny, "The Macedonian Question," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Denchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). p. 139.
[141] Şule Kut, "Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna - Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993," in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, edited by Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2001). p. 325.
[142] Ibid., p. 323.
[143] Alija Izetbegovic, "Bosna - Hersek'in Bağımsızlığının 3. Yıldönümü," *Yeni Türkiye*, Türk Dış Politikası Özel Sayısı, no. 3 (1995). p. 23.

said after the meeting that Turkey had been closely watching the situation in Yugoslavia and he hoped a peaceful solution to these problems would be found. At every opportunity, Turkish foreign policy makers stressed that the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia needed to be protected.[144]

The main determinants in this argument was staying in line with the traditional motives of Turkish foreign policy, which was the protection of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the fear that a breakup of Yugoslavia would dramatically change the delicate balance of power in the Balkans. In addition to the fact that the dissolution of Yugoslavia could unsettle the balance of power between Turkey and Greece in the Balkans, Turkish politicians also considered ethno nationalism dangerous as related to the Kurdish question in Turkey.[145] Nevertheless, events had long passed the period where they could be prevented. On 25 June 1991, Croatia and Slovenia declared their independences and on 27 June 1991, the first intervention of the Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija,* JNA) took place in Slovenia. Ironically, the first person died in the dissolution process was a Slovenian soldier of the JNA, who was shot dead by the Slovenian forces.[146] It was understood by the Macedonian and Bosnian officials as well that the federation could not be kept and dissolution was inevitable.

The Macedonian President, Kiro Gligorov, on 9 July 1991, and the Bosnian President, Alija Izetbegovic, on 15 July 1991, paid diplomatic visits to Turkey, seeking diplomatic help for their struggles for independence.[147] Seeking diplomatic help, Izetbegovic visited a number of Islamic countries in the summer of 1991 as

[144] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 326.
[145] Bechev, p. 212.
[146] *The Death of Yugoslavia* (BBC Documentary, 1995). Part 2.
[147] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 326.

well.[148] In August 1991, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Safa Giray visited Belgrade, Sarajevo, and Skopje.[149] After his visit, he declared that Turkey considered these events as an internal matter of Yugoslavia and declared his hopes for the protection of the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia with peaceful solutions to the problems.[150] Turkish foreign policy remained reluctant as two newly emerged republics in the Balkans sought its diplomatic assistance. Turkey did not want to be seen in the international arena as a country that had provoked the dissolution.[151] In addition to that, the protection of the territorial integrity of a nation state was one of the centerpieces of Turkish foreign policy. For that reason, Turkey argued that a dialogue environment needed to be founded within the principles of OSCE and a peaceful solution to the problems.

After the EC recognized Slovenia and Croatia following the German ultimatum, and also Bulgaria's recognition of four new countries came as a relief to Turkish foreign policy.[152] Two days after the decision of the EC on 17 January 1992, Turkey announced that it would recognize any republic seceding from Yugoslavia without making any differentiation.[153] On 22 January 1992, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and his minister of foreign affairs paid a visit to Ankara and

[148] Louis A. Delvoie, "Through Islamic and Other Prisms: Turkey and the Bosnia Conflict," in *Bridges to Peace: Ten Years of Conflict Management in Bosnia*, edited by Charles C. Pentland, (Ontario: Queen's University, 2003). p. 237.
[149] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 1, legislative year 1, session 1, 06.11.1991, p. 28.
[150] Soysal, p. 226.
[151] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 327.
[152] Prior to the declaration of independence in Croatia and Slovenia, Germany gave full support to these countries. With the full support of Germany, and against the wishes of other EC members, Croatian parliament declared its sovereignty. Following this decision, Germany gave an ultimatum to the EC on the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, if the war had not ended in two months.
[153] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 327.

made a belated plea to Turkish foreign policy makers not to support the seceding republics, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On 31 January 1992 Belgrade recalled the last Yugoslav ambassador to Turkey, Trayan Petrovski. The main reason behind this decision was the fact that Petrovski was a Macedonian and the Serbian government had accused him of persuading Turkey to recognize the independence of Macedonia.[154] After that, the diplomatic links between Ankara and Belgrade mostly broke away. On 6 February 1992, Turkey officially recognized Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia. During the London Meeting for the former Yugoslavia, Turkey signed several protocols with these countries, determining the nature of formal diplomatic relations with these countries on 26 August 1992.[155]

During this period, and even long after the warfare started in Slovenia and Croatia, Turkey's attention to these events was not great. In November 1991, Bülent Ecevit, leader of the Democratic Left Party (*Demokratik Sol Parti,* DSP), which was one of the opposition parties, declared in the TBMM that Yugoslavia was on the edge of dissolution and accused the government of not including this matter in the newly established government program.[156] After the wars in Yugoslavia had started, the issue had attracted attention of the TBMM, public opinion, and the mass media in Turkey. For example, after the establishment of his government on 20 October 1991, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel had stated in his first international press conference on 11 December 1991 that Turkey would try to create an atmosphere of dialogue for the peaceful solution of the problems in the Balkans through

[154] Ibid., p. 327.
[155] Ibid., p. 327.
[156] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi,* Term 10, vol. 1, legislative year 1, session 8, 28.11.1991, pp. 210-212.

international organizations.[157] However, this attention did not grow dramatically until the spread of the warfare into Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In 1991, Turkish fears and concerns for Bosnia and Herzegovina were growing, but the foreign policy makers of Turkey could have not anticipated the disastrous turn of events in the next year. In fact, the Balkan situation was far from being one of Ankara's priority issues until the war spread to Bosnia and Herzegovina.[158] In December 1991, a member of parliament from the Social Democratic People's Party (*Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti*, SHP), which was the small coalition partner of the True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi* ,DYP) – SHP government that had been founded on 20 October 1991, Ali Dinçer, declared that Turkey must work to protect the unity and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. He stated that Turkey's diplomatic attention should be directed to Yugoslavia, but he did not mention Bosnia and Herzegovina particularly.[159]

It would not be fair to state, however, that there were no Turkish initiatives for Yugoslavia. On 22 January 1992, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Hikmet Çetin made a speech in the TBMM in order to inform the members of parliament on a recent NATO meeting. He stated that in the NATO meeting he had informed the ministers of foreign affairs of the NATO member states that Turkey's geographical closeness and cultural ties to the Balkans would give Turkey an upper hand to engage in an active and efficient diplomacy in the region as a problem solver.[160] By assuming such role in the Balkans, Turkey aimed to become an active diplomatic

[157] Şule Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia - Hercegovina," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 297.
[158] Brown, p. 151.
[159] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 1, legislative year 1, session 16, 17.12.1991, p. 557.
[160] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 3, legislative year 1, session 29, 22.01.1992, p. 97.

power in the Balkans in the post-Cold War structure. After the war spread to Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, the involvement of Turkish foreign policy in this issue took another form and the war in Bosnia became its top priority from beginning to end, as the Western powers failed to protect the Bosnian Muslims from the Serbian aggression.[161]

Turkish Reactions and Initiatives during the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina

As the war started in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the Serbia-backed paramilitary forces of the Bosnian Serbs, the attention of Turkey grew in the conflict in Yugoslavia. The wars in Slovenia and Croatia did not directly affect Turkish interests, but Bosnia and Herzegovina was a totally different matter.[162] The ethnic and cultural bonds with the Bosnian Muslims along with the critical political situation in the region led Turkey to take action in this conflict.[163] During more than three years of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey tried to play an active diplomacy in all possible diplomatic environments, aiming to support the cause of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this part, I will discuss the diplomatic efforts of Turkey and try to analyze the diplomatic capabilities of a regional power during a crisis and conflict in its own respective region.

The Bosnian Parliament declared its sovereignty on 15 October 1991, and on 29 February 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina passed a referendum for independence, which was boycotted by the Bosnian Serbs. On 3 March 1992, Bosnia and

[161] William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (London: Routledge, 2013). p. 202.
[162] Brown, p. 145.
[163] Rubin, Türkiye'nin Yeni Dış Politikasını Anlamak, p. 375.

Herzegovina declared its independence.[164] As a result of the Serbian boycott, the turnout in the referendum was 63 percent, and 99.7 percent of the voters voted for independence. According to the population census held in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1991, Bosnian Muslims constituted 43.7 percent of the population, whereas Serbs 31.4 and Croats 17.3 percent of the Bosnian population.[165] In 1991, as Yugoslavia started to dissolve, Serbian President Milosevic stated that he would not oppose to the right to self-determination of Yugoslav republics, yet he added that the same right should be given to Serbian populations within Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.[166] This argument became the basis of the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The motive of the Bosnian Serbs after the independence decision was quite simple: why would we become minority in your republic, whereas you could become minority in ours?

Right after the referendum the war actually started in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey's immediate response to the conflict was to raise international awareness for the situation. The first step for that was to achieve international recognition for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The war started as Turkey held the pro-tempore presidency in Council of Europe (CoE) and OIC, and Turkey carried out an intense diplomacy in these organizations supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 15 April 1992, Turkey applied to OSCE and OIC, and on 5 May to the UN for recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina and protection of its territorial integrity.[167]

Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognized as an independent country by OSCE on 19 April and by the UN on 22 May 1992, together with Slovenia and Croatia.

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[164] Aydın Babuna, *Bir Ulusun Doğuşu: Geçmişten Günümüze Boşnaklar* (İstanbul: Tarih Yurt Vakfı Yayınları, 2000). p. 204.
[165] Ibid., p. 199.
[166] The Death of Yugoslavia (BBC Documentary, 1995) , Part 1.
[167] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 329.

While we have no concrete proof of a cause-effect relationship between these events, the fact that within a few days of Turkey's application to the OSCE and the UN, these organizations recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina might indicate the influence of Turkey's lobbying efforts. After the recognition, Turkey continued to actively support Bosnia and Herzegovina in these organizations. On 4 May 1992, Turkey joined an unofficial group called "The Friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina" within the OSCE, founded by the initiatives of Hungary. Later the group decided to appoint a Turkish ambassador to the OSCE as the head and spokesman of the group.[168] On the day Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognized by the UN, Turkish Permanent Representative to the UN Mustafa Akşin made a speech in the UN General Assembly and urged all parties to bring an end to the war. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of the role of the UN in stopping the war.[169]

In fact, Turkish efforts for the international recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina had begun even before the war started. In the OIC Summit in Dakar on 9-11 December 1991, Bosnia was added as an invitee country to the OIC and the conference expressed its fear that the war operations might spread into Bosnia and Herzegovina.[170] Even though Turkey had advocated the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia before the war had started, in time Turkish foreign policy started to accept the reality and develop a policy according to the course of events.

As the war started in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the events in this country not only became a top priority for Turkish foreign policy, but also the issue was intensely discussed at the domestic level. The opposition parties such as the Motherland Party

[168] Kut, Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Hercegovina, p. 300.
[169] UN General Assembly Accords, 46th Session General Assembly Provisional Verbatim Record of the 86th Meeting Held at Headquarters, New York, 22 May 1992. http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N92/607/11/PDF/N9260711.pdf?OpenElement (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .
[170] OIC Summits Final Communique – Dakar Summit http://www.oic-oci.org/english/conf/is/6/6th-is-sum(final%20Com).htm (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .

(*Anavatan Partisi*, ANAP), the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP), the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), and DSP blamed the coalition government of DYP and SHP for not doing enough for the Bosnian Muslims. All of the opposition parties, although from different perspectives, stated that engagement in the international organizations or calling the Western countries to help would not be enough to stop the atrocities committed by the Serbian forces and for that reason Turkey needed to take more bilateral actions against Serbia.[171] On 7 May 1992, a motion, given by the opposition party ANAP to the TBMM, was discussed by all political parties in the parliament. Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü stated that Turkey had asked OSCE for suspension of the membership of Yugoslavia, political and economic sanctions against Belgrade, and retreatment of paramilitary forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina.[172] Yet it still needs to be kept in mind that the OSCE would probably suspend the membership of Yugoslavia inevitably, regardless of the Turkish demand.

It should be noted here that a former ambassador of Turkey, İsmail Soysal, on that account argued that it was not realistic to except a solution to the problem by applying to the OSCE, since this organization did not possess an implementation mechanism to enforce its principles, and it was not easy to establish a consensus among more than 50 member states.[173]

The international recognition of the new states' right to exist by international law was not enough to stop the Serbian aggression. In a new initiative to mobilize international will in support of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in July 1992, the Turkish

[171] See for example Bülent Ecevit's speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 11, legislative year 1, session 77, 20.05.1992., or Adnan Kahveci's speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 10, legislative year 1, session 74, 07.05.1992.
[172] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 10, legislative year 1, session 74, 07.05.1992, p. 97.
[173] Soysal, p. 187.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Çetin met with Izetbegovic in Zagreb and flew with him to Helsinki in order to attend the OSCE meeting. After the meeting, he went to Sarajevo, which had been under siege since 5 April 1992, to contact the Bosnian officials. During the Helsinki meeting Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel met with US President George Bush and, reminding him the Gulf intervention, stated that an international intervention was necessary to stop the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[174] In the same meeting, Demirel also tried mobilize a pressure group of Central Asian republics and Azerbaijan.[175]

This was the first time Turkey advocated a military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and later on this policy became one of the cornerstones of Turkey's diplomatic initiatives in order to bring an end to the war. At the same time, Turkey prepared an action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which included limited international intervention and military assistance for the Bosnian Muslims, and presented it to the UN and several European countries. For five days Hikmet Çetin conducted meetings in London, Paris, and New York, arguing that if there would not be any military intervention against the Serbs, then the Bosnian Muslims had the right to obtain weapons in order to protect themselves against aggression.[176]

From the start of the war, Turkey advocated an international intervention for Bosnia and Herzegovina. But at that time that option did not seem possible to the Western countries. Turkey in response to this lack of action changed tactics and tried to pressure the UN Security Council to exclude the Bosnian Muslims from the arms embargo in former Yugoslav republics, and thus give the Bosnian Muslims a chance for self defense. As the war started in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina the UN

[174] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 329.
[175] Hale, p. 203.
[176] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 329.

Security Council adopted a resolution that established an arms embargo in Yugoslavia. This, however, barred the Bosnian Muslims from defending themselves against the Serbian paramilitary forces that were supported militarily by the JNA.

In addition to lobbying efforts in the Western international organizations, Turkey also tried to mobilize the support of the Muslim countries for Bosnia and Herzegovina and through that tried to create diplomatic pressure in the UN. On 17-18 June 1992, on the request of Turkey, the OIC held an extraordinary session of foreign ministers in Istanbul in order to examine the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hikmet Çetin delivered a speech at the conference in which he emphasized the significance of the tragic crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and drew attention to the need of effectively cope with this problem in order that a good precedent might be set to proof of the firm preparedness of the international community to reject aggressive expansionism.[177] The conference strongly condemned the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, expressed its alarm at the violence perpetrated by the JNA and Serbian irregular forces, reaffirmed its full solidarity and support for the government and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and expressed its full support for the measures taken by the UN Security Council.[178]

Another extraordinary session by the OIC foreign ministers was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 1-2 December 1992. The ongoing peace efforts to restore peace by NATO, the EC, and the UN were welcomed, and alarm was expressed at how the ongoing conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina posed a grave risk of spilling to adjacent

[177] OIC Final Communiqué of the 5th Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Istanbul. (17-18 June 1992) http://www.oic-oci.org/english/conf/fm/All%20Download/5Ext/5Ext-FC-En.pdf, p. 3 (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .

[178] OIC Final Communiqué of the 5th Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Istanbul. (17-18 June 1992) http://www.oic-oci.org/english/conf/fm/All%20Download/5Ext/5Ext-FC-En.pdf, p. 3 (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .

areas, further threatening peace and stability in the Balkan region. The attendees requested the UN Security Council to take necessary measures and allow the immediate delivery of defensive arms to Bosnia and Herzegovina by member states.[179]

As Turkish efforts increased in the international arena in support of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbian Prime Minister Milan Panic paid a diplomatic visit to Ankara and asked Turkey not to get involved in the conflict in this country.[180] Nevertheless, Turkish diplomatic initiatives continued despite these demands.

Turkey carried active diplomacy in other international organizations as well. On 13-14 August 1992, the UN Human Rights Commission gathered an extraordinary meeting on the request of Turkey, first time in its history.[181] The report published after the meeting condemned in the strongest terms all violations of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the concept and practice of ethnic cleansing.[182] On 24-25 August, the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the UN introduced a draft resolution to the UN General Assembly against Serbia for its actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was adopted by 136 votes to one with five abstentions.[183] The resolution expressed grave concern that no effective measure had been implemented to stop the practice of ethnic cleansing or to discourage the

[179] OIC Resolution No. 1/6-EX on the Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina http://www.oic-oci.org/english/conf/fm/All%20Download/6Ext/6Ext-RES-En.pdf (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .
[180] Soysal, p. 231.
[181] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 329.
[182] UN Security Council Report 14.08.1992 http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/e_1992_22_add.1_rev_1.pdf (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .
[183] Forty-Sixth Session GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 91st Meeting Held at Headquarters, New York on Tuesday, 25 August 1992, at 10.30 a.m. The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Draft Resolution Amendment http://daccess-dds ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N92/610/89/PDF/N9261089.pdf?OpenElement (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .

policies and proposals that might encourage it. The resolution reaffirmed the right of Bosnia and Herzegovina to individual or collective self-defense in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, and urged the UN Security Council to take further appropriate measures to put an end to the fighting.[184]

It should also be mentioned that, in addition to the formal lobbying efforts in many international organizations, Turkish foreign policy makers tried to increase the international awareness of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For instance, on 18 April 1992, President Özal called for precaution in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the USA, France, the UK, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. On 7 May 1992, Minister of Foreign Affairs Çetin, who was the pro-tempore president of the CoE, declared in his first speech in this organization that the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina must be protected.[185]

In August 1992, Turkey launched an intensive campaign for its plan of action in Western capitals, underlining the need for international intervention. The main aim of Turkish diplomats was to persuade the permanent members of the UN Security Council of the need for an international intervention. The two-staged plan was a combination of diplomatic and military measures. Turkey proposed creating conditions for safe access of humanitarian aid, safe havens for refugees, and closure of Serbian detention camps. In case of the failure of diplomatic efforts, Turkey proposed a limited military action, which included a provision on demilitarization and disarmament, and surrendering of all heavy weaponry to the UN officials in two weeks.[186] In case of the failure of the diplomatic attempts, Turkey proposed a limited air bombardment of certain strategic Serbian targets. Turkey's main argument as

[184] UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/46/292 91st Plenary Meeting 25 August 1992 http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/46/a46r242.htm (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .
[185] Soysal, p. 229.
[186] Kut, Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Hercegovina, p. 303.

expressed at various international forums was that the UN had to stop arguing that why it could not intervene militarily, but start to discuss how it could.[187]

The core of the Turkish arguments was that the aggressor could not be deterred in this conflict, unless backed by effective sanctions and credible warnings. Thus, according to the Turkish position, a limited military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina was needed to stop the aggression and to force the Serbians to agree to negotiations.[188] Nevertheless, the EC and the US had already stated several times before August 1992 that the mobilization of decisive force against Serbia was not necessary. On 11 June 1992, for example, President Bush stated that the US was not the world's policemen, when asked about speculation that the US was planning military intervention against Serbia.[189] Although this plan was not accepted by the great powers, Turkey's aim can be regarded as putting this option on the agenda of international community as a possible solution to the problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On 26 – 28 August 1992, an international conference was held in London to discuss the events in Bosnia and Herzegovina on initiatives of Cyrus Vance, the Special Envoy to the UN Secretary General for Bosnia and Herzegovina; David Carrington, the EC co-chairman of the Conference for the former Yugoslavia; and John Major, Prime Minister of the UK.[190] Hikmet Çetin was also among the people who played an active role in the gathering of this conference.[191] As a result, he was invited to the London Conference as a representative of the OIC.[192] During the

[187] Ibid., p. 303.
[188] Ibid., p. 303.
[189] Ramet, War in the Balkans, p. 96.
[190] Mustafa Türkeş, "Bosna - Hersek Problemi: 26 - 28 Ağustos 1992 Londra Konferansı ve Siyasi Sonuçları," in *Prof. Dr. Abdurrahman Çaycı'ya Armağan*, edited by Abdurrahman Çaycı, (Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi, 1995). p. 472.
[191] Ibid., p. 475.
[192] Soysal, p. 231.

conference, Turkey advocated Bosnian arguments to end the war, which included using limited military intervention against the Serbian military targets in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey repeated the same options as advocated in the earlier days of August 1992. These arguments, however, were not in the line with the arguments of the EC or the US, and as a result, Turkish demands were not accepted in the conference.[193]

Considering the fact that all major global powers were advocating diplomatic efforts rather than military intervention, it was not realistic to except that Turkish thesis in the conference would be accepted. The main aim of Turkey might as well have been, as Mustafa Türkeş argues, to bring this option onto the agenda of the international community.[194] In the conference, it was decided that lands occupied by the Serbian forces should be returned, but also stated that this would be done by diplomatic methods and closed the opportunity for military intervention. This was in fact not a gain, but a loss for the Bosnian Muslims, since the Bosnian Serbs had managed to transform their military successes into political demands and as they already occupied 70 percent of Bosnia and Herzegovina, they were able to use the occupied lands as a negotiation subject. It was also decided in the conference that no military forces other than the peacekeeping missions of the UN would enter the region, thus closing the path to military aid to the Bosnian Muslims.[195] Another diplomatic success for the Bosnian Serbs at the London Conference was that Radovan Karadzic, who was the political leader of the Bosnian Serbs, had been

[193] Türkeş, Bosna Hersek Problemi: 26-28 Ağustos 1992 Londra Konferansı ve Siyasi Sonuçları, p. 481.
[194] Ibid., p. 475.
[195] Ibid., p. 477.

invited to the conference as well, thus establishing his position in the international arena as the representative of the Bosnian Serbs.[196]

From this perspective, the London Conference can be regarded as a failure for Turkey, since it did not persuade the global powers on the necessity of intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It should be noted, however, that during that period the global powers were more than reluctant to try any effort other than diplomacy. In fact, the reluctance of the global powers, willingly or unwillingly, gave a green light to the Serbs to continue their actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as Mustafa Türkeş argues.[197]

In the eyes of the Turkish officials there was a lack of a firm response to the situation by the Western powers. During this period, the opposition parties in the TBMM intensely criticized the government for its inability to help the Bosnian Muslims and relying on Western permission in its actions.[198] The opposition parties, therefore, through the public opinion, tried to put pressure on the government to increase its efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The lack of response by the global powers, in addition to the pressure from the opposition parties, forced the Turkish government become more engaged in the conflict.

At this point, Turkish participation in military operations by the international organizations should also be mentioned. Since Turkey advocated joint military intervention against the Serbian targets, it actively participated in all possible international operation established for the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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[196] Ibid., p. 476.
[197] Ibid., p. 481.
[198] See for example Bülent Ecevit's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 2, legislative year 1, session 20, 15.12.1991, p. 28.; or Oğuzhan Asiltürk's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi,* Term 19, vol. 3, legislative year 1, session 29, 22.01.1992, p. 86.

NATO's involvement in Bosnia and Herzegovina began in July 1992, when it began monitoring operations in the Adriatic Sea in support of UN Security Council Resolutions 713 and 757 imposing an arms embargo and sanctions on the former Yugoslav republics. By October 1992, NATO aircrafts were monitoring operations in support of UN Security Council Resolution 781, imposing a no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina.[199] In November 1992, NATO began to enforce the sanctions and embargo imposed by the UN Security Council Resolution 787.

It should be noted that the embargo on the Serbs had leaks, as various reports had suggested that Greece, Russia, and Romania had continued to flow oil, food, and weapons into Serbia.[200] After the UN authorized the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO began Operation Deny Flight in April 1993.[201] Turkey strongly supported the NATO decision to deploy a naval force in the Adriatic to monitor the economic sanctions on the former Yugoslavia. The force was commanded by a Turkish officer at one point. Moreover, Turkey deployed a detachment of F-16 jets to join the NATO force based in Italy, which aimed to enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia.

At the same time, Turkish diplomats were actively working to convince the international arena that these efforts were not enough to protect the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[202] In December 1992, Turgut Özal, along with the diplomatic help of the OIC, threatened to send arms to the Bosnian Muslims unless enough measures were taken by January 1993.[203] In fact, in December 1994, the Turkish Chief of

[199] NATO Peace Support Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52122.htm (Accessed last on 18.04.2015).
[200] Ramet, War in the Balkans, p. 96.
[201] NATO Peace Support Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52122.htm (Accessed last on 18.04.2015).
[202] Hale, p. 203.
[203] Ibid., p. 203.

General Staff Doğan Güreş admitted in a newspaper interview after his retirement that Turkey had sent arms to Bosnian militias despite the UN embargo.[204]

On 21 February 1992, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 743, which allowed the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR),[205] in Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with Croatia and Macedonia.[206] The activity of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina had been authorized to be in certain areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 30 April 1992, but later had been withdrawn from there for security reasons for the Serbian attacks had intensified.[207] Nevertheless, UNPROFOR remained in several areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the war had not intensified.

On 8 December 1992, Prime Minister Demirel asked the official permission of the TBMM to deploy Turkish soldiers to UNPROFOR command. His motion was accepted by the TBMM with an overwhelming majority. It was adopted by 317 votes with only one abstention.[208] However, Turkish troops could not participate to UNPROFOR until 1994, as several Balkan countries such as Serbia and Greece opposed Turkish military activity in the Balkans. In fact, several accounts even claim that no Balkan nations except the Muslims wanted Turkey back in the Balkans.[209] Only in March 1994, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali announced that

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[204] Gencer Özcan, "Türk Dış Politikasında Oluşum Süreci ve Askeri Yapı," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, edited by Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002). p. 48.

[205] It should be noted here that there were important criticisms on the account of the ineffectiveness of UNPROFOR. These criticisms will be discussed in Chapter 5.

[206] UN Security Council Resolution 743 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/743(1992) (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .

[207] Kut, Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Hercegovina, p. 302.

[208] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 22, legislative year 2, session 36, 08.12.1992.

[209] Brown, p. 155.

Turkish troops would be accepted to UNPROFOR[210]. When the first Turkish troops arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina in June 1994 as a part of UNPROFOR, the Serbs were quick to draw parallels with the Ottoman Empire.[211]

Apart from active diplomacy in all possible international organization, Turkey also took initiatives at the regional level, thus trying to create international pressure on the global powers and the Bosnian Serbs. In November 1992, it convened a conference of foreign ministers of the Balkan and regional countries in Istanbul. All Balkan countries and the neighboring countries of the former Yugoslavia participated, except for Federal Yugoslavia and Greece. Milosevic's administration was not invited since the UN had banned its participation in all international events, and Greece did not participate because Macedonia would be present in the conference.[212] Arranging such conference was an important success of Turkish diplomacy, but the points expressed in the joint declaration in the end of the conflict did not satisfy Turkey, since it did not call for an international military intervention, but only stressed the need for political intervention.[213]

In that period, Turkey continued its diplomatic efforts in the international organizations. In December 1992, the UN Commission on Human Rights gathered through the initiatives of the US and Turkey. The resolution adopted by the commission named the Serbs as the aggressors and the Muslims as the victims threatened by extinction.[214] On 9 December 1992, a contact group of Islamic countries applied to Boutros-Ghali, asking him to activate the UN for Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the same day, Serbian officials declared a statement in which they

[210] Hale, p. 203.
[211] Sabrina Petra Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milosevic* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002). pp, 216.
[212] Kut, Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Hercegovina, p. 307.
[213] Ibid., p. 307.
[214] Ibid., p. 307.

addressed Turkey as responsible for all UN and NATO decisions taken against the Serbian state.[215]

On 18 December 1992, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had been proposed jointly by Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the resolution, the Serbs were again accused of ethnic cleansing, which was described as a form of genocide. The same resolution also stated the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina required activating Section VII of the UN Charter, and Bosnia and Herzegovina had the right to self defense. Moreover, the General Assembly asked the Security Council to decide for military intervention in case the Serbian militia attacks did not stop by January 15, and lifting of arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims.[216]

In January 1993, one of the most promising peace plans, known as Vance-Owen Peace Plan began to be negotiated between the leaders of Bosnia's warring parties. The plan was prepared by the UN Special Envoy Cyrus Vance and EC representative, Lord Owen. The plan divided Bosnia and Herzegovina into 10 ethnically homogenous cantons, all ruled by their own respective nationality. While the plan was criticized by many accounts for several reasons, the international community was desperate for any solution to the brutal conflict in Europe.

Turkey had important reservations about this plan. First, the plan legitimized the seizure of territory through aggression.[217] Second, Turkey argued that the plan created ethnically clean areas, thus punishing the victim and encouraging the

[215] Soysal, p. 232.
[216] UN General Assembly Resolution 18.12.1992 http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/47/a47r121.htm (Accessed last on 18.04.2015).; Kut, Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina, p. 308.
[217] Sylvie Gangloff, "The Weight of Islam in the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 5 (2001 2000). p. 93.

aggressor in the conflict.[218] Despite these drawbacks, Turkey supported the plan. In fact, it supported any peace plan that would bring a reliable peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey was not a direct part in the peace negotiations, as it was not in any of the peace plans, although Vance and Owen came to Turkey several times, either before or after they visited Bosnia and Herzegovina, during the preparations of the plan.

According to Kut, they were trying to use the close diplomatic relations between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina to make the Bosnian Muslims accept the peace plan.[219] Owen, in his book on the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, states that he and Vance found it essential before fixing the map to try to carry Turkey with their policy, and therefore found it important to visit Prime Minister Demirel.[220] They paid a visit to Demirel on 4 November 1992. During this meeting, Demirel argued that the real frustration throughout the Islamic world and Turkey was the idleness and inactivity of the West about Bosnia and Herzegovina. Demirel once again repeated the case for lifting the arms embargo and also criticized the ineffectiveness of the sanctions on Serbia.[221]

The Vance-Owen Peace Plan seemed promising in that both the international community and warring parties accepted it. The Serbian forces were still holding control on nearly 70 percent of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but all of these territories had been seized in initial processes of the war and there had not been any important strategic changes in the war for the last months. As Serbia started to feel the difficulty of the economic sanctions and financial problems of helping the Bosnian Serbs, Milosevic had no choice but to accept the plan. He also pressured Karadzic to

[218] Kut, Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Hercegovina, p. 297.
[219] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 331.
[220] David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (London: V. Gollancz, 1995). p. 68.
[221] Ibid., p. 68.

accept the plan. As a result, on 30 April 1993, Karadzic signed the plan, but also stated that the plan had to be ratified in the parliament of the Republika Srpska. At the same time Greece, the closest regional partner of Serbia during the war, tried to persuade the Serbian leaders to accept the plan as well.

During the parliamentary meeting on 6 May 1993, the Serbian leaders, along with several officials from other countries, tried to convince the members of the parliament to accept the plan. In fact, Montenegrin President Momir Bulatovic, the president of the only remaining republic of Yugoslavia except Serbia and the closest political ally of Milosevic, declared in the parliament that only the enemies of the Serbs, such as Turkey, wanted the parliament to reject this plan.[222] The parliament, however, did not ratify the plan and the establishment of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina was delayed until November 1995.

As a result of this decision in the parliament of Republika Srpska, the international recognition of the Bosnian Serb administration dropped dramatically. After a while, Radovan Karadzic, and Ratko Mladic, military leader of the Bosnian Serbs, were declared war criminals. For that reason, international negotiating parties could no longer make contact with Karadzic and Mladic during peace negotiations. Milosevic, frustrated by the result, started to take harsh measures against the Bosnian Serbs, even establishing an embargo on them at one point.[223] At the same time, however, Milosevic benefited from the rejection of the peace plan by the parliament. He changed his policy and discourse of Greater Serbia and instead adopted a foreign policy in which he established himself as a leader who was indispensable for the establishment of peace in the Balkans. Thereby he managed to gain credibility in the

[222] The Death of Yugoslavia (BBC Documentary, 1995), Part 5.
[223] İlhan Uzgel, "Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik," in *Türkiye'nin Komşuları*, Mustafa Türkeş and İlhan Uzgel (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2002). p. 145.

international arena, both as a leader who promoted peace and as the only leader who could influence the Bosnian Serb leaders.[224]

One of the most important diplomatic efforts of Turkey that established its position as a solid and reliable regional power came in 1993, when it mediated between the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Croats, who had been fighting on and off since June 1992. The war between the Croats and the Muslims came as a shock to the international community since before the war they had been seen as political allies against the Bosnian Serbs. In a regular balance of power structure, the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Croats would be expected to unite against the Serbian forces. However, the Bosnian Croats were influenced by the nationalist discourse of their politicians. The result was devastating for the Bosnian Muslims.

In fact, looking at the evidence, the war between the two sides was probably no surprise at all. As the Serbian leaders' nationalist discourse actively influenced the Serbian people for a greater Serbia, Croatian nationalist President Franco Tudjman had more or less the same desires for Croatia. His war aims, described by Richard Holbrooke, the chief American negotiator during the Dayton Agreement, involved full control of an ethnically homogenous Croatia and a Bosnian Croat nation that would be dependent on him.[225] Even in 1990, there were convincing evidence that Milosevic and Tudjman, however great their own enmity, were carving up Bosnia and Herzegovina.[226] The agreement between Milosevic and Tudjman resulted in the Graz Agreement on 6 May 1992, signed by Karadzic and the Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban.[227] According to this agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided

[224] Ibid., p. 147.
[225] Richard C. Holbrooke, *Bir Savaşı Bitirmek* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 1999). p. 208.
[226] Brown, p. 152.
[227] The Death of Yugoslavia (BBC Documentary, 1995), Part 3.

by Republika Srpska and Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia. The Bosnian Muslims, not surprisingly, were not a part of this agreement.

The war between Croats and Muslims in Bosnia came to a military deadlock in 1993. The war also harmed the international credibility of Croatia, which at the time was criticizing the Serbs in all possible international forums of invading several parts of Croatia. During this period, Turkish diplomats started shuttle diplomacy between the Croats and the Muslims. During 15-22 February 1993, President Özal took a Balkan tour and stated that the Bosnians and Croats were natural allies. In his meetings in Zagreb, the main topic of discussion was the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[228] Turkey, along with the US and several European countries, first mediated for a ceasefire between sides in 1993 and for the creation of a Bosnian Croat Federation afterwards.[229]

As the ceasefire efforts came to a deadlock, the Bosnian and Croatian officials invited Hikmet Çetin, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs. Çetin flew to Sarajevo and Zagreb at the invitation of Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic and Croatian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mate Granic.[230] Turkish shuttle diplomacy first paid off when Muslims and Croats agreed on a ceasefire and future federation on 12 November 1992. The meeting between three leaders resulted in the Sarajevo Declaration, which later on determined the main principles of the Washington Agreement. Çetin states that prior to this meeting in Sarajevo, he had arranged ten

[228] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 332.
[229] Şule Kut, "Turkish Policy toward the Balkans," in *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, edited by Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, (Washington D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000). p. 83.
[230] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 - 1993, p. 333.

other meetings between Croat and Muslim officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Turkey, trying to establish a between sides.[231]

As Turkey was the honest broker for the Muslims, the US became the honest broker for Croats in these negotiations.[232] The US played a key role in bringing Muslims and Croats together. As Ramet writes, the US diplomats added muscle to the mediation in January 1994 when the US threatened Tudjman with sanctions unless he immediately began to collaborate with the Bosnian government.[233] Nevertheless, Turkey was a mediator in this agreement and, as a result of this intensive diplomacy between the Croats and Muslims, the Washington Agreement was signed in March 1994, establishing the Bosnian Croat Federation.

Turkey's close relations with Croatia were useful for Turkey becoming a mediator in this agreement. Between 1992 and 1997, there were 13 high level official visits between Ankara and Zagreb and 18 bilateral agreements signed between two sides.[234] Turkish foreign policy remained quite realistic at that point by recognizing the essential importance of the Bosnian Croat federation for the establishment of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hikmet Çetin on that account declared in the TBMM that if the Bosnians and Croats had not united, it would have become impossible in the region to support a united Bosnia, and for these reasons, he further stated, Turkey put a lot of effort in creating this alliance.[235] As a result of this agreement, Turkey managed to establish its regional power position in the Balkans as a mediator and problem solver. Although there is no evidence of direct cause-effect

[231] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 57, legislative year 3, session 88, 12.04.1994, p. 244.
[232] Türkeş, "Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim.", p. 262.
[233] Ramet, Balkan Babel, p. 216.
[234] Kut, Turkish Policy towards Balkans, p. 85.
[235] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 57, legislative year 3, session 88, 12.04.1994, p. 244.

relation between these events, Boutros-Ghali announced in the same period of the Washington Agreement that the Turkish troops would be admitted to UNPROFOR.

Turkey continued its initiatives in international organizations as well. On 2 December 1993, the NATO Summit of Ministers of Foreign Affairs met to discuss the new functions of NATO. Çetin stated that NATO should put more emphasis on Bosnia and Herzegovina and pointed out the importance of this conflict on the prestige of NATO.[236]

At this moment, it is important to discuss the bilateral relations of Turkey in the Balkan region, concentrating mostly on the bilateral relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey had maintained a close diplomatic contact with the Bosnian officials since the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There were frequent diplomatic visits from both sides paid to each other. To give an example, Minister of Foreign Affairs Hikmet Çetin paid three diplomatic visits to Sarajevo, a city which had been under siege for almost four years.[237] Turkey's Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, on the other hand, visited Sarajevo twice. Bosnian officials frequently visited Turkey as well.

During the war, Turkey became a safe haven for the Bosnian refugees as well, welcoming 100,000 refugees who had fled from the war.[238] According to the statement of Health Minister of Turkey Mehmet Kazım Dinç, Turkey provided 13 million USD aid as well as health and sheltering services for sick and wounded refugees.[239] Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü announced that apart from aid gathered by private companies and NGOs, the Turkish government provided 25

[236] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası, p. 326.
[237] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 57, legislative year 3, session 88, 12.04.1994, p. 244.
[238] Kut, Turkish Policy toward the Balkans, p. 83.
[239] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 48, legislative year 3, session 45, 15.12.1993, p. 38.

million USD humanitarian aid to the Bosnian people.[240] Turkey also tried to mobilize the OIC member states to pledge financial and humanitarian aid for the Bosnian government.

It should be noted, however, that the aid provided by Turkey was less than sufficient. Iran, for example, during the same period, pledged more than 100 million USD until 1993.[241] Nevertheless, Turkey continued to diplomatically support the Bosnian government in every possible opportunity. Establishment of the Bosnian Croat Federation was probably among the most significant efforts provided by Turkey.

Contributing to the establishment a peace between the Bosnian Muslims and Croats was an important success for Turkish diplomacy. Yet the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was still going on, with the Bosnian Serbs intensifying their attacks and atrocities in 1994. As the conflict grew more violent in 1994, the Western powers started to come around as well.[242]

The Bush administration in the US was replaced with the Clinton administration toward the end of 1993. President Clinton believed that stopping the war by means of US mediation was important for the US to prove its leadership in the New World Order.[243] Therefore, according to Clinton, failure to act would be to give up US leadership in world politics.[244]

The final peace plan before the Dayton Agreement was the Contact Group plan, which was prepared by the five nations Contact Group, the USA, the UK,

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[240] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 84, legislative year 4, session 95, 11.04.1995, p. 16.
[241] OIC 21st Conference of the Foreign Ministers 1993. http://www.oic-oci.org/english/conf/fm/21/Final%20Communiqu%C3%A9(21).htm (Accessed last on 18.04.2015).
[242] Hale, p. 203.
[243] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 408.
[244] Kaufman, p. 93.; US perspectives in the war will be elaborated in more detail in Chapter 5.

Germany, France, and Russia, for a peace settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There was in fact enormous diplomatic pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to accept the plan from all sides. In fact, Milosevic himself imposed an embargo on the Bosnian Serbs to make them accept the plan.[245] Turkish foreign policy makers at that point advocated an intensified international diplomatic pressure. Süleyman Demirel, who had been elected as the president in 1993 after the death of President Özal, stated that there needed to be more international pressure to make the Bosnian Serbs accept this peace plan.[246] The plan was rejected by the Bosnian Serbs, who were unwilling to give up their territorial gains in peace negotiations, in a referendum held on 28 August 1994.

In early 1995, the US started to take a new diplomatic initiative to stop the war. President Clinton ordered the foundation of a unit of US diplomats and appointed Richard Holbrooke as the chief executive of this group. The group started shuttle diplomacy between the warring parties and global and regional powers to find a possible solution to the war. The peace negotiations seemed to be under the supervision of the five nations Contact Group and the UN. However, in 1995, the US started to take leadership in the negotiations. The dual presidency of this group was held by Holbrooke and Carl Bildt, the chief UN representative.

Turkey neither held no direct position in the contact group nor was it a direct part of the peace negotiations. However, its diplomatic activism during the war, its close relations with the Bosnian government, and also its close cooperation with the US were the main elements that increased the importance and influence of Turkey during the peace negotiations before the Dayton Agreement. Moreover, as a leading

[245] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, p. 145.
[246] Demirel, p. 8.

member of the OIC Contact Group, Turkey maintained continuous relations with the five nations contact group.[247]

During this period, there was a shift in the US foreign policy towards the Balkans. The Clinton administration started to consider military intervention as an option. This had been proposed several times by Turkey since the early phases of the war. According to Holbrooke, the European NATO members were still reluctant about the idea of air bombardment on the grounds that there were still UN forces in the conflict zones and such operation might jeopardize their security. Moreover, the US general staff opposed the intervention and the US Congress had reservations about the operations as well.[248] However, dramatic increase in atrocities committed by the Bosnian Serbs and their irreconcilable attitude during the negotiations opened the way for the air bombardment.

Following the Srebrenica Genocide in July 1995 and the Serbian attacks in Sarajevo on 28 August 1995, NATO's air operation, named Operation Deliberate Force, against the Bosnian Serb targets began. The operation continued from 30 August to 20 September and helped shift the balance of power between parties on the ground, while forcefully persuading the Bosnian Serb leadership to peace negotiations.[249] It should be noted that Turkey did not directly participate in the air bombardment, although it intensely supported the operation on the diplomatic level. In the end, as Hikmet Çetin stated in a speech given to the TBMM, it was Turkey that had first applied for NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[250]

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[247] Delvoie, p. 247.
[248] Holbrooke, p. 132.
[249] NATO Peace and Support Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52122.htm?selectedLocale=en (Accessed last on 18.04.2015) .
[250] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 57, legislative year 3, session 88, 12.04.1994, p. 242.

As the bombardment opened the way to peace negotiations, hopes for the long awaited peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina started to increase. As mentioned earlier, Turkey was not invited to Dayton, but it fully supported the peace process and tried to take an active role in the mediation efforts. On 4 September 1995, Izetbegovic paid a diplomatic visit to Ankara and met with Prime Minister Tansu Çiller and President Demirel. The main aim of his visit was to seek support for the Bosnian Croat Federation after the establishment of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Holbrooke came to Turkey at the same time and a meeting between Holbrooke, Izetbegovic, and Çiller was held on 5 September 1995. In this meeting the final draft before the Dayton Agreement was prepared, named the Ankara Draft. On the next day, Holbrooke met with Milosevic in Belgrade and he accepted this draft.[251] The visit of Izetbegovic was symbolically important as well, since it was his last diplomatic visit before Dayton. On 7 September 1995, the Contact Group met with the leaders of the warring parties and on the next day they agreed upon the main principles of the peace settlements.[252]

During the Dayton negotiations, Turkey expressed its full support for a fair and permanent peace settlement. On 3 November 1995, two days after the start of Dayton Accords, Doğan Müftüoğlu, Member of Parliament from the government party DYP, declared in the TBMM that Turkey would provide all kinds of political support for the establishment of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[253] Even though Turkey was not a part in the negotiations, Turkish influence in the accords could be felt due to Turkey's close relations with the Bosnian government.

[251] Holbrooke, pp. 166-168.
[252] Ibid., p. 175.
[253] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 86, legislative year 5, session 22, 03.11.1995.

On 19 November 1995, on the nineteenth day of the accords and two days before the agreement was initialed by Izetbegovic, Milosevic, and Tudjman, the leaders were still not close to agreement. On that day, US ambassador to Ankara Grossman arranged a phone call between Izetbegovic and Turkish President Demirel in order to convince Izetbegovic to agree. As Holbrooke states in his book, Izetbegovic respected and trusted Demirel more than any other foreign leader.[254]

After three weeks of negotiations, the warring parties managed to reach an agreement in Dayton on 21 November 1995. The Dayton Agreement, or officially known as the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was initialed and later on, officially signed on 14 December 1995 in Paris. The Long-awaited peace was finally established in the region with a controversial yet effective agreement.

According to the Dayton Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina would constitute two units under one state, each unit with its own army and assembly, whereas the central government would be responsible for foreign policy, monetary policy, and trade.[255] However, there were fundamental problems with the Dayton Agreement. First of all, the Bosnian Croat federation lacked stability. In addition, the Bosnian expectations were not met in the agreement.[256] Moreover, although the Bosnian government enjoyed widespread international recognition, the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina looked weak since they were wedged between Serbian and Croatian parastates with two mother ships they could turn to.[257] Richard Holbrooke said that the main problems with the Dayton Agreement were that it left two opposing armies

[254] Holbrooke, p. 326.
[255] Babuna, Bir Ulusun Doğuşu, p. 207.
[256] Ibid., p. 208
[257] Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War* (London: Penguin, 1996). p. 263.

in the same country and maintenance of the name Republika Srpska, since "republic" means an independent country.[258]

The Report of the International Commission on that account stated that the initial peace plans by the EC, US, or UN aimed at the coexistence of a mixed ethnic society within Bosnia and Herzegovina; therefore, these plans were based on the principles they advocated. As the conflict lengthened out, however, each peace plan concentrated on narrower aims and in the end, the Dayton Agreement even restrained the sovereignty of an internationally recognized government.[259]

Turkey's close relations and cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina continued after the Dayton Agreement. Since the long war devastated the economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Dayton Agreement was problematic in many aspects, Bosnia and Herzegovina was deeply reliant on foreign support for reconstruction after the war. By 1995, Bosnia's annual per capita GDP dropped to less than 500 USD, which was around 20 percent that of the pre-war period.[260] Industrial production in 1995 was nine percent that of the pre-war period, whereas food production dropped almost 70 percent. By the end of the war, 80 percent of the Bosnian people were dependent on international food aid.[261] The Dayton Agreement made no explicit mention of international assistance for the Bosnian economic recovery, but it was widely understood at the time that the World Bank would take the lead.[262]

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[258] Holbrooke, pp. 437-438.
[259] *Barışa Çağrı: Uluslararası Komisyon'un Balkanlar Hakkındaki Raporu* (İstanbul: Sabah Kitapları, 1997). pp. 72-73.
[260] Elizabeth M. Cousens and Charles K. Cater, *Toward Peace in Bosnia: Implementing the Dayton Accords*, International Peace Academy Occasional Paper Series (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001). p. 87.
[261] Ibid., p. 91.
[262] Ibid., p. 88.

Even in the late 1990s Bosnia and Herzegovina had experienced economic difficulties and had been dependent on foreign help. A huge trade deficit, lack of domestic investment, unsustainable budgetary problems, widespread unemployment, and corrupt institutions were the main problems.[263] Even though Turkey took some material initiatives for the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it should also be mentioned that it was economically quite inactive in the Balkans. In 1995, the Turkish total trade volume toward the Balkans was only 1.75 Billion USD, which was only three percent of Turkey's total trade.[264] Turkish financial assistance and aid for Bosnia and Herzegovina was surprisingly low even during the war period, and in the aftermath of the war Turkey did not assume an important role in the economic reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Turkey's main initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina were constructed through military agreements, in which Turkey assumed a major role in training the federation army.[265] Turkey and the US considered the main reason for such a war as the imbalance of power between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.[266] For that reason, Turkey and the US initiated a train and equip program, in which Turkey assumed the training and the US assumed equipping missions.[267] After the war, Turkey also joined the Peace Implementation Council as a representative of the OIC and contributed to the Implementation Force (IFOR), later Stabilisation Force (SFOR).[268] Turkey participated in IFOR and later SFOR with around 1200 personnel each and

[263] Carl Bildt, "A Second Chance in the Balkans," *Foreign Affairs*, 80, no. 1 (February 2001). p. 152.
[264] Bechev, p. 214.
[265] Othon Anastasakis, "Turkey's Assertive Presence in Southeastern Europe: Between Identity Politics and Elite Pragmatism," in *Another Empire: A Decade of Turkey's Foreign Policy under the Justice and Development Party*, edited by Kerem Öktem, Ayşe Kadıoğlu, and Mehmet Karlı, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2012). p. 193.
[266] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 412.
[267] Türkeş, Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim, p. 259.
[268] Bechev, p. 214.

also contributed to the international police force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[269] Turkey was admitted to the Peace Implementation Council only in an observer position initially, and later as a member.[270]

Turkey remained the Bosnian government's only reliable ally in the region. In addition to economic, military, and humanitarian assistance, it also provided institutional assistance in education, reconstruction, and judiciary. It also continued to its diplomatic efforts to strengthen the alliance between the Bosnian Muslims and Croats, to which it attached great importance. In fact, Turkey considered this cooperation as the only viable means to preserve territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[271]

After the war, the international community firmly believed that the presence of an international peacekeeping mission was essential to the preservation of the peace between three ethnic communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[272] On that account, Buzan and Wæver argue that the internal dynamics of the region were repressed by external powers in the Balkans, and the region was forced to peace against its own will. They further claim that if the Western overlay was removed from the Balkans, the region would return to warfare.[273] Turkey's diplomatic position was the same as well. While advocating the presence of international force, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey also aimed to contribute any international force in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to preserve the peace.

Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy in the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina

[269] Ali Hikmet Alp and Mustafa Türkeş, "The Balkans in Turkey's Security Environment," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 6 (2001). p. 136.
[270] Türkeş, Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim, p. 263.
[271] Kut, Turkish Policy towards the Balkans, p. 84.
[272] See Holbrooke and Barışa Çağrı.
[273] Buzan and Wæver, p. 378.

The determinants of Turkish foreign policy during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina are important to understand in order to make a better evaluation of Turkish diplomacy. For that reason, in this part I will briefly discuss the main determinants, which are strategic and cultural or identity based concerns of Turkey. Its political economic concerns, its international reputation both in Western and Islamic circles, and the influence of Turkish public opinion will also be discussed.

When the war started in Yugoslavia, Turkey, as discussed above, initially aimed at a peaceful solution to the problems in this country. National sovereignty and protection of territorial integrity are among the fundamental determinants of Turkish foreign policy, and as in line with these determinants, Turkey did not want to be seen as a country that provoked dissolution. Turkey's reluctance in recognizing the former Yugoslav republics should be regarded in these terms. As the dissolution became the reality, however, Turkey started to follow a policy in line with the new realities.

As my findings indicate that the strategic reasons constituted the primary motivation of active Turkish diplomacy in the region, I will start my discussion on the determinants of Turkish foreign policy during the Bosnian War by the strategic concerns of Turkey.

The geopolitical importance of the Balkans decreased with the end of the Cold War as it was no longer a subject of competition over military or ideological domination. The region lacks mineral, energy or other resources that would make it important for the world economy. For that reason, the Balkans was no longer a

region over which the global powers competed.[274] The strategic importance of the region, however, cannot be totally ignored. As retired Turkish Lieutenant General İhsan Gürkan states, the Balkans is the main support and base region of military operations for the strategic oil rich areas from Eastern Europe to the Suez Canal. Furthermore the region is still strategically important for the security of Western Europe. He adds that the region has strategic importance for NATO as well, being an intersection point between Italy and Turkey Peninsula.[275]

Turkey was surrounded by three different regions that were constantly in conflict during the 1990s. Therefore it should be emphasized that Turkey aimed to be an active diplomatic power in all three regions, but with different strategic concerns in all of them. In fact, even though Turkey was an active power in the Balkans during the 1990s, it was not the primary strategic concern of Turkish foreign policy. At that time, Turkey was an active actor in the Middle East and Caucasus as well and received more serious security threats from the Middle East.[276] In fact, the security primacy of Turkey shifted mainly to the Middle East in the 1990s. The relative importance of the Balkans in Turkey's security concerns had therefore decreased.

For Turkish foreign policy makers, only Greece was considered as a security threat in the West, but not as big as the PKK, Syria, or Iraq.[277] The International Commission's Report on the Balkans, for example, indicates that the strategic importance of the Balkans for Turkey was not as vital as the importance of the Caucasus or the Middle East; thus, the report states that Turkey's motives are

[274] Anton Bebler, "The Western Balkans and the International Community," *Avrasya Dosyası*, Balkanlar Özel Sayısı, 14, no. 1 (2008). p. 10.
[275] İhsan Gürkan, "Jeopolitik ve Stratejik Yönleriyle Balkanlar ve Türkiye," in *Balkanlar/ Ortadoğu ve Balkan İncelemeleri Vakfı* (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1993). pp. 263-265.
[276] Barışa Çağrı, p. 166.
[277] Gencer Özcan, Continuity and Change in Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans, p. 292.

considered as emotional rather than strategic.[278] The Balkans, however, still occupied a pivotal position between Western Europe and Eurasia, thus made it important in strategic terms for Turkey.

Ali Hikmet Alp and Mustafa Türkeş argue that for Turkey, the stability of the Balkans gained importance in strategic terms in terms of Turkey's increasing economic integration with Europe, and its potential for alternate trade and energy routes. They write that the security interests of Turkey in the Balkans cannot be limited to classical military threat definitions but have to be conceived in a larger context.[279]

As communism collapsed in the Balkans in the early 1990s Turkish foreign policy makers considered this a moment of opportunity to develop better relations and regional cooperation with the new Western-oriented regimes. However, the wars in the region resulted in a shift in Turkish foreign policy, making stability in the Balkans its primary concern. Kut states that if regional cooperation was the main drive of Turkish foreign policy makers in the early 1990s, regional stability was their idée fixe. She further states that regional instability with all the risks and threats it involved was and still is the nightmare of the Turkish foreign policy elites.[280]

The main security concerns of Turkey in the Balkans were the Macedonian question, which will be analyzed in the next chapter, and its competition with Greece.[281] An important strategic concern of Turkey regarding the Balkans, on the other hand, was the fact that the region was located on Turkey's closest trade route to Western Europe. In fact, during the war Turkey had to find a new trade route to Western Europe through Romania, which was a longer route and therefore more

[278] Barışa Çağrı, p. 27.
[279] Alp and Türkeş, p. 125.
[280] Şule Kut, "Turkey in the Post-Communist Balkans: Between Activism and Self Restraint," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 3 (1997-1996). p. 41.
[281] Alp and Türkeş, p. 133.

costly. In fact, not only Turkey, but also Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, and Macedonia all were dependent on Serbia not only as a commercial partner, but as a trade route to Western Europe as well.[282] For that reason, stability in the Balkans was a strategic concern for Turkey related to political economy.

The war threatened to disturb the delicate balance of power between Greece and Turkey in the Balkans. During the 1990s the relations between the two countries were perhaps at the lowest level due to the Aegean dispute. Turkey and Greece tried to keep their bilateral disputes out of the conflicts in the Balkans, but it was not easy to achieve.[283] Throughout that period, an anti-Muslim and anti-Turkey Slavic Orthodox belt led by Greece was one of the major fears of Turkish foreign policy makers.[284] During the war, two countries supported two opposing countries and this increased the tension in bilateral relations. Moreover, the relations were also low due to Greece's problematic and Turkey's close relations with Albania and Macedonia. It was a common concern during the 1990s that if the war spilled to Kosovo and Macedonia, a total Balkan war might start in which Greece and Turkey, two NATO allies, would be on opposing sides. For that reason, it is important to note that the balance of power between Turkey and Greece in the Balkans was a strategic concern of Turkish foreign policy, though it was not the primary strategic concern of Turkey regarding the conflicts in the Balkans but should be regarded as a contributing factor.

Another strategic concern in the Balkans for Turkey was to prevent a regional hegemonic power. As the dissolution process began, Serbia's primary aim was to establish a Greater Serbia that would unite all Serbs in a single country. To some extent but definitely less ambitious, Croatian government followed a Greater Croatia policy as well. The strategic importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina was crucial for

[282] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 639.
[283] Alp and Türkeş, p. 132.
[284] Hale, p. 206.

these aims since it was the key to Adriatic coast and therefore necessary for the ambitions of Greater Serbia or Greater Croatia.[285] If Serbia, as it initially aimed, had managed to build a Greater Serbia, it could establish itself as a hegemonic regional power. Turkey, as a country with ambitions of becoming a regional power in the Balkans, could not permit such ambitions to become reality. Considering Serbia's close diplomatic ties with Turkey's main regional competitor, Greece, Turkey's policy against Serbia is understandable. As the war went on for years Milosevic had to back down from his nationalist ambitions. Furthermore, the economy of Serbia suffered greatly during the war due to the UN sanctions and the expenses of the war, thus made it less than possible for Serbia to become a hegemonic power. According to official records of Serbia, the annual GDP per capita dropped from 2950 USD to 1500 USD between 1990 and 1996.[286]

It should also be emphasized that the fact that the conflict did not directly present a bilateral conflict risk to Turkey, which was not the case concerning the conflicts in the Middle East, relieved Turkish foreign policy makers to follow a more active policy.[287]

Some accounts consider the minority issue as a strategic concern as well. As was stated above, Turkey became a safe haven for refugees during the war. More than 100,000 entered the country. There are important amounts of Turkish minorities in several Balkan countries, especially in Greece, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. During a time of crisis, these minority groups would develop a tendency to seek refugee in Turkey.[288] For that reason particularly, the minority issue can be considered as a strategic concern for Turkey as well.

[285] Glenny, The Macedonian Question, p. 136.
[286] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, p. 140.
[287] Uzgel, Türkiye ve Balkanlar, p. 117.
[288] Türkeş, Türkiyenin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim, p. 263.

Furthermore, in addition to refugee issue, the Muslim and Turkish minorities in the Balkans had constituted a historical aspect of Turkish foreign policy since the early republic period.[289] Nevertheless, the minority issue should be considered as part of the identity-based determinants of Turkish foreign policy in addition to strategic concerns.

In terms of the identity-based approach, it should be stated first that the situation of the Turkish minority groups has always been an important aspect of Turkish foreign policy. Moreover, the harsh assimilation policy of Bulgaria between 1984 and the collapse of the Zhivkov regime that resulted in more than 300,000 Bulgarian Turkish immigrants to Turkey made Turkey more sensitive to the situation of the Turkish and Muslim populations in the Balkans.[290]

There are several reasons why Turkey could not remain aloof from the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the identity-based level. First of all, as Tanıl Bora argues, the Balkans constitutes a geography that feeds the sources of the Turkish national identity through the losses of the Ottoman provinces during the nineteenth century. This issue deeply affected the political elites of the newly founded Turkey.[291] Furthermore, the Bosnian Muslims were the most intensively affected by oppression and this community has historical and cultural proximities to Turkey and their relatives that live in Turkey.[292] It is estimated that, although there is no official proof, one-fifth of the Turkish population is made up of Balkan refugees who came to Turkey in the nineteenth and early twentieth century after the end of the Ottoman domination in the Balkans.[293] Even if this number is overestimated and lower than anticipated, the Balkans constitutes an important region in the national discourse of

[289] Ibid., p. 256.
[290] Ibid., p. 255.
[291] Bora, Turkish National Identity, Turkish Nationalism and the Balkan Question, p. 103.
[292] Ibid., p. 115.
[293] Uzgel, Türkiye ve Balkanlar, p. 87.

Turkey and the Turkish identity. It is mainly because of these cultural and historical ties that the wars in Slovenia and Croatia did not directly attract the diplomatic activeness of Turkey, but Turkey was the most diplomatically active supporter of Bosnia and Herzegovina throughout the war.

These historical ties, however, were infamous among many Balkan countries. In fact, Muslims apart, no Balkan nations actually wanted Turkish influence in the Balkans.[294] It should be kept in mind that there is a strong historical and emotional background against Turkey, which creates a serious handicap for Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans.[295]

As Turkish diplomatic efforts in the Balkan region increased in the Balkans, Serbian and Greek officials on many occasions declared their oppositions to these policies. In that period, Athens mainly believed that Turkey was aiming to build a Muslim axis to encircle Greece.[296] The foreign policy makers of Greece considered Turkish activism a threat and believed that Turkey was trying to build a community of its own which might develop into a significant economic, political, and possibly military alliance.[297] Belgrade, on the other hand, opposed Turkish activism through neo-Ottomanism arguments.[298] Both countries accused Turkey of following a religion-based foreign policy that aimed to revive neo-Ottomanism.

In fact, when President Özal undertook a Balkan tour in February 1993, the Defense Minister of Greece immediately declared that this tour was nothing but a provocation. Together with Serbian officials, he accused Turkey of attempting to revive neo-Ottomanism.[299] Regarding the arguments of Serbian and Greek officials

[294] Brown, p. 155.
[295] Gangloff, The Weight of Islam in Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans, p. 100.
[296] Hale, p. 212.
[297] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia: the third Balkan war, p. 241.
[298] Kut, Turkey in the Post-Communist Balkans, p. 39.
[299] Gangloff, Weight of Islam in Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans, p. 100.

against Turkey's identity-based political attempts, it should also be kept in mind that Greece was Turkey's main regional competitor and Serbia and Turkey placed themselves on opposite sides regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina. For that reason, their arguments against Turkey should also be considered from a *Reelpolitik* perspective.

About the Greek and Serbian accounts however, it should be noted that there were Islamist and neo-Ottomanist approaches among several Turkish politicians and in the public opinion as well. For example, the Islamist RP described the war as between two religions and argued that Turkey should take a more religion-based foreign policy toward the Balkans. ANAP, on the other hand, took a neo-Ottomanist approach. On several occasions, ANAP parliamentarians considered the Bosnian issue in relation to neo-Ottomanist arguments.[300] The fact that President Özal was formerly the Prime Minister from ANAP gave some credibility to the arguments of Greece and Serbia. In his visit to Washington in February 1992, Özal, while advocating the use of force as the only thing the Serbs would ever understand,[301] stated that the situation in Bosnia represented a life time opportunity for Turkey to restore its economic, diplomatic and cultural influence among the Muslim vestiges of the Ottoman Empire.[302] Still, ANAP and RP, although influential in several aspects, were opposition parties during that period and therefore did not represent the official approach of Turkey.

Turkish foreign policy makers specifically aimed not to follow an ethnic or religion-based foreign policy in that period. Although the public opinion favored the

[300] See for example Gürhan Çelebican's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 8, legislative year 1, session 58, 12.03.1992.; or Gaffar Yakın's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 19, vol. 9, legislative year 1, session 69, 28.04.1992.
[301] Owen, p. 113.
[302] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War, p. 240.

Bosnian Muslims to a great extent, Turkish spokesmen frequently emphasized that Turkey considered the issue as humanitarian, not religious.[303] When Prime Minister Çiller visited Sarajevo in February 1994, she made no reference to Islam, held no talks with religious leaders, and did not visit any places of worship. Turkey also opposed the attempts of Iran within the OIC to describe the conflict as a religious war.[304] According to Sylvie Ganlgoff, the main reason was that the Balkan countries were already quite skeptical of Turkish efforts in the Balkans.[305] She further argues that the Turkey's policy of not following a militarily aggressive strategy caused by the concerns of the Balkan countries towards Turkish aims. Turkey, although welcomed the NATO ultimatum to Serbia in February 1994, proposed its participation in airstrikes only for logistic missions and in August 1995 did not actively participate the Operation Deliberate Force aiming to bomb strategic targets.[306]

Turkey also took several symbolic initiatives to prove that it was not following a religion based foreign policy. Turkey financially supported the reconstruction of historically symbolic Catholic Church in Zenica and gave funds for reconstruction of the historical bridge in Mostar, which is seen as a symbol of religious brotherhood.[307] Yet regarding Mostar Bridge it is to be noted that it was built in the sixteenth century and is also considered as an important Ottoman heritage in the Balkans.

Turkey's strong relations with Croatia during the war had also symbolic importance to prove that Turkey was not trying to build a Muslim axis in the Balkans.[308] Turkey built strong relations with Croatia due to their common hostility

[303] Hale, p. 202.
[304] Gangloff, The Weight of Islam in the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans, p. 97.
[305] Ibid., p. 97.
[306] Ibid., p. 100.
[307] Ibid., p. 100.
[308] Hale, p. 203.

to Serbia; this relation had symbolic importance to show that Turkey was not trying to build a Muslim axis in the Balkans.[309] After the establishment of Bosnian Croat Federation, for which Turkey became a quite active participant and supporter, Turkey continued its close relations with Croatia. When the Zagreb administration was criticized for human rights violations and for not cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in the Hague, Turkey took a neutral position.[310] On 13 December 1999 the funeral of Croat President Tudjman was held and President Demirel was the only head of state present in the funeral, along with the Prime Ministers of Hungary, Macedonia, Slovenia, Montenegro and also Croat member of the three person presidency in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[311] It should be kept in mind however, Turkey's relations with Croatia was highly dependent on the Bosnian-Croat and Sarajevo-Zagreb relations.[312]

To conclude the identity based-approach of Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans, it should be noted that even though Turkey was careful not to follow an ethno-religious foreign policy in the Balkans, the fact that its people have close historical, religious, and cultural relations with the Muslim communities in the Balkans is a reality, which stems from a common history of nearly six centuries, and therefore cannot be changed.[313]

The strategic and identity-based stances of Turkey reached the same conclusion in the end. As a result of this, as Bozzo and Ragionieri argue, this led Turkey to play

[309] Ibid., p. 203.
[310] Kut, Turkish Policy towards the Balkans, p. 85.
[311] Owen, p. 213.
[312] Kut, Turkish Policy towards the Balkans, p. 85.
[313] Ibid., p. 87.

a much more active foreign policy role than it had done during the Cold War period.[314]

Before moving to the evaluation part, other determinants of Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans should also be discussed. Public opinion should be mentioned as one of these determinants. Kemal Kirişçi on that matter argues that in terms of the public opinion's view, it was an opportunity for Turkey to support the loyal Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire.[315] The common heritage with the Balkans along with the fact that a substantial number of Turkish citizens are Balkan immigrants or the descendants of those immigrants is an important aspect of the public opinion, but it should also be considered that there was a complete support for the cause of the Bosnians, not only from the Islamist or nationalist circles.

Once the war started in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the public opinion along with the mass media in Turkey was pro-Bosnian to a high degree and the government parties, DYP and SHP, were afraid that if they would not intervene strongly, this could benefit the Islamist RP, had taken an interest in the conflict since the beginning, arguing that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was between Christians and Muslims.[316] To give an example of how the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina affected the domestic politics, Prime Minister Çiller paid two diplomatic visits to Sarajevo, once in February 1994, a few weeks before the local elections, and once in November 1995, four weeks before the general elections.[317]

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[314] Luciano Bozzo and Rodolfo Ragionieri, "Regional Security in the Balkans and the Role of Turkey: An Italian Perspective," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 269.
[315] Kemal Kirişçi, "ABD - Türkiye İlişkileri: Yenilenen Ortaklıkta Yeni Belirsizlikler," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, edited by Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002). p. 214.
[316] Delvoie, p. 243.
[317] Gangloff, The Weight of Islam in the Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans, p. 94.

During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkish foreign policy towards this issue were debated in the TBMM frequently and several opposition parties raised their voices against the government, criticizing Turkey for not doing enough. Still, it also should be mentioned that the influence of public opinion is a debated subject. For example, a survey held in 1997 in Turkey showed that 53 percent of the participants stated that they were not interested in foreign policy, whereas only 23 percent of the participants stated they were interested. Generally, it can be claimed that economy and party affiliation attracts more attention in elections.[318]

Another determinant is that the all influential groups in Turkish foreign policy making were on a similar policy line regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkans. This eased the decision-making process in the conflict. Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East or Israel, for example, was a major fault line between Islamist and secularist circles within Turkey in the 1990s. In the Balkans however, every influential group in foreign policy such as the army, the ministry of foreign affairs, or every political party in the TBMM were in the same line, although some of them perceived the issue from different perspectives.

It is important to note that political economy was not a direct determinant in Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans. The percentage of the Balkans in Turkish total trade volume, which was around three to five percent during the 1990s, and the underdeveloped markets of the Balkan countries can be stated as the main reasons for that. Turkey's main aims in the Balkans therefore were not economic cooperation or profit, but creating a stable region with no conflicts.[319] Nevertheless, Turkey initiated one regional organization, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), but this organization was diplomatically and

[318] Hale, p. 148.
[319] Kut, Turkey in the Post-Communist Balkans, p. 45.

economically not influential or important, at least not as influential or important as Turkish foreign policy makers expected it to be.

Another motive of Turkey was cooperation with the international community. Turkey avoided bilateral actions in the Balkans and argued generally that it should be the determined diplomatic and if necessary military actions of the international community that would bring an end to the conflict. For that reason, in addition to close contact with regional countries, Turkey pursued an active diplomacy in several international organizations and supported most of the decisions taken in these organizations regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina, at the same time arguing for the necessity of stronger measures to be taken.[320]

Turkey also tried to improve its reputation in the international arena with its Balkan policy. Brown on that issue argues that while the Turkish policy makers had genuine feelings and concerns for the Bosnian Muslims, they were also aware that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina gave them relief from the Western criticisms they had been receiving in several areas, such as the relations with Armenia and Turkey's treatment to its Kurdish citizens.[321] The situation in the Balkans represented an important opportunity for Turkey for its international credibility.

Turkey also considered the Balkans as an area that would help it to improve its reputation among the Muslim countries as well. During the 1990s, Turkey's position within the OIC was frequently questioned by the member states for Turkey's Western-oriented policy, its relations with Israel, and Turkey's secular orientation. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina was also a means for Turkey to increase its credibility in the OIC.[322] Turkey was also in diplomatic competition in the OIC with several countries, especially Iran, regarding the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There

[320] Gencer Özcan, Continuity and Change in Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans, p. 305.
[321] Brown, p. 152.
[322] Delvoie, p. 244.

were calls for Jihads against the Serbs, mostly by Iran and in the international context as a moderate country Turkey could not afford to be demonstrably less concerned than Iran, which was regarded as an extremist Islamist country.[323]

With the end of the Cold War and the end of the Soviet threat to NATO, there was a genuine concern among the Turkish political elites on the future of the Turkey's position in NATO and Turkey's relations with the US. For that reason, the Balkans also presented an opportunity to Turkey to cooperate closely with the US. As Turkey and the US had similar approaches to the region, the most visible cooperation between two countries showed itself in the Balkans.[324]

The reasons for this cooperation between Turkey and the US were several. First of all, the US was in need in a region that it was not familiar with and Turkey was in need of diplomatic support of the military and political superpower of the post-Cold War world structure.[325] In addition to that, the Balkans constituted the second region of cooperation between Turkey and the US, the first being the Middle East and the Gulf War, and represented a welcomed opportunity for the Turkish political elites.[326] In the end, the massacres of the civilians in addition to ineffectiveness of the European powers and the UN made Turkey and the US more important actors in the Balkans.[327] In addition, participation of a Muslim country to the operations was important for the USA in order to secure the support of the Muslim world.[328]

Holbrooke writes that during the meeting on 3 September 1995 between Holbrooke and the OIC representatives, Iran accused the US and the Western world

[323] Brown, p. 154.
[324] Uzgel, Türkiye ve Balkanlar, p. 88.
[325] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 404.
[326] Ibid., p. 409.
[327] Ibid., p. 406.
[328] Kirişçi, "ABD - Türkiye İlişkileri: Yenilenen Ortaklıkta Yeni Belirsizlikler.", p. 214.

of ignoring the Bosnian Muslims whereas Turkey deeply supported the US arguments.[329] For Turkey, on the other hand, cooperation with the US eased the criticisms of Turkish involvement in the Balkans. Misha Glenny, on the Turkish – US cooperation in the Balkans, states that the US considered Turkey as a key nation in the region and Turkey developed parallel relations with Bucharest, Sofia, Skopje, and Tirana with the US.[330] As the region became Western oriented with the dissolution of the USSR, many Balkan countries supported the US involvement and therefore Turkey's cooperation with the US in the region. Such cooperation, on the other hand, attracted great criticisms towards Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East.

For the US foreign policy regarding the Balkans and Turkey, however, it was also vital not to allow Turkey to build a regional hegemony, thus the US diplomatic support of Turkey was limited in that respect. The multidimensional network of relations of Turkey in the Balkans was kept under control of the US to a certain extent.[331] It was one of the major aims of the US foreign policy to balance the interests of Athens and Ankara in the Balkans and try to keep the tensions between Greece and Turkey regarding the Balkan conflicts from exacerbating the Aegean and Cyprus disputes.[332]

It was crucial for Turkish foreign policy that it was NATO that played the most important role rather than the UN or the EU in bringing the war to an end and in securing the security of the Balkans in the aftermath of the war.[333] It was important for the Western circles as well NATO's role in peacekeeping because, as David

[329] Holbrooke, p. 152.
[330] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War, p. 241.
[331] Türkeş, Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim, p. 260.
[332] Misha Glenny, "Heading off War in the Southern Balkans," *Foreign Affairs*, 74, no. 3, (May – June 1995). pp. 106-107.
[333] Alp and Türkeş, p. 138.

Owen explains, not only it did involve the USA and Canada, but also Turkey, which was important for the credibility of the operations with the Islamic countries.[334]

There is one final determinant that needs to be discussed before moving on to an evaluation of Turkish foreign policy, which is a Turkish aim to become a regional power in the Balkans during the 1990s. It is no secret that Turkey tried to fill in the power vacuum in the Balkans that was created with the dissolution of the USSR.[335] According to Tanıl Bora, the Turkish political elites placed great hopes in the idea that Turkey would become a major power in the short run in the aftermath of the Cold War and within this perspective, the Balkans stood as an area of influence that Turkey could not afford to ignore.[336] According to Bora, the Yugoslav conflicts, and especially the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, were perceived as testing grounds on which Turkey would prove or develop its ability to carry its new mission to become a regional power.[337] Kut claims that the new and more assertive foreign policy of Turkey in the late 1990s owed many of its characteristics such as active involvement in international problems, extensive use of multilateral diplomacy, and pro-interventionist stance against aggression to the crisis in the Balkans during the early 1990s.[338]

Several discourses by influential politicians in Turkey may affirm these arguments. For example, Turgut Özal frequently employed a neo-Ottomanist discourse regarding Turkish foreign policy. Süleyman Demirel's discourse on the Turkic world from the Adriatic to the Great Wall of China, and Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem's discourse on Turkey as a superregional, interregional, and multiregional power might in fact affirm these arguments.

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[334] Owen, p. 225.
[335] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alanı Olarak Balkanlar, p. 403.
[336] Bora, Turkish National Identity, Turkish Nationalism and the Balkan Question, p. 116.
[337] Ibid., p. 116.
[338] Kut, Turkish policy toward the Balkans, p. 82.

Critical Evaluation of Turkish Foreign Policy in the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The policy of Turkey regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina was concentrated on several fundamental points. As Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Hikmet Çetin states, Turkey argued that only with determined and efficient international acts the problem could be solved in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, the independence, unity, and territorial integrity constituted the main principles of Turkish diplomatic stance.[339] Kut on that account states that the Turkish policy was based on three premises, namely, the protection of independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, convincing the international community that the war against Bosnia and Herzegovina was an act of aggression, and lifting the UN arms embargo as it punished the victim by denying Bosnia and Herzegovina its legitimate right to self-defense and as such violated the UN Charter.[340] President Demirel stated that Turkey from the first day had argued Bosnia and Herzegovina should be exempted from the arms embargo and the events in early 1990s justified the Turkish claims.[341]

As the International Commission Report indicates as well, the negotiations and diplomatic pressure had to be supported with external material force as well; this was the only way that the warring parties would agree to compromise. The report further states that the most valuable lesson learned from this conflict was the inefficiency of diplomacy that was not supported by material force.[342] This was the claim of Turkish diplomats from the start and the result was indeed justifying the claims of Turkey.

[339] Çetin, p. 56.
[340] Kut, Turkish policy toward the Balkans, p. 82.
[341] Demirel, p. 9.
[342] Barışa Çağrı, p. 37.

Throughout the war, Turkey tried to convince the international community that the Serbs could not be persuaded to stop the war and ethnic cleansing unless the world showed them a credible reaction. Turkey basically argued that without credible threat of force, the aggressors could not be persuaded.[343]

During the war, Turkey did not consider unilateral military action, simply because of the geographical distance and it could not afford to step too far out of line with the policies of its Western allies.[344] Still, it contributed to every international military operation created to bring peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina. It did not end the war in the Balkans, and it would be unrealistic to expect such success from Turkey since the global powers and major international organizations failed in this goal for many years as well, and also considering the its limited diplomatic and material capacity, but it is important to note that the war ended only when the measures proposed by Turkey since the beginning of the war taken by the international community by NATO and US leadership.

Moreover, Turkey also managed to establish its role in the Balkans as an honest broker as mediated between the Bosnian Croats and Muslims. With such action, Turkey proved its ability in conflict resolution and mediation, thus proved itself as a responsible and unbiased regional power. During this period, Turkey became a factor of stability in the region and established its position as a vital regional power. In the 1990s, it built strong relations with all Balkan countries, except for Serbia and Greece. It should also be mentioned that despite Turkish firm stance against the Serbian aggression, Turkish Serbian relations were not totally severed. The fact that most Turkish exports to Europe were transported via Serbian

[343] Kut, Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia-Herzegovina, p. 313.
[344] Hale, p. 203.

territory was an important factor in that.[345] Nevertheless, Turkey was careful not to provoke a wider division in the Balkans or to draw itself into a broader conflict. In fact, Ankara pursued a policy specifically designed not to turn Serbia, Greece's main ally in the Balkans, into Turkey's enemy. Moreover, Turkish officials were also careful to distinguish the Serbian people from the pro-war Serbian government.[346]

As William Hale argues, Turkey's careful policy in the 1990s helped to prevent an anti-Muslim and anti-Turkey Slavic bloc and it also did not create a Muslim belt in the Balkans as Turkish foreign policy carefully avoided creating one.[347] As the war ended, the normalization of relations between Ankara and Belgrade began immediately and only after six months of the Dayton Agreement, the relations were upgraded to ambassadorial level again and official contacts actively resumed.

On bilateral relations with the formerly Yugoslav republics, Burhan Ekinci, Turkey's last ambassador to Yugoslavia, writes that a fair and equal treatment to each of these newly established republics was an important premise of Turkish foreign policy.[348] In fact, Turkey's Balkan policy in the 1990s was not a simple sum of close bilateral relations, but a regional policy that was consistent in concept.[349] With its careful foreign policy, Turkey managed to support the victim of aggression without provoking further conflict. With these policies, Turkey played the role of a mature and realistic regional power.

Kut writes that Turkey did not impose itself on the region, but its geopolitical position in the Balkans imposed on Turkey the role of a regional power. She further states that the approach of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria,

[345] Kut, Turkish Policy toward the Balkans, p. 80.
[346] Ibid., p. 80.
[347] Hale, p. 206.
[348] Burhan Ekinci, "Yugoslavya'nın Dağılması ve Türkiye," in *Balkanlar/ Ortadoğu ve Balkan İncelemeleri Vakfı* (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1993). p. 255.
[349] Kut, Turkish Policy toward the Balkans, p. 89.

and Croatia to Turkey for support during the 1990s is an example of that.[350] It should be noted that several mistakes in Greek foreign policy in the early 1990s, especially regarding Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Albania, benefited Turkey. In addition, Russian ineffectiveness in the Balkans increased the influence of Turkey in the region.[351] Turkey tried to play a leadership role in the region while it also sought to prevent another regional actor to become the leader or hegemonic power of the Balkans.[352]

It should be noted, however, that Turkey failed to become influential in the region in the post-war settlements. It contributed to several international projects to reconstruct Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war, but failed to become an influential actor in that arena. Although Turkey it a consistent and systematic contribution to the establishment of peace, it failed to play the same role in the aftermath of the role as a regional power in the Balkans.

This was mainly for mainly two reasons. First, Turkish economic ties with the Balkans were weak and the Balkan markets did not present an opportunity to increase these relations due to their relatively small and underdeveloped markets. Second, after the war, the EU started to take a greater initiative in the Balkans and assumed a stronger position in the reconstruction. As a more influential power, the Balkan countries mainly turned to European support and also integration in that process; and the Balkans politics started to become dominated by European powers in the aftermath of the war. For that reason, it was not easy for Turkey to become more influential than the EU. Nevertheless, it still managed to secure its good and close relations with the Balkan countries and continued to be an influential actor. With the diplomatic successes during the early 1990s, Turkey began an active and

[350] Kut, Turkey in the Post-Communist Balkans, p. 41.
[351] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 438.
[352] Türkeş, Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim, p. 257.

important regional power in the Balkans for the first time since the start of the Cold War.

CHAPTER 4

THE WAR IN KOSOVO AND TURKISH DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES

After the Dayton Agreement, the Balkans and the former Yugoslav republics experienced a relatively peaceful period for a while. The term “relatively” is necessary here, since interregional relations were still problematic. The peace between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia or Republika Srpska was dependent on the presence of international forces. Several other Balkan countries were experiencing domestic problems that could easily have taken an international dimension, such as the Albanian Rebellion in 1997, the interethnic problems between the Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority in Macedonia, and the prospect of a war in Kosovo, which was considered an important danger to the peace and stability in the region.

The Kosovo issue was present long before the dissolution period of Yugoslavia had begun. In fact, for many scholars, Kosovo was the region that initiated the events that led to the dissolution process and in the end, completed the dissolution wars. Even though the danger that could be caused to the whole region due to a conflict in Kosovo was known by all international actors involved in the region, the issue was given only a small part in the Dayton Agreement in 1995, which assured peace between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The unspoken reason for this neglect, according to Richard Caplan, was that there was no war at Kosovo at that time, there was already too much to discuss in Dayton, and the EU and the US did not want to

alienate Milosevic, who claimed Kosovo was an internal matter of Serbia.[353] Even Richard Holbrooke, the chief US mediator during the Dayton process, stated that although the Dayton Agreement managed to solve the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and prevented a dual conflict combining Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, the problem in Kosovo remained unresolved. He further admitted that a war in Kosovo might have drawn in other Balkan nations such as Albania, Macedonia, and perhaps even Greece and Turkey.[354]

In this chapter, I will discuss and analyze Turkish diplomatic initiatives towards the war in Kosovo. Keeping in mind that the Kosovo conflict possessed the possibility of a spillover effect and might even have evolved into a total war in the Balkans, in the first part of this chapter, I will discuss the reasons why the Kosovo issue presented such a danger to the whole region. Among these reasons, special emphasis will be given to the new Macedonian question.

In the next part, I will discuss Turkish diplomatic attitude towards Kosovo since the beginning of the dissolution process, and then concentrate on Turkish reactions to the war in Kosovo. After that part, I will discuss Turkish motives, and last, I will make a general evaluation of Turkish foreign policy. In the evaluation part, I will claim that Turkey was more reluctant in its diplomatic activism in Kosovo compared to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even though Turkey took several initiatives during the Kosovo War, the international community and most notably the global powers were much quicker to react in Kosovo. As a direct result of the increased global power attention on the region, Turkey's ability to influence the turn of events in the regional affairs dropped in proportion to the increased attention of the global powers.

[353] Richard Caplan, "International Diplomacy and the Crisis in Kosovo," *International Affairs*, 74, no. 4 (October 1998). p. 750.
[354] Holbrooke, p. 433.

The Regional Dimension of the War in Kosovo and the New Macedonian Question

The conflict over Kosovo differed from the conflict over Bosnia and Herzegovina in several ways. These two regions were the two main conflict zones in the Balkans during the 1990s, nevertheless as Bosnia and Herzegovina was a direct strategic concern for the Serbian, Bosnian, and Croatian nations, Kosovo should be thought in a wider spectrum as it constituted a strategic concern for other Balkan nations as well, namely Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and quite possibly Turkey and Greece.[355] As the conflict in the Balkans started in the early 1990s, Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey had all signaled that they may be unable to remain aloof from the fighting if Serbia would take military action to drive the largely unarmed Albanian population in Kosovo, which was under Serbian political control at that time. The leaders of these states had feared that a Serbian assault on Kosovo; and a southern front to the war in the former Yugoslav republics were only a matter of time.[356]

Throughout the 1990s, a conflict in Kosovo was considered dramatically dangerous for the stability and security in the Balkans. Especially during the early 1990s, one of the main fears of the Balkan countries was the prospect of an escalation of the conflict to the whole region. It was mainly related to the concerns that the conflict in Kosovo would also affect the delicate political situation in Macedonia between the Macedonian majority and Albanian minority. Since its foundation, Macedonia experienced a number of domestic and regional problems and

[355] Barışa Çağrı, p. 17.
[356] Ramet, War in the Balkans, p. 80.

was widely considered at that time that a conflict in Kosovo would spread to Macedonia, and might eventually result in a total Balkan war. Moreover, as the population in Kosovo consisted mostly of Albanians, the conflict might also have affected Albania as well.

For these reasons, in this part of the chapter, I will concentrate on the regional dimension of the conflict over Kosovo and the new Macedonian question. I believe it is essential to understand these aspects in order to develop an understanding of both Turkish foreign policy and the foreign policies of the regional and global powers in regard to Kosovo and Macedonia.

The prospect of a conflict in Kosovo immediately took on an international dimension, and was mainly considered as more dangerous than the actual war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The strategic aspect of Kosovo and Macedonia is important here to understand. As Bosnia and Herzegovina was the key to the control of the Adriatic coast, Macedonia was the only territory where the Balkan Mountains could be traversed from north to south and east to west.[357] For that reason, as Misha Glenny argues, should any of Macedonia's neighbors control the territory, they would determine whether the main transit route in the region runs from Belgrade to Thessaloniki or from Durres to Istanbul.[358] At that time, due to the fragile political situation in Macedonia and the large Albanian populations both in Kosovo and Macedonia, it was widely believed by the international community that a conflict in Kosovo would spill over to Macedonia as well and at worse might indeed initiate a total Balkan war.

The statements of political leaders from various countries are helpful to better explain this issue. In December 1992, when the US still was reluctant to politically

[357] Glenny, Heading off the War in Southern Balkans, p. 99.
[358] Glenny, The Macedonian Question, p. 136.

intervene in the conflicts in the region and considered the turmoil in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a European problem, President Bush wrote a letter to Milosevic and stated that if Serbia caused a conflict in Kosovo, the USA would intervene. Later on, his successor President Clinton made a similar statement as well.[359] The reasons for this policy may well have been related to the US interest in keeping Albania as its ally in the Balkans or a fear of spillover effect in the region.[360] Still, it is an indicator of US concerns about a conflict in Kosovo.

Turkey's Chief of Staff, Doğan Güreş, stated on 21 November 1992, during a NATO Military Committee Meeting that a new Balkan war would be inevitable if the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina spread to Kosovo and Macedonia.[361] In 1992, Albanian President Sali Berisha announced that Albania would get involved if the conflict spread to Kosovo. After that, there were several incidents of warning shots along the Albanian – Serbian border.[362] On 12 February 1998, Albanian President Rexhep Meidani made speech in the TBMM and stated that Kosovo issue was a Balkan problem which involved not only Albania and Serbia, but also Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria.[363]

David Owen, co-creator of Vance-Owen Peace Plan, also stated that the real risk of the conflicts in Yugoslavia was this powder keg might turn into a total war in which Greece and Turkey would stand on opposing sides.[364] The Report of the International Commission on the Balkans states on that issue that it was widely

[359] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 421.
[360] Ibid., p. 421.
[361] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 – 1993, p. 337.
[362] Tanıl Bora, *Bosna Hersek: Yeni Dünya Düzeni'nin Av Sahası* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1999). p. 202.
[363] Rexhep Meidani's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 45, legislative year 3, session 54, 12.02.1998, p. 104.
[364] Owen, p. 11.

accepted in the Western countries that a collapse of Macedonia would result in a total Balkan war.[365]

The same concerns were shared by several scholars as well. Kaufman stated that the real fear in the Kosovo conflict was that the conflict would spread and include neighboring countries, including Turkey and Greece, and in that scenario, two NATO allies would be on opposite sides of an armed conflict.[366] Glenny stated in 1995 that if the war would reach Macedonia, it would be harsher than Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it could lead a total war between the Belgrade – Athens and Tirana – Ankara axis.[367] Sabrina Ramet also said that a war in Kosovo and Macedonia would draw in Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey.[368]

It should be noted that most of these arguments were presented during the early 1990s, when the conflicts in Yugoslavia were in the initial phases. Later on, the possibility of a total Balkan war seemed to decrease; still, it remained a common and legitimate concern during that period. Although the possibility of a total Balkan war seemed to drop, these fears might have played an important role on the eagerness of NATO to act more quickly in the Kosovo conflict.

At this point, it needs to be discussed why the situation in Kosovo might affect Macedonia and why this issue might have turned to a total Balkan war. In order to do that, I will first describe the political, economic, and social situation in these countries. I will also briefly mention the Serbian and Kosovar Albanian claims on Kosovo.

Kosovo was the poorest area within Yugoslavia. By 1988, its GDP per capita was only 27 percent that of the Yugoslav average, 13 percent of the level of

[365] Barışa Çağrı, p. 159.
[366] Kaufman, p. 156.
[367] Glenny, Heding off the War in the Southern Balkans, p. 103.
[368] Ramet, War in the Balkans, p. 80.

Slovenia, and 31 percent of Croatia. The unemployment rate was 53 percent, whereas for Yugoslavia as a whole it was 17 percent.[369] According to the latest reliable population census in 1981, the population was consisted 77.4 percent Albanians, 13.2 percent Serbs, 1.7 percent Montenegrins, 3.7 percent Slavic Muslims, 0.8 percent Turks, 0.2 percent Yugoslavs, and 3 percent had other ethnic affiliations. In 1991, it was estimated that about 90 percent of the inhabitants were Kosovars, while about 10 percent was regarded as Serbs[370]

Although the Serbian population in Kosovo stood as insignificant, Kosovo captures a very important part of Serbian culture and history. Sterio states that the symbolic value of Kosovo to Serbians can be compared to symbolic value of Jerusalem to Christians or Jews, or Mecca to Muslims.[371] Waring, an important Serbian intellectual, wrote in his article in the early twentieth century that Kosovo was an important part of the Serbian culture, and the Battle of Kosovo, where the Serbians lost against the Ottoman army and came under Ottoman domination for centuries, stood as the most important myth of the Serbian culture.[372] Throughout centuries, with songs and poetry, the Serbs lived the myth of Kosovo, the Battle of Kosovo, and their claims over the disputed territory.[373]

Kosovo myth played an important role as Milosevic rose to power in Serbia as well. Especially after 1986 Milosevic used the Kosovo problem for his own political career and mainly by provoking this problem, he first became leader of the Serbian Communist Party, and later on the Serbian president. At this period, his meetings and

[369] Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, *The Balkans: A Post-Communist History* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007). p. 513.
[370] Ibid., p. 513.
[371] Milena Sterio, "The Case of Kosovo: Self-Determination, Secession, and Statehood under International Law," *American Society of International Law*, Proceedings of the Annual Meeting, 104 (March 24, 2010). p. 361.
[372] L. F. Waring, "Kosovo," *The Slovanic Review*, 2, no. 4 (June 1923). p. 61.
[373] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 11.

speeches on the Kosovo issue increased his political popularity greatly.[374] Milosevic, in his speech in 1989 on the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, addressed the Serbs and called for an awakening of the Serbian nation. In that meeting in Kosovo, one million Serbians gathered to memorialize the Battle of Kosovo and in that speech Milosevic stated that Kosovo was sacred for Serbia and would always remain Serbian territory.[375]

To conclude, Kosovo myth became the essence of modern Serbian nationalism, both during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[376] The main Serbian claims over Kosovo concentrated on historical and cultural arguments. According to the Serbians, Kosovo was seen as holy land of the Serbian nation, the center of the Serbian culture and tradition, the birth place of Serbian myth, and the Jerusalem of the Serbians.[377]

The claims of the Kosovar Albanians, on the other hand, concentrated on demographic facts. Ninety percent of the population was estimated to be of Albanian origin. Moreover, the Kosovar Albanians argued that they did not constitute a national minority, unlike the Serbs claimed, but a nation itself; thus they argued they possessed the right to self determination.[378]

What linked the Kosovo problem to Macedonia was mainly related to the Albanian minority in Macedonia and the fragile political situation of Macedonia. According to the 1981 Yugoslav census, the population in Macedonia was 1,912,257 of whom 1,281,195 were Macedonians; 377,726 were Albanians; 86,691 were Turks;

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[374] Aydın Babuna, "Kosova Sorunu Üzerine," *Dış Politika Dergisi,* 1, no. 2 (1997). p. 8.
[375] Aydın Babuna, "Milosevic ve Sırp Milliyetçiliği," *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi: Dün/Bugün/Yarın*, no. 35 (December 1999). p. 112.
[376] Anna Di Lellio, "The Missing Democratic Revolution and Serbia's Anti-European Choice: 1989 – 2008," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 22, no. 3 (September 2009). p. 375.
[377] Babuna, Kosovo Sorunu Üzerine, p. 14.
[378] Ibid., pp. 16-18.

and the rest had other ethnic affiliations, such as Serbs, Gypsies, Pomaks, Vlachs, and Bulgarians. Since then, there had been an important amount of rise in Albanian numbers that would make the Albanian population as much as a quarter of the whole population, which had been increasing even further.[379] According to the 1994 census, the Albanian population was recorded as 22.9 percent.[380]

In addition to its ethnically diverse population, Macedonia was weak in terms of economy and material power as well. The official unemployment rate mounted steadily from 26 percent in 1992 to 42 percent in 1997. The real rates may have been lower due to unrecorded informal or unregistered sectors which employed people who were officially recorded as unemployed.[381]

The relations between the Albanians and Macedonians in Macedonia were problematic as well. The Albanians argued that there had been a systematic unofficial policy of discrimination against them. They further argued that their population was more than the official records and close to 40 percent. Their main demand was to change the minority status of Albanians to a constituent nation status.[382]

The relations between the Macedonians and Albanians were problematic during Yugoslavia period as well. Especially during the 1980s, the Serbophile communist party in Macedonia dealt with the Albanian population even more harshly

[379] James Pettifer, "The New Macedonian Question," in *The New Macedonian Question*, edited by James Pettifer, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). p. 17.
[380] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun and Emir Türkoğlu, "Makedonya Bıçak Sırtında: Balkanların Eski 'Model Ülke'si Yeni İstikrarsızlık Unsuru Mu?" in *Dünden Bugüne Makedonya Sorunu*, edited by Murat Hatipoğlu, (Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2002). p. 128.
[381] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 461.
[382] Demirtaş-Coşkun and Türkoğlu, p. 129.

than its counterpart did in Kosovo. For that reason, it would take more than a few years of verbal commitment to trust the Macedonian state.[383]

Misha Glenny argues that the conflict in Kosovo threatened Macedonia in two ways. First reason was the independent Kosovo program of the Kosovo Liberation Army (*Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës,* UÇK), which would be a powerful magnet for Macedonian Albanians. And second, large numbers of refugees from Kosovo to Macedonia would disturb the fragile balance between the two communities.[384]

On the first issue, Macedonians tended to see any move in favor of Albanians as a first step towards secession, while latter claimed proportional representation within state institutions as well as the status of a constituent nation. This perception strengthened with the eruption of the Kosovo conflict.[385] The Albanians even declared at one point that they had built an autonomous region in western Macedonia.[386] Partly due to these reasons, Macedonia came to the edge of a civil war in 2001. Fortunately, the crisis was resolved through the diplomatic efforts of the USA and the EU before it could take a more serious dimension.

The refugee issue is complex and problematic as well. Since its foundation, in addition to its problematic relations with its neighbors, especially Greece, refugee flows from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo were one of the main problems of this small republic.[387] During the Kosovo crisis, 850,000 Kosovar Albanians out of 2 million fled from the country and 360,000 of them were in refugee status in

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[383] Glenny, The Macedonian Question, p. 137.
[384] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 656.
[385] Sophia Clement, "Former Yugoslav Macedonia, the Regional Setting and European Security: Towards Balkan Stability," in *The New Macedonian Question*, edited by James Pettifer, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). p. 285.
[386] Uzgel, Türkiye ve Balkanlar, p. 105.
[387] Murat M. Hatipoğlu, "Kuruluşundan Günümüze Makedonya Cumhuriyeti'nin Dış Politikası ve Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri (1991-2000)," in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, edited by Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, (Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2001). p. 167.

Macedonia. The fact that Macedonia was geographically close to Kosovo and many of the Kosovar Albanians had relatives in Macedonia made this country an important magnet for these refugees.[388] Yet, this situation made the already fragile relations between Macedonians and Albanians even more complicated.

In the Balkan context, the migration issue was also transformed into security issues. Migration could easily disturb the relationship between the states' territorial and societal security and affect each of those elements interactively, as well as the whole regional security, thus threat migration might cause changes at some level on the foreign policies and security problems of involved states.[389] During the war in Kosovo, the massive refugee flows to the neighboring countries increased the potential of the war overspread the territory of Macedonia and Albania. The expulsion of refugees to these countries created several ethnic, economic, and political problems. As a result of uncontrolled refugee flows, Albania was almost involved in the war with Serbian military forces and Macedonia became more vulnerable to the shift of the Kosovo War into its territory. Both Albanian and Macedonian nationalisms in this country rapidly increased during this period.[390]

Another point that made Macedonia significantly vulnerable to the regional conflicts was the fact that Macedonia established very problematic relations with its neighbors since its foundation. In fact, the foundation of an independent Macedonia brought an historical problem back to the Balkans, namely the Macedonian Question, in the form of new a Macedonian question.[391]

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[388] Demirtaş-Coşkun and Türkoğlu, p. 127.
[389] Nurcan Özgür Baklacıoğlu, "Albanian Migrations and the Problem of Security in the Balkans," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 6 (2001). p. 108.
[390] Ibid., p. 112.
[391] For a detailed overview of the history of Macedonian question in the Balkans, see Fikret Adanır, *Die Makedonische Frage: Ihre Entstehung Und Entwicklung Bis 1908* (Frankfurt: Frankfurter Historische Abhandlungen, 1979).

Apart from the historical claims of its four neighbors, namely Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Albania, over Macedonia, it is most notably the strategic importance of this country, as discussed above that made it crucial in the regional setting of the Balkans. James Pettifer states that the Macedonian question was the most bloody, complex, and intractable of all Balkan questions.[392] Although all four neighbors of Macedonia had stated that they had no claim on Macedonian territory, there still were substantial political parties in all of them, with the exception of Greece that had claims over Macedonian territory or wanted a revision of the position of their compatriot minorities, leading to a possibility of a destabilizing effect on Macedonia.[393] Thus it is important to note that the question of external aggression was secondary to the issue of internal stability of Macedonia. Nevertheless, if a collapse of relations between Albanians and Macedonians did occur, Serbia, Bulgaria, or Albania would infringe on Macedonian sovereignty.[394] The fact that the JNA took all its weaponry with it, while leaving Macedonia, left the new state almost completely unable to defend itself.[395] This situation made things even worse for the newly established republic.

Greece's problems with Macedonia were not over territory, but over the Macedonian nation and name of the country. The main dimension of the foreign policy of Athens towards Skopje was to change the name, flag, and constitution of Macedonia through lobbying efforts in various international organizations and at one level putting an embargo on Macedonia.[396] However, the stability in Macedonia was strategically important for Greece as well since the ambitions of greater Albania, Bulgaria, or Serbia towards Macedonia were considered dangerous by Athens as

[392] Pettifer, p. 15.
[393] Ibid., p. 17.
[394] Glenny, The Macedonian Question, p. 135.
[395] Ibid., p. 137.
[396] Hatipoğlu, p. 173.

well. Such a partition process would involve Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, Turkey, and Serbia in a dangerous and destructive Balkan war; thus, it was strategically important for Greece to maintain a relatively weak buffer state.[397]

Albania was the only neighbor of Macedonia that had recognized both the Macedonian state and Macedonian nation, although the recognition of the former was conditioned upon certain variable concessions being granted to the Albanian minority in Macedonia.[398] The weak material power, internal problems, and dependence on Western support made Albania directly involved in regional affairs; thus, it was not easy for the Albanian politicians to follow ambitious dreams of a greater Albania.[399]

Traditionally, Bulgaria was the country with the most direct designs on Macedonian territory. However, Bulgaria also was the first country to recognize the independence of Macedonia and doubtless planned to involve itself deeply in its affairs.[400]

As Macedonia had no direct importance for the Serbian culture and history like Kosovo, and had only an insignificant number of Serbian minorities, it meant little to the Serbian nationalist dreams of greater Serbia. Thus, Macedonia managed to be the only country that could leave Yugoslavia without any armed conflict. During the 1990s, the main dimension of the Serbian policy was to allow Macedonia to remain as a relatively weak nation state. But if any of the surrounding forces, especially

[397] Theodore Couloumbis and Prodromos Yannas, "Greek Security Challenges in the 1990s," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 206.
[398] Glenny, The Macedonian Question, p. 136.
[399] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Arnavutluk'un Dış Politikası ve Balkanlarda Arnavut Sorunu," in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, edited by Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, (Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2001). p. 79.
[400] Pettifer, pp. 25-26.

Bulgaria, increased their influence in Skopje dramatically, or took matters as far as territorial revision, then Belgrade would consider itself forced to act.[401]

The Kosovo problem was directly related to the Macedonian question and the problematic relations of Macedonia with all its neighbors together with its fragile domestic political setting seemed to create a possibility of a total Balkan war during the 1990s. As Glenny states, if the delicate balance between the Albanians and Macedonians had been broken, Serbia, Albania, and Bulgaria would have considered how best to fill the resultant power vacuum in the corridor.[402]

In such a political setting, Turkey considered the survival of Macedonia as crucial to its interests. Turkey was the second country to recognize Macedonia as an independent republic and the first to open an embassy in Skopje.[403] Turkish foreign policy makers considered Macedonia an important factor of sustainable peace in the Balkans, and for that reason tried to keep the diplomatic relations as good as possible. The Turkish minority group in Macedonia can be considered to have been influential factor of Turkey's close diplomatic ties with this country. The prospect of a partition process of Macedonia was considered as vitally dangerous by Turkish foreign policy makers. In such an environment, Macedonia's problematic neighborly relations with Greece and Turkey's regional rivalry with this country became an advantage for Turkey to develop its diplomatic relations with Macedonia.[404]

As Ankara believed that the survival of Macedonia was crucial for Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans, Turkey tried to keep the material power of Macedonia at a reasonable level and signed defense contracts with this country. The two countries signed a security agreement in 1992, and in March 1995, Turkey and

[401] Ibid., p. 25.
[402] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia, p. 250.
[403] Babuna, İç politikadan dış politikaya, p. 343.
[404] Uzgel, Türkiye ve Balkanlar, p. 106.

Macedonia signed a military cooperation agreement, according to which Turkish officers provided Macedonian officials with training programs.[405]

As the relations between Greece and Macedonia started to normalize after 1995, the momentum of relations of the previous years between Turkey and Macedonia started to slow down and the number of Greek investments and projects in Macedonia started to increase.[406] Turkey still tried to keep its close diplomatic relations with Macedonia, but failed to improve its economic ties with it. The trade and economic relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries were in general quite far from reflecting the satisfactory level of the political relations. The interests of the Turkish private sector in the region were quite modest in terms of both investment and trade, mostly due to the relatively limited size of the regional markets.[407]

For Turkish foreign policy, Kosovo would still be strategically important even if there was a certainty that the war would not spill to Macedonia. Throughout the 1990s Turkey built close relations with Albania and Macedonia and if the war would include these countries and Greece as well, Turkey would possibly have to intervene as well.[408] During that period, Turkey signed defense treaties with both Macedonia and Albania. Under a defense treaty between Ankara and Tirana signed in May 1993, Turkey committed to supporting Albania with weapons supplies and logistics if war should break out in Kosovo.[409]

As I have underlined in this part, the conflict in Kosovo threatened the peace and stability in the Balkan region at various levels, and most of these threats were

[405] Babuna, İç politikadan dış politikaya, p. 343.
[406] Hatipoğlu, p. 180.
[407] Güner Öztek, "Situation in the Balkans and Turkey's Balkan Policy," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 8 (2003). p. 13.
[408] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 421.
[409] Glenny, The Macedonian Question, p. 146.

directed at Macedonia. In the next part, I will move to the Turkish diplomatic initiatives during the Kosovo conflict.

Turkish Reactions and Initiatives during the War in Kosovo

As the prospect of a conflict in Kosovo and its possible spillover effects on Macedonia was perceived as a threat to Balkan stability by the international community and Turkey as well, Turkish foreign policy makers started to develop a foreign policy towards Kosovo as soon as the problems started in Yugoslavia. Kosovo can be regarded as the region that accelerated and ended the Yugoslav dissolution wars. It was the region that eased the political rise of Milosevic and where the conflicts were first started. And at last, the Kosovo War was the last of the Yugoslav dissolution wars.

With the 1974 Constitution of Yugoslavia, Kosovo was granted an autonomous status within Serbia. In 1989, Milosevic lifted the autonomy of Kosovo and in September 1990, more than 100,000 Kosovar Albanians were sacked by the Serbian government which resulted in a general strike led by the Kosovar government. In 1991, the Kosovar Albanians held a referendum and declared independence from Serbia, issued their own political system, and elected Ibrahim Rugova as their president.[410] Until the late 1990s, the Kosovar Albanians followed a passive resistance movement against Serbia under the Rugova government. The fact that the resistance of the Kosovar Albanians did not cause an armed conflict and he managed to keep his hegemony over the region was to the benefit of Milosevic as well, thus he did not make a move against Rugova, who acted as a president, held diplomatic

[410] Aydın Babuna, "Die Turkei Und Kosovo," in *Der Kosovo-Konflikt: Ursachen Akteure Verlauf*, edited by Konrad Clewing and Jens Reuter, (München: Bayerische Landeszentrale für Politische Bildungsarbeit, 2000). p. 315.

meetings with foreign representatives and leaders, had his own bureau, and official car.[411] On the other hand, during the 1990s, Kosovo became the region where the most serious violations of human rights in Europe occurred.

Turkey started to take a position in the early 1990s and for the Kosovar administration, Turkey's support was perceived as important as well. On 11 February 1992, Rugova paid a diplomatic visit to Turkey and for the first time was officially received by a head of state. He was seeking political support and recognition from Turkey for the Kosovar independence. Yet, Turkish officials stated that Kosovo was an autonomous region under Serbia and recognition was not possible.[412] Nevertheless, Turkey promised diplomatic support for the protection of the Kosovar Albanians.[413]

Until the escalation of armed conflict, Turkey only provided diplomatic support for the Kosovar people and adopted a cautious and moderate stance. During that period, Turkey's Kosovo policy contributed to preventing a total collapse of Ankara – Belgrade relations. Although Kosovo issue received widespread publicity in Turkey, creating strong sympathy for the Kosovar Albanians, Ankara refrained from provoking or supporting separatist tendencies in the region.[414] Ankara – Belgrade relations were already problematic due to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Turkish foreign policy makers wanted to avoid further problems by bringing another issue to the table. During that period, there were also two other factors that led Turkey to follow a cautious Kosovo policy. First, the territorial integrity of a nation state is a sacred principle in Turkish foreign policy and tampering with that is considered ultimately dangerous in Ankara's view. Second,

[411] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilil ve Dış Politika, p. 161.
[412] Soysal, p. 228.
[413] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 421.
[414] Kut, Turkish Policy toward the Balkans, p. 80.

the relations between the Kosovar Albanians and Turks in Kosovo disturbed Ankara as the tiny Turkish minority was known to have concerns about the prospect of an Albanian hegemony.[415]

After the Dayton Agreement, a process of rapprochement between Ankara and Belgrade began, and only six months later, Turkey and Serbia upgraded relations to ambassadorial level and active official contacts were resumed.[416] Ankara's soft approach and speedy rapprochement with Serbia provoked some negative reaction in Turkey and the opposition parties accused the government with opportunism, naiveté, and even betrayal. According to Kut however, Ankara's decision making regarding Serbia should be viewed in the light of the pragmatic approach that traditionally dominates Turkish foreign policy.[417] Turkey invited Serbia along with the former Yugoslav republics to join BSEC, and Mesut Yılmaz, Turkish Prime Minister, met with Milosevic in Crete during the Balkan Summit in November 1997.[418] It could be understood that Turkey was ready and willing for a normalization process in bilateral relations with Belgrade. These efforts however were doomed with the outbreak of the fighting and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo in March 1998.

After 1995, UÇK started to react against the passive resistance policy of Rugova. Nevertheless, the actions of UÇK and Kosovo conflict attracted little attention outside Kosovo and Serbia. According to Glenny, this was mainly due to two factors. First, the international community was tired of the Bosnian conflict and second it was widely believed at that time that the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina

[415] Ibid., p. 81.
[416] Ibid., p. 81.
[417] Ibid., p. 81.
[418] Ibid., p. 81.

depended on the goodwill of Milosevic.[419] However, UÇK in the late 1990s believed that the international attendance in Kosovo would only be possible if a conflict broke out between the Serbian and Kosovar forces.

In February 1998, UÇK intensified their attacks against the Serbian security forces, and in response, the Serbian forces attacked Albanian villages and massacred the inhabitants. As stated above, Kosovo was the region that brought Milosevic political power, thus he could not allow such troubles in this region, which was considered to be the Serbian Jerusalem.[420] He, in response to the UÇK assaults, increased pressure on Kosovo, and as a direct result, the international community's attention was once again brought into the Balkans. It should be noted that mainly with lessons learned from Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO decided to act more quickly this time.[421]

From this perspective, it could be claimed that the main idea behind the UÇK policy was to perform acts of violence in order to attract the attention of the Western powers. In addition to the Serbian military forces, the UÇK also targeted the Serbian civilian population in Kosovo. By abducting Serbian civilians, the UÇK pressured the Serbian population to leave Kosovo. The UÇK was aware of the fact that these assaults would result in Serbian counterattacks, and in this period, many Albanian civilians were sacrificed as well. As the Serbian forces attacked the civilian Albanian population, the Western powers started to increase its attention towards Kosovo and the Kosovar Albanians secured the Western support which they desperately needed.[422] Albanian Diaspora succeeded at internationalizing the question to a

[419] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 654.
[420] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilil ve Dış Politika, p. 162.
[421] Kaufman, p. 156.
[422] Emir Türkoğlu, "Kosova Arnavutları'nın Milliyetçiliği," in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, edited by Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, (Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2001). pp. 118-119.

considerable degree at this period.[423] Rugova held frequent meetings with European and American political leaders and enjoyed strong support among Muslim populated countries, including Turkey. The Serbian officials were well aware of the political risks of extremist actions to achieve a new ethnic cleansing. For most of the Serbian population in Kosovo, the prospect of an armed confrontation with around the 90 percent of the population was unattractive and the political costs would be extremely high. Renewed economic sanctions and international isolation would be and became a disaster for a country that was trying to recover from the consequences of the Croatian and Bosnian conflicts. Moreover, a conflict in Kosovo was likely to prompt a NATO intervention led by the USA. This was understood by the Serbian leadership, but the military acts of the UÇK trying to attract foreign military intervention would constitute a dangerous prospect for the Serbian administration as well.[424]

The events started to turn into an armed conflict in February 1998, when Serbian military forces killed 17 Kosovar protesters in Drenica. On 4 March, they killed 80 civilians. On 9 March 1998, the six nations contact group members, namely the US, Russia, France, Germany, the UK, and Italy, met in London, decided to stop supplying Serbia with any equipment that could be used for internal suppression and terrorism and to ask the UN Security Council to impose an arms embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.[425] The intense assaults of the Serbian military forces resulted in more people joining the UÇK, European and the US involvement in the conflict, and the unsettled regional stability in Macedonia and Albania, and also in

[423] Veniamin Karakostanoglu, "The Kosovo Question: Starting & Concluding the Yugoslav Crisis?" in *Balkan Currents: Studies in the History, Culture, and Society of a Divided Land*, edited by Lawrence A. Tritle, (Los Angeles: Loyola Marymount University Press, 1998). p. 50.
[424] Ibid., pp. 69-70.
[425] Bideleux and Jeffries, pp. 537-539.

Montenegro by polarizing Montenegrin society that was tired of the fights of the Serbs.[426] Milosevic, on the other hand, started to be perceived as the problem maker in the Balkans once again, rather than an essential actor in order to keep the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He increasingly became isolated in the international community.[427]

As the events in Kosovo turned into an armed conflict and the issue took on an international dimension, Turkish diplomatic attention was directed towards the Balkans. As soon as the events started in February 1998, President Süleyman Demirel held a conference meeting with Milosevic.[428] Later on, Demirel also met with regional leaders to find a diplomatic solution to the problem in Kosovo at a regional level.

On 8 March 1998, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem held a diplomatic meeting with Milosevic. During that meeting, Cem proposed a three-staged plan to Milosevic, including immediate ceasefire in Kosovo, the return of the rights of the Kosovar people according to the 1974 constitution that would be revised according to contemporary circumstances, and autonomy status for the Kosovo province within Serbia.[429] There was, however, no political outcome of the Cem – Milosevic meeting. Serbian officials argued that Kosovo was an internal matter of Serbia, and accused Turkey at some level of providing arms to the UÇK. At the same time, Turkey accused Serbia of providing arms to the PKK.[430]

[426] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 655.
[427] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa: Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, p. 163.
[428] İsmail Cem's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 47, legislative year 3, session 64, 10.03.1998, p. 246.
[429] İlhan Uzgel, "1990-2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye: Balkanlarla İlişkiler," in *Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar,* Vol. II, edited by Baskın Oran, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006). pp. 510-511.
[430] Ibid., p. 493.

At that point, Milosevic was ready to face a US embargo for the sake of his political career and it would be unrealistic to expect Turkey to achieve an important outcome from this meeting.[431] After the meeting, Cem also held meetings with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and the foreign affairs ministers of other Balkan countries.[432]

On 10 March 1998, a general debate was held in the TBMM about the events in Kosovo in February 1998. In that debate, Cem listed several diplomatic initiatives that had been taken by Turkey until that point. He stated that as the events had started, Turkey brought the issue to the attention of NATO. Furthermore, he stated that Turkey had used the opportunity to host the Balkan summit and brought the issue to the attention at that summit. He listed Turkey's aims and policy lines as finding a peaceful solution to the problem, protection of the Kosovar people from violence, respecting the territorial integrity of Serbia, and he further declared that a permanent solution could only be achieved when the Kosovar people gained their pre-1989 rights.[433]

Cem held a meeting with OIC Secretary General, after which he stated in the TBMM that the Turkish diplomats at the OIC were working on a draft paper on Kosovo for an OIC meeting that would be held in Doha on 15 – 17 March 1998.[434] At the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, the OIC's final communiqué affirmed its total rejection of the arbitrary use of military force against civilians in Kosovo and strongly condemned the large scale repression and violations of human

[431] Ibid., p. 423.
[432] Didem Ekinci, "Turkey and Kosovo: A Chronicle of Post-Cold War Bilateral Relations," *Avrasya Dosyası*, Balkanlar Özel Sayısı, 14, no. 1 (2008). p. 286.
[433] İsmail Cem's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 47, legislative year 3, session 64, 10.03.1998, pp. 246-249.
[434] İsmail Cem's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 47, legislative year 3, session 64, 10.03.1998, pp. 246-249.

rights against the defenseless Muslims of Kosovo committed by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).[435]

On 16 March 1998, the Council of Ministers in Turkey gathered and issued a declaration on Kosovo, stating that a dialogue between parts should start for a peaceful solution and the rights of all ethnic groups in Kosovo should be returned. The declaration also stated that options other than autonomy should also be discussed.[436] This declaration drew some criticism from several circles for supporting separationist tendencies in Kosovo. Minister of State Şükrü Sina Gürel stated in the TBMM that the government by that declaration did not mean independence but supported any environment that would ease the dialogue between parties.[437]

Mümtaz Soysal, a member of parliament from the small coalition party DSP announced in the same TBMM debate that Turkey in Kosovo and the Balkans had three main responsibilities, which were the Turkish and Muslim population in the Balkans, the Balkan immigrants that were now Turkish citizens, and humanitarian values. He further stated that Turkey would diplomatically be active to help the Kosovar people to gain their autonomy back, mobilize a pressure group in various international organizations, mediate between Belgrade and Kosovo, and diplomatically be active in the six nations contact group.[438]

Turkey tried to be active in diplomatic meetings to find a political solution to the Kosovo problem. On 24 March 1998, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem paid a diplomatic visit to Bonn in order to attend the Meeting of Foreign Affairs

[435] OIC 25th Conference of the Foreign Ministers in 1998http://www.oic-oci.org/english/conf/fm/25/final25.htm (Accessed last on 18.04.2015).
[436] TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 48, legislative year 3, session 67, 17.03.1998, p. 81.
[437] TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 48, legislative year 3, session 67, 17.03.1998, p. 98.
[438] TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 48, legislative year 3, session 67, 17.03.1998, p. 88.

Ministers of the Contact Group with an accompanying delegation of Turkish members of parliament.[439]

On 31 March 1998, the UN Security Council imposed an arms embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, condemned the Serbian use of excessive force, and stated the aim of the UN at an enhanced status of Kosovo which would include a substantially greater degree of autonomy and meaningful self-administration.[440] Several representatives of the non-Security Council member states made statements in the General Assembly prior to the Security Council resolution, including the Turkish Permanent Representative to the UN, Tülay Tanç. She stated that unless an agreed solution was found, the explosion in Kosovo might shake all the neighboring countries and lead to a wider international crisis. She also emphasized the Turkish community in Kosovo in her speech.[441]

On 1 October 1998, in his opening speech for the fourth legislation session, President Süleyman Demirel stated in the TBMM that Turkey would support and actively be a part of any international solution that would bring peace and stability to the region.[442]

During that period, Turkey actively tried to find a regional solution to the problem. In October 1998, during the Balkan Summit in Antalya, Turkey tried to negotiate with Milosevic on the Antalya Declaration, where Turkish foreign policy

[439] TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 51, legislative year 3, session 80, 22.04.1998, p. 191.
[440] UN Security Council Resolution 1160 31 March 1998 http://www.un.org/press/en/1998/19980923.sc6577.html (Accessed last on 21.02.2015).
[441] Tulay Tanc, UNSC Resolution Press Release 1160 31 March 1998 http://www.un.org/press/en/1998/19980331.SC6496.html (Accessed last on 18.04.2015).
[442] TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 62, legislative year 4, session 1, 01.10.1998, p. 237.

makers managed convince Milosevic on the 1974 plus formula.[443] In its regional efforts, Turkey issued a joint declaration with the Romanian and Bulgarian heads of states and convinced Milosevic to discuss a political solution based on that declaration. Nevertheless, this declaration was not supported by the global powers.

The US was ready to follow a hard power policy and Milosevic's political mistakes eventually led to the Kosovo War.[444] Milosevic believed that the US was not able to take unilateral political actions without Russian approval, and when he finally realized he was mistaken, it was too late for him. Looking from this perspective, it might seem that Milosevic missed a golden opportunity by not granting autonomy to Kosovo.[445] Nevertheless, as discussed above, the political career of Milosevic was highly dependent on Kosovo. The public opinion in Serbia during the late 1990s would not allow him to perform such a political action, as 41.8 percent of Serbians believed that the solution was to be seen in the forcible expulsion of the Albanians in Kosovo, whereas only 27.2 percent believed that some democratic tolerance should be given and would be willing to grant at best cultural autonomy.[446]

I would argue at that point that the Antalya Declaration stands as proof that regional initiatives are not enough to find a possible solution to a regional conflict when the attention of the global powers is directed in that particular region. In such environment, the regional powers lose their ability to influence the regional politics at a sufficient level and the responsibility shifts towards the global powers.

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[443] 1974 Plus formula argued for autonomy rights for Kosovar Albanians based on the extended version of the rights given by the 1974 Constitution of Yugoslavia, which granted Kosovo autonomy at the first place in the Socialist Yugoslavia.
[444] Türkeş, Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim, pp. 264-265.
[445] Aldo Bumci, "Regional Perspectives for an Independent Kosovo - Albania and Macedonia," in *Understanding the War in Kosovo*, edited by Florian Bieber and Zidas Daskalovski, (London: Frank Class, 2003). p. 284.
[446] Ibid., p. 284.

It should also be mentioned that in the regional setting, Turkey was still regarded as an important and relevant regional power. When the conflicts escalated in 1998, Rugova immediately sought support in Turkey and stated that they expected more support from Turkey than any other NATO country.[447]

In October 1998, bilateral dialogues between the USA and Serbia had already been initiated. On 6 October 1998, Holbrooke, who had been the chief US negotiator during the Bosnian crisis as well, held a meeting with Milosevic. Two days before, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivanov also held contact with Milosevic, where Milosevic sought the Russian support against NATO. The Holbrooke – Milosevic meetings did not bring a viable solution and as the proposed peace plans were not accepted, Milosevic increased the military pressure in Kosovo.[448] At one point, Holbrooke managed to convince Milosevic of a ceasefire; however, it could not be sustained. In January 1999, several armed conflicts occurred between the Serbian forces and UÇK militants and the ceasefire was broken.[449] In January 1999, during the Racak Massacre, Serbian forces killed 45 civilian Kosovars and the problem in Kosovo took on wider international dimensions.[450]

During the early phases of the Kosovo crisis, Turkey supported a diplomatic solution for Kosovo on the 1974 plus formula to the promotion of Kosovo's status within the final Yugoslav federation as a third republic. With the increase of violence and continued intransigence of Serbia, however, Turkey started to advocate an international, and preferably a NATO, intervention.[451] During that period, Turkey had several security fears, which were, as showed above, the Macedonian problem

[447] Didem Ekinci, p. 287.
[448] Heinz Loquai, *Der Kosovo-Konflikt: Wege in Einen Vermeidbaren Krieg: Die Zeit Vom Ende November 1997 Bis März 1999* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000). pp. 53-55.
[449] Türkoğlu, p. 120.
[450] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 542.
[451] Alp and Türkeş, p. 132.

and an all out Balkan war. Moreover, competition with Greece was another concern of Turkey. Even though Turkey and Greece tried to keep their bilateral disputes out of the conflicts in the Balkans, it was a difficult task to achieve considering the diplomatic tension between two countries.[452]

Another concern of Turkey in supporting Kosovo was the tiny Turkish minority in Kosovo. According to the 1991 census, the Turkish population was around 12,000, but the Kosovar Turks claim that their number was at least 60,000. The claim was that 1991 census had not been reliable due to political manipulation and the real number of Turkish speakers was in fact much larger.[453] The Kosovar Albanians regarded this minority group as "Turkified" Albanians and between these two communities there were several events of tensions. Whereas the Serbs, on the other hand, provided the Turkish minority with several minority rights and privileges and tried to prevent Turkish and Albanian minorities act together against the Serbs.[454] The Turkish foreign policy makers were aware of the Turkish minority in Kosovo had concerns about an Albanian hegemony. One of the constant lines of Turkish policy was the insistence of the participation of the Turkish population in the peace talks. It is important to note that this community had rather tense relations with the Albanian majority and tended to stand on the Serbian side.[455] In fact, in every international meeting regarding Kosovo, Turkey insisted that the solution packages must include a clause on the ethnic minorities in order to protect the legal status of the Turkish minority in Kosovo.[456]

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[452] Ibid., pp. 132-133.
[453] Sylvie Gangloff, "Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo: The Preeminence of National Political Interests," *Balkanologie*, 8, no. 1 (June 2004), http://balkanologie.revues.org/517. (accessed last on 18.04.2015).
[454] Babuna, Kosova Sorunu Üzerine, p. 13.
[455] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.
[456] Uzgel, Türkiye ve Balkanlar, p. 110.

During the conflict in Kosovo, Turkish foreign policy makers feared a spillover effect of the war into Macedonia and Albania. Several members of parliament mentioned to such a prospect in the TBMM debates as well.[457] The main fear was that if the Kosovar Albanians were granted independence, the Macedonian Albanians would follow the movement, and would provoke the disintegration of Macedonia and a regional conflict.[458] In order to prevent such an event, Turkey tried to keep close diplomatic contact with these countries.

The main diplomatic difficulty was that Turkey had built close diplomatic relations with both countries during the 1990s but the conflict in Kosovo increased the tension between Albania and Macedonia and put Turkish diplomacy in a difficult situation.[459] Ankara furthermore feared that the close relations between the Kosovar and Macedonian Albanians might increase the tension in Macedonia. In early 1999, President Demirel paid diplomatic visits to Tirana and Skopje, and promised humanitarian aid to the Kosovar refugees in these countries in the amount of 6.5 million USD.[460] Moreover, Turkey immediately strengthened its military assistance to Macedonia in order to prevent an armed conflict due to the close links between the Kosovar and Macedonian Albanians.[461]

In June 1998, negotiations between Turkey and Macedonia were engaged on the delivery of 20 F-5 planes to Macedonian army and the training of Macedonian pilots in Turkey. This concern was shared by the Western powers as well. Prior to the

[457] See for example: İrfan Demiralp's Speech in TBMM, TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 63, legislative year 4, session 44, 08.10.1998, p. 360.
[458] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.
[459] Uzgel, 1990-2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye: Balkanlarla İlişkiler, p. 510.
[460] Babuna, Die Turkei und Kosovo, p. 310.
[461] Gangloff, The Weight of Islam in the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans, p. 96.

Turkish negotiations with Macedonia, NATO had organized a demonstration of force in this country, showing support for the territorial integrity.[462]

On the humanitarian front, Turkey opened its borders to 80,000 refugees.[463] The Turkish Red Crescent extended help to a like number of refugees who had reached Albania and Macedonia.[464] It should be noted, however, that this aid was rather insignificant for a regional power that aimed to be influential in regional politics, since the total number of refugees fled from Kosovo was around 400,000 between 1991 and 1994. Following the NATO operations, this number had risen to 850,000 and these people could not return to their homes until the aftermath of the war in Kosovo.[465] Considering these numbers, it can safely be claimed that Turkish humanitarian aid was far from enough.

On 8 October 1998, following the NATO ultimatum on Serbia, the Turkish Council of Ministers asked the TBMM for the permit of Turkish military participation in a possible multinational peacekeeping force in Kosovo, which was accepted by unanimous vote.[466] Until that point, one of the main reservations of Turkish foreign policy makers was about that Kosovo was a province within Serbia and might be regarded legally as an internal affair of Serbia. In fact, this was the main policy line of the Belgrade government. During these debates in TBMM, however, Minister of State Yücel Seçkiner claimed that due to the dramatic refugee problem and gross violations of human rights by Serbia made this issue no longer an internal affair, but an international problem. Yet, he still mentioned that Turkey was

[462] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.
[463] Hale, p. 205.
[464] Kut, Turkish Policy toward the Balkans, p. 82.
[465] Babuna, Milosevic ve Sırp Milliyetçiliği, p. 116.
[466] TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 63, legislative year 4, session 44, 08.10.1998, p. 380.

respectful regarding the territorial integrity of Serbia, but the Belgrade government should return to the people of Kosovo their political rights prior to 1989.[467]

In January 1999, a new government in Turkey was found by Bülent Ecevit's DSP, which would serve as the minority government until the coming elections. The new government adopted the issue of Kosovo in the government program by stating that the government would do anything necessary until a rightful peace was established in Kosovo.[468]

In January 1999, the conflicts in Kosovo took on a more serious dimension. On 15 January 1999, 45 Kosovars were killed by the Serbian forces in Racak. On 29 January 1999, the contact group summoned representatives of the Serbian and Kosovar governments to a conference which was to start on February 6 in Rambouillet, near Paris.[469] In Rambouillet, Milosevic rejected the imposed articles on the grounds that they violated the sovereignty rights of Serbia.[470] Indeed, a referendum to be held in three years to determine the fate of Kosovo and deployment of 28,000 NATO personnel could in fact be regarded as such.

On behalf of Turkey, it needs to be mentioned that Turkey was excluded from the ongoing diplomatic efforts in Rambouillet. Russia and Finland were mediating between NATO and Belgrade, while Turkey was put aside. Turkey was not part of any important forums with a decision-making authority in which the Kosovo issue was discussed.[471] It is, however, also important to note that no Balkan country participated in these negotiations.

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[467] Yücel Seçkiner's Speech in TBMM, Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 63, legislative year 3, session 64, 08.10.1998, 380 p. 380.
[468] Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term 20, vol. 69, legislative year 4, session 42, 12.01.1999, p. 76.
[469] Bideleux and Jeffries, pp. 542-543.
[470] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilil ve Dış Politika, p. 164.
[471] Enika Abazi, "Kosovo/a Conflict and the Post-Cold War Order: Russia and Turkey Policies," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 7 (2002). p. 230.

As the negotiations failed, Serbia took a new offensive in Kosovo. On 22 March 1999, Holbrooke made final attempt to clinch a deal with Milosevic, but failed. On 23 March 1999, Serbia declared an immediate threat of war on NATO. The same day, Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, who was flying to the US in an attempt to broker a deal to avert a war, turned around in mid-flight following a telephone conversation with US Vice President Al Gore because he could not assure Primakov that NATO would not start bombing Serbia during his planned visit to Washington.[472]

On 24 March 1999, NATO airplanes started bombing military targets in Serbia. On 12 April 1999, NATO foreign ministers issued a joint statement, declaring that airstrikes would continue until Milosevic agreed to ensure a verifiable halt to all military action, accept the stationing of an international military presence in Kosovo, ensure safe return of all refugees and displaced persons, provide assurances of his willingness to work on the basis of the Rambouillet Accords, and in conformity with international law and the UN Charter. On 6 May 1999, foreign ministers of G-8 countries including Russia adopted a general principle for a political solution to the Kosovo crisis, quite similar to the NATO declaration.[473]

Between 24 March and 3 June, when Milosevic finally gave up and agreed on the NATO terms, NATO conducted 12,525 strike sorties against Serbia, destroyed one third of the Serbian air force, 314 artillery pieces, 120 tanks, 40 bridges, 29 percent of ammunition storage, and 57 percent of petroleum reserves. Around 80 percent of Serbia was left without electricity and most of the Serbian oil refining

[472] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 545.
[473] Ibid., pp. 552-553.

capability had been destroyed.[474] The estimated costs of the airstrikes on the Serbian economy were around 64 billion USD.[475]

Similar to the Bosnian conflict, Turkey once again supported the military intervention. Although Turkey took part in all the NATO operations, it did not take the lead in formulating action plans or pushed for tougher military actions on behalf of the Kosovars. One of the reasons was that the international community was more inclined to take tougher measures than it had been in the early stages of the Bosnian conflict.[476] Turkey took part in all NATO operations and the crisis at one level presented Turkey with the opportunity to demonstrate that it was a "first class" member of NATO.[477]

In March 1999, Turkish Defense Minister Hikmet Sami Türk stated that Turkey was prepared for possible involvement in a NATO strike. The Turkish air force was on duty, one of the warships was in the Adriatic Sea, and the army had prepared a battalion, despite the fact that a land operation was out of question in March 1999.[478] Turkey also opened its Western Anatolian airbases to the use of NATO and the Council of Ministers had made a decision to put Balıkesir and Bandırma airports at the disposal of NATO airplanes and Çorlu airport at the disposal of tanker planes, though they were never used during the NATO operations.[479] Turkey joined the operations with 18 F-16 airplanes and with one battleship, stationed in the Adriatic.[480]

As the NATO operations began in Kosovo, most of the Turkish politicians praised the operations. President Demirel stated that the people who had been

[474] Ramet, Balkan Babel, p. 320.
[475] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilil ve Dış Politika, p. 165.
[476] Kut, Turkish Policy toward the Balkans, p. 82.
[477] Hale, p. 204.
[478] Didem Ekinci, p. 287.
[479] Ibid., p. 288.
[480] Babuna, Die Turkei und Kosovo, p. 310.

subjected to cruelty in Kosovo were the brethren of the Turkish people and it was the duty of Turkey to save them.[481] In a further statement in April 1999, he even called the repression of the Serbian forces a genocide.[482] Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit said that the Kosovars were the brothers of Turkey and the legacy of Turkish history". Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem referred to the 500 years of Turkish experience in Kosovo.[483] By pointing out the historical and cultural connection, Turkish politicians were probably trying to justify their actions, yet it is also noteworthy that these statements were made during the electoral campaign for the general elections in April 1999.

Turkish diplomatic activism in Kosovo continued after the NATO operations as well. In July 1999, Turkey participated in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) with 1000 troops, stationed in Prizren, where most of the Kosovar Turks lived.[484] On 17 July 1999 İsmail Cem paid a diplomatic visit to Pristine and announced that Turkey would actively join in international political, economic, and administrative aid programs.[485] Turkey also became a member of the Friends of the Kosovo Group, initiated by Kofi Annan in order to consult the decisions that would be taken over Kosovo. The group consisted G-7 countries, Russia, China, the Netherlands, Greece and Turkey.[486] On 30 July 1999, Demirel attended the Friends of Kosovo meeting in Sarajevo and argued that Kosovo was an important factor in the security and stability in the Balkans.[487]

As can be seen, Turkish activism continued after the war, yet as similar to the Bosnian case, Turkish efforts and activism started to decrease after the wars.

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[481] Hale, p. 204.
[482] Gangloff, The Weight of Islam in the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans, p. 96.
[483] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.
[484] Hale, p. 204.
[485] Babuna, Die Turkei und Kosovo, p. 311.
[486] Uzgel, 1990-2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye: Balkanlarla İlişkiler, p. 512.
[487] Babuna, Die Turkei und Kosovo, p. 311.

Although Turkey joined in several stabilization pacts and security initiatives in the Balkans and in several cases initiated regional security and cooperation organizations in the region, these efforts were usually not sufficient.

Determinants and Constraints of Turkish Foreign Policy in the War in Kosovo

The determinants of Turkish foreign policy during the Kosovo crisis are important to understand in order to develop a satisfactory evaluation of Turkish diplomacy. To that end, in this part, I will make a brief analysis of these determinants. It was underlined in this chapter that Turkish diplomacy had several concerns in its Kosovo policy, thus these concerns also needs to be discussed along with the determinants of Turkish foreign policy. In the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the stance of Turkish diplomatic stance was clear, and provided full support for the Bosnian cause against Serbia. In Kosovo however, the concerns of Ankara prevented Turkey from following such a clear policy and from becoming the most vocal actor supporting Kosovo in all international forums. In addition to these concerns, the fact that the problem drew the attention of the global powers so quickly prevented Turkey from becoming or at least made it unnecessary to be, as vocal as it had been in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well.

Similar to the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I will state that the main determinants of Turkish foreign policy in Kosovo were the strategic and cultural or identity-based concerns of Turkey. In addition to those concerns, several other aspects such as Islamic based foreign policy arguments, the reputation of Turkey in the international arena, public opinion, and the Turkish minority in Kosovo also will be discussed as they might have contributed to the formation of Turkish policy line

in Kosovo. In addition to these determinants, I will also discuss several constraints of Turkey in its policy regarding Kosovo, namely the prospect of a spillover of the conflict in Kosovo to the whole region; the fact that Kosovo was considered by the international community as an integral part of Serbia as it did not have republic status during Yugoslavia period, but was an autonomous province within Serbia; the parallels between the Kosovo crisis and the Kurdish question in Turkey; and the international law aspect of the Kosovo War.

The first determinant of Turkish foreign policy regarding Kosovo was the strategic concerns of Turkey, as my findings indicate that this constituted the primary determinant of Turkey. As stated in the previous and this chapter, stability and security in the Balkans was crucial for Turkish policy, mainly because the region is located on the main trade routes of Turkey towards European markets.[488] Turkey, on the other hand, throughout the 1990s tried to prevent any possibility of a rise of a regional hegemonic power. Yet this did not constitute a major concern in the late 1990s as this possibility decreased dramatically.

One of the main concerns of Turkish foreign policy was competition with Greece in the Balkans. Despite the fact that both Turkey and Greece aimed at keeping their bilateral disputes over the Aegean Sea and Cyprus out of the Balkan conflicts, this was not always that easy. Moreover, Turkey and Greece supported different parties in the region. During the 1990s, Greece mainly supported Serbia, and had problems with Albania and Macedonia; whereas Turkey was the main regional opposition to Serbia, and built close relations with Albania and Macedonia. In the Kosovo matter as well, Greece and Serbia were in line and Turkey wanted to emerge as a counterbalancing factor.

[488] Gürkan, p. 261.

It was Turkey's geostrategic interest to avoid an overwhelming pan-orthodox axis in the Balkans, based on Greek-Serbian Orthodox kinship that would extricate Turkey and bring Russia in the Balkans.[489] The main strategic fear of Greece was similar as it feared from a pan-Islamic axis in the Balkans led by Turkey. Turkey during that period also wanted to avoid Russian influence in the Balkans and the Turkish political elites perceived that Turkey was powerful enough to constitute a counterbalancing factor against Russian political influence in the Balkans.[490] According to the Turkish political elites, the shared history with the Balkan countries along with the desire of the post-Communist countries to engage in the Western system would make Turkey an important magnet for these countries.

It should be noted at this point that Turkish-US cooperation was regarded as crucially important for the political elites of Turkey during the late 1990s, and for that reason, Turkish foreign policy makers regarded Turkish participation in these operations as strategically important. In Kosovo as well, Turkey followed the Western policy line, supported the economic sanctions, and decided to join air maneuver operations in the region, carried over Albania and Macedonia.[491] Similar to its position in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey supported military intervention in Kosovo as well and Turkish-US cooperation showed itself once again in this war as well.[492] After the Kosovo War, the US once again wanted to establish international peacekeeping forces in the region considering the domestic economic and public opinion aspects of its actions.[493] In addition to that, the participation of a Muslim populated country was specifically important for the US due to the

[489] Enika Abazi, "Kosovo: War, Peace, and Intervention in a Nutshell," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 6 (2001). p. 62.
[490] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 409.
[491] Ibid., p. 424.
[492] Babuna, İç politikadan dış politikaya, p. 342.
[493] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 425.

justification of these forces in the region.[494] As the US needed Turkish support for its operations, Turkish foreign policy makers were in need of US diplomatic support as well, thus were enthusiastic of yet another Turkish-US cooperation in the Balkans.

Another strategic determinant, and at the same time a serious concern of Turkey, was the spillover effect of the war in Kosovo toward the neighboring countries. With the Kosovo War, the dissolution wars reached south as Turkish foreign policy feared and thus created a more serious security problem for Turkey than the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, since it could spill over into Macedonia and could turn into a dissolution process for this country and also could encircle Albania, with which Turkey built close relations in the 1990s.[495]

Macedonia, due to its diverse ethnic population and problematic relations with its neighbors, was regarded by the international community and Turkey as well as quite open to such events. As stated above, those concerns were stated by Turkish political elites and foreign policy scholars throughout the 1990s. As a consequence, Turkey immediately strengthened its military support to Macedonia. The fears over the territorial integrity of Macedonia almost became a reality when the country came to the edge of a civil war in 2001, where Albanian militias started an armed conflict with Macedonian forces. During that crisis, Turkey favored territorial integrity in Macedonia and was against the cross border movements of Albanian guerrillas. The Macedonian government requested support from international community in its campaign against these guerrilla forces and Turkey, as a close diplomatic partner of Macedonia, was among these countries that Macedonian government applied for the deployment of military personnel along the Kosovo-Macedonia border.[496]

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[494] Kirişçi, ABD – Türkiye İlişkileri, p. 214.
[495] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 421.
[496] Mesut Özcan, "An Overview of Turkey's Policy in the Balkans and the Middle East in the 1990s," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, no. 8 (2003). p. 36.

Turkey's close relations with Albania during the 1990s were another strategic determinant that would explain the Turkish activism in the Kosovo crisis. Relations with Albania were considered especially important by Turkish foreign policy makers, considering the problematic relations between Greece and Albania.[497] To show support for the Albanian government and also to follow an active Balkan policy, Turkey participated in Operation Alba in 1997 led by Italy, developed in response to the Albanian Rebellion in the same year.[498]

During the Kosovo crisis, the cultural and historical ties of Turkey with the Balkans were again an important determinant of Turkish foreign policy. As Barry Rubin argues, in addition to the dissolution in Yugoslavia, the ethnic and cultural kinship felt by the Turkish political elites was an important factor that motivated Turkey to follow an active foreign policy towards the region.[499] President Demirel, Prime Minister Ecevit, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Cem all emphasized the cultural and historical ties between Turkey and Kosovo in order to justify Turkish participation in the NATO operations. It should be noted however that the historical background constituted a considerable handicap for Turkey in the Balkans from time to time, and for that Turkey had to act cautiously and could not take any sharp position on the conflicts or tensions in the area.[500] The anti-Turkey policy of Greece and reservations of several Balkan countries on the Turkish influence in the region therefore made this background a handicap rather than a benefit for Turkish foreign policy.

The historical background arguments once again raised questions on Turkey's possible neo-Ottomanist or Islamist policies in the region, leading to serious

[497] Uzgel, 1990-2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye: Balkanlarla İlişkiler, pp. 508-509.
[498] Alp and Türkeş, p. 136.
[499] Rubin, Türkiye'nin Yeni Dış Politikasını Anlamak, p. 375.
[500] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.

accusations on the determinants and aims of Turkish foreign policy regarding the Balkans. Neo-Ottomanist arguments started to decrease with the death of President Turgut Özal in 1993. The Islamic arguments, on the other hand, were not as vocal as they had been during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even though conservative and Islamist circles supported the operations against Serbia, it did not constitute the main motivation of Turkish foreign policy. Moreover, regarding the Turkish public opinion, it was not only the Islamists or conservatives that favored the operations against the Serbs, but there was a complete consensus on that issue. It should also be noted that several Muslim populated countries such as Iraq or Libya were in line with the Serbian government regarding the war in Kosovo.[501]

As discussed above, the tiny Turkish minority in Kosovo constituted another determinant of Turkish foreign policy. Thus, Turkish diplomats tried to include the rights of the Turkish minority group in the peace agreements over Kosovo. It should also be emphasized that the problematic relations between the Kosovar Albanians and Turks and the prospect of an Albanian hegemony caused a reservation in Turkish foreign policy towards Kosovo.

The public opinion aspect should also be discussed. In the previous chapter, it was discussed that the public opinion generally does not constitute the most preeminent factor in the Turkish foreign policy and had a limited effect on the voting behavior of Turkish voters. In the Kosovo crisis, the situation was similar. The Kosovar Albanians, however, were Muslims and received the support of the Turkish public opinion. In addition to that, the image of the Serbs was quite low in Turkish public opinion due to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For that reason, no Turkish

[501] Babuna, Die Turkei und Kosovo, p. 312.

government could afford to ignore a Serbian repression in the Balkans.[502] The fact that Turkish political elites such as Prime Minister Ecevit's and Minister of Foreign Affairs Cem's emphasis on historical kinship with the Kosovar people overlapping with the propaganda period for the upcoming elections might stand as a proof that signifies the importance of public opinion in Turkish foreign policy.

In addition to that, another issue that needs to be mentioned on the public opinion aspect is that it is estimated that there was a large ethnically Albanian population living in Turkey as a result of the migration movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Several unofficial estimations even claim that the Albanian diaspora in Turkey was at least 1 million people.[503] However, the influence of this diaspora in the decision making process is open to question. Despite the active mobilization of their leaders, the Albanian community itself did not really take part in this lobbying. These Albanians generally considered themselves to be Turks, and most of them did not even speak Albanian anymore.[504]

At this point, it is necessary to move to the main reservations of Turkish foreign policy towards the crisis in Kosovo. It is to be noted that these reservations from time to time drew criticisms from several circles regarding Turkey for not following a clear policy on that issue.

Adding to the possible spillover effects and the prospect of a total Balkan war, the main concern of Turkey regarding its Kosovo policy was the fact that Kosovo was an autonomous region within Serbia until 1989 and the issue, as the Serbian policy line argued, could be regarded as an internal issue of Serbia. It must be noted here that principles of non-interference in internal affairs and territorial integrity constitute the primary determinants of Turkish foreign policy. Bosnia and

[502] Uzgel, 1990-2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye: Balkanlarla İlişkiler, p. 508.
[503] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 23.
[504] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.

Herzegovina was recognized as an independent and sovereign state by the international community even before the war, but the issue was not so in the Kosovo case. The fact that the context of war in Kosovo showed similarities with the Kurdish problem in Turkey indeed made this issue more difficult for the Turkish political elites and they did not want to be regarded as supporters of separationist movements.[505] However, due to the gross violations of human rights in this region and the huge refugee movements to neighboring countries led Turkish politicians to argue that this no longer constituted an internal issue of Serbia, but an international problem.

In addition to the prospect of an unbalanced regional stability, the separationist aspect of the issue and the parallels with the Kurdish question made Kosovo a difficult matter for Turkey.[506] At that point, the Turkish policy line was to bring this issue into the attention of the Balkan countries and international organizations and demand a status of autonomy or at most a republic within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The independence claims of the UÇK, on the other hand, were not supported by Turkish politicians.

The analogy between the Turkish and Serbian cases was not missed by Serbian politicians. The Yugoslav ambassador in Ankara, for example, did not miss an opportunity to refer to the fight against the PKK in Turkey and stated that Turkey should understand Belgrade better than any other county since it was involved in a similar situation.[507] During the visit of Cem to Milosevic in March 1998 during the early phases of the conflict, Cem delivered a letter from President Demirel to Milosevic, in which he stated that Turkey too had to fight terrorism in its territory.[508]

[505] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.
[506] Anastasakis, p. 193.
[507] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.
[508] Ibid..

Indeed, both the PKK and the UÇK were regarded as terrorist organizations in the countries in which they operated, and also by the international community. The Kurdish question and the Kosovo conflict had certain similarities indeed. In both scenarios, the minority groups were concentrated in a specific and underdeveloped region of a country, both groups had other ethnic kinships in neighboring countries with an eventual aim of unification under a homogenous nation state, and both groups engaged in an active armed conflict and faced repression by the central government.[509]

According to Noam Chomsky, Turkish participation in the humanitarian intervention of NATO even downgraded the reputation of this intervention due to the similarity between the Turkish-Kurdish and Serbian-Kosovar cases.[510] He further argued that the atrocities committed by Turkey against the Kurdish minority were surely comparable to the atrocities in Kosovo.[511] In addition to that, Chomsky stated that Turkey was lauded for its humanitarianism and when an invasion was being planned, NATO officials expressed hope that Turkey might send ground troops to Kosovo, where they could put their current experience to good use. However, as he further noted, no one mentioned the ironies of Turkey, a state involved in crushing the identity of its Kurdish minority, helping the Bosnian or Kosovar people.[512] In addition to the Turkish case, by bringing out the NATO's inactivity in Colombia, Laos, Rwanda, and Iraq, Chomsky argues that the US-NATO decision to bomb

[509] Uzgel, 1990-2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye: Balkanlarla İlişkiler, p. 510.
[510] Noam Chomsky, "Crisis in the Balkans," *Z Magazine*, May 1999, http://www.chomsky.info/articles/199905--.htm. (accessed last on 16.04.2015).
[511] Noam Chomsky, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (London: Pluto Press, 1999). p. 8.
[512] Ibid., p. 56.

Belgrade in 1999 was contradictory and relied on power interests rather than humanitarian values.[513]

The Turkish political elites argued that the nature of the conflict was different. Demirel stated on 4 April 1999 that the Serbian government called the Kosovar Albanians a minority in Kosovo, but Turkey did not have any minorities in it.[514] Moreover, Demirel also claimed that the repression in Kosovo was on such a large scale that no comparison was possible as he called the Serbian repression genocide.[515] During the TBMM debates on the Kosovo conflict, however, there was no reference to the similarities between the Kurdish and Kosovar cases.

Leaving aside the declarations of Turkish politicians, these two cases, despite their similarities such as armed conflict between an internationally recognized terrorist organization and the central authorities and the repression of an ethnic minority by the central state, had several crucial differences as well that needs to be mentioned here.

First of all, the percentage of the Kosovar Albanians within the population of Kosovo is much higher compared to the percentage of Turkish Kurds in Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia. Moreover, Kosovo was ruled as an autonomous province between 1974 and 1989, until Milosevic removed this autonomy and initiated the problems in the region. Furthermore, the Albanians in Kosovo held a referendum in 1991, declared independence, possessed their own political system and president, whereas Turkey has always had a unitary political system.[516] Another difference is that the Albanians in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were concentrated in Kosovo alone, whereas the Kurds in Turkey were spread all over Turkey; in fact half of the

[513] Chomsky, Crisis in the Balkans.
[514] Gangloff, The Weight of Islam in the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans, p. 96.
[515] Gangloff, Turkish Policy towards the Conflict in Kosovo.
[516] Babuna, Die Turkei und Kosovo, p. 315.

Kurdish population in Turkey lived outside southeastern and eastern Turkey. The Albanians in Kosovo had a mother state, whereas the scenario for the Kurds was not so. There were important differences in societal terms as well, as interethnic contact in forms of marriage or kinship were quite limited between the Kosovar Albanians and the Serbians, whereas it is a common phenomenon in Turkey. Also, the Kosovar Albanians were heavily repressed and collectively sacked in the private and public sectors by Serbia, whereas Turkey never had such official state policy against the Kurdish population.[517]

One final concern of Turkey was that the legality of the intervention was questioned as it was conducted without a UN Security Council authorization. Yet during the TBMM debates, it was argued that due to the gross violations of human rights, the legal ground of the operation would be in line with the international laws. To this day, the legality of these operations is discussed by the scholars of international law; yet during the late 1990s, it did not basically constitute a reservation for the Turkish political elites. Several members of parliament pointed out the similarities between the 1974 intervention of Turkey in Cyprus, which is actually open to discussion on legal grounds as well, and argued that the operations were in line with the international law and the UN Charter.

Critical Evaluation of Turkish Foreign Policy in the War in Kosovo

In contrast to the foreign policy of Turkey towards the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkish foreign policy regarding the Kosovo conflict was more complex. Turkey supported Kosovo, yet declared constantly that it respected the

[517] Uzgel, 1990-2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye: Balkanlarla İlişkiler, p. 510.

territorial integrity of Serbia. Turkey demanded the Serbian authorities to respect the rights to the minorities, demanded autonomy status for Kosovo, and at the same time tried to protect the Turkish minority in Kosovo against the prospect of Albanian hegemony.[518] As the conflict in Kosovo had a separationist tendency, Turkey faced a difficult dilemma. Turkey as opposed to its policy over Bosnia and Herzegovina was not the most vocal supporter of the Kosovar cause in the international community. Rather, Turkey in all international organizations presented the Kosovo issue strictly as a human rights matter and stressed the need to find a just and sustainable solution without further compromising the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia.[519]

The main demand of Turkey was that Kosovo should be granted a status of autonomy within Yugoslavia. Yet, the constraints of Turkey mentioned above restricted Turkey from time to time from following a clear policy towards this issue. In fact, Turkish support for Kosovo was several times regarded as insufficient by the Kosovar politicians. In fact, the UÇK politician Adem Demaçi criticized Turkey for not following a clear policy on the Kosovo issue.[520]

Throughout the Kosovo conflict, the initiatives of Turkish diplomacy in the international diplomatic arena were less frequent compared to the Turkish activism in the war over Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although Turkey condemned the violence and repression of Serbian forces and proposed its participation in an international peacekeeping force, it did not display an intense diplomatic activism in Kosovo as it did in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkish foreign policy elites were in fact quite cautious in their condemnation in the Kosovo conflict and did not accuse the international community of passivity.[521] It would be unfair to claim that Turkey was

[518] Uzgel, Türkiye ve Balkanlar, pp. 108-109.
[519] Kut, Turkish Policy toward the Balkans, p. 81.
[520] Babuna, Die Turkei und Kosovo, p. 313.
[521] Gangloff, The Weight of Islam in the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans, p. 95.

inactive during the Kosovo conflict, yet with comparison to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is safe to claim that Turkish activism decreased dramatically.

My argument here is that this was due to two reasons: the constraints of Turkish foreign policy in the Kosovo conflict, as discussed above, and, perhaps even more importantly, as opposed to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the conflict in Kosovo immediately drew the attention of major global powers, and most notably the US. Thus, as the attention of the global major powers were directed towards the region, the ability of a regional power, namely Turkey in this instance, to make a difference in or influence the regional political settings decreased in proportion to the increased diplomatic attention.

Throughout the 1990s, Turkey aimed at creating regional security and cooperation platforms in order to be more influential in the regional political setting. In 1999, the Southeastern European Multinational Peace Force, located in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. In 2000, the Balkan countries signed a joint agreement and promised good neighborly relations, stability, security, and cooperation in southeastern Europe.[522] Turkey was also a part of the Southeastern Europe Cooperation Initiative as well, which was the only Balkan initiative brought upon the own will of the Balkan states and held regular meetings with its members at the level of presidents, foreign ministers, and Balkan experts.[523] The BSEC can be given as another example of these organizations as well.

To make a final comparison of Turkish foreign policy between the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, it could be claimed that during the conflict in Kosovo, Turkey followed a more region based foreign policy, by attempting to mobilize regional parties or organizations, unlike its foreign policy in Bosnia and

[522] Öztürk, p. 29.
[523] Öztek, p. 11.

Herzegovina, which attempted to mobilize support for the Bosnian Muslims among the Western powers and international organizations at the global level. The main reason for this can be explained through the fact that the crisis in Kosovo immediately drew the attention of the great powers. As a result of Turkey's decreasing ability to influence the great powers, Turkish foreign policy makers followed a more region-based foreign policy, though not hesitating to support Turkey's Western allies once the air operations of NATO had started.

Yet these regional organizations or other Turkish diplomatic efforts failed to provide a real political outcome in the region and after the Yugoslav disintegration wars, and the internal dynamics of the Balkans started to be shaped by Europe. The NATO operation in Kosovo resulted in ignored demands of regional actors and increased the influence of the global powers in the Balkans. After the NATO operation, the US built Bondsteel Military Base in Kosovo and the EU increasingly became more dominant in governing the Kosovar economy. The regional actors, on the other hand, were increasingly left out of the political decision making processes.[524] Although Turkey took major political initiatives during the Yugoslav dissolution process and developed close relations with most of the post-Communist Balkan countries, it started to lose its ability to negotiate with the global powers and make a difference in the political setting in the Balkans.

This was mainly a result of the rapidly increasing European influence in the Balkans in the post-2000 political setting. Regional countries tried to develop closer ties with Western powers. During the late 1990s, almost every Balkan country desired EU and NATO membership, and several of them managed to achieve this goal. It should be noted here that Turkey supported the NATO memberships of the

[524] Türkeş, Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Devamlılık ve Değişim, p. 267.

post-Communist Balkan countries as well in order to build closer relations with these countries. These arguments do not claim that Turkey became an insignificant power in the Balkans or lost its ability to act as a regional power, but claim that the regional setting of the Balkans increasingly were dominated by the European powers in the post-Yugoslav disintegration wars period.

CHAPTER 5

THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE BALKANS DURING THE 1990s

Throughout the 1990s, the Balkan region experienced dramatic changes in its political structure. The events affected not only the regional dynamics and political setting of the Balkans but also had several important effects on world politics. For that reason it is important for the purposes of this thesis to develop a better understanding of the political structure of the Balkans during the 1990s.

In this chapter I will analyze and discuss the changes in the political structure of the Balkans in the 1990s. These changes can be listed briefly as the collapse of the communist regimes, the implementation of the New World Order by the US, and the breakup of Yugoslavia. In the next part, I will discuss the perspectives of major global and regional actors on the breakup process of Yugoslavia. I will analyze the perspectives of the USA, Russia, the UK, France, and Germany, as the five nations Contact Group for Bosnia and Herzegovina consisted these countries. I will also discuss the role of the UN in that process, as the UN was harshly criticized for being ineffective throughout the whole conflict. The regional countries I will analyze are Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania, as they are the rest of the Balkan countries, excluding the former Yugoslav republics and Turkey.

In the end of the chapter, I will argue that the Balkan region entered the last decade of the millennium as a separate region with its own power and security dynamics, but that these dynamics started to be gradually dominated by European

powers. The involvement of the global powers in the conflict resolution and their efficiency also will be discussed in the end of this chapter.

Political Changes in the Balkans during the 1990s

During the 1990s the Balkan region experienced dramatic changes in its political structure. As stated above, the most dramatic ones of these changes were the dissolution of the USSR and the collapse of the communist regimes, the implementation of the New World Order by the US, and the violent breakup of Yugoslavia. The First two reasons here are obviously interdependent of each other as one can also be read as the consequence of other. Furthermore, the third change, the breakup of Yugoslavia, while it can be seen as separate from the other two, it is also at several levels related to the first two changes. The dissolution of the USSR also led to a decrease in the source of the legitimacy of the communist parties, not only in Yugoslavia, but also throughout Eastern Europe and, as a direct result; the communist party of Yugoslavia was no longer considered a legitimate ruling party.[525]

Even prior to the dissolution of the USSR, the Perestroika and Glasnost policies of Gorbachev had affected Yugoslavia as much as they had affected the communist regimes in Europe. Furthermore, with the change in the world system, the position of Yugoslavia changed as well. It no longer had a significant role to play as a balance between the East and the West with its mixed political and economic system and its nonaligned diplomatic stance.[526] Thus, in addition to the internal factors, the change in the world system also affected the breakup of Yugoslavia.

[525] Miller, p. 216.
[526] Kaufman, p. 65.

The dissolution of the Soviet Bloc and the communist regimes and the implementation of the New World Order were clearly interrelated and affected not only the Balkans, but whole world, since the polarity of the world system has changed with these events and the whole world system had been replaced with a new one. The Balkan conflicts of the 1990s were the most visible and attracting conflicts of the new system, thus its influence was most visible in that particular region as well. In fact, Buzan and Wæver on that issue argue that the Balkans became the security laboratory of Europe during that period. They state that all the major questions of European post-Cold War security had been tested and sometimes settled in political competition here, such as the EU-NATO relationship, the relations of the West and NATO with Russia, and the division of labor in UN peacekeeping missions.[527]

As these two reasons were interrelated, the effects of these events in the Balkan region should not be discussed separately. These events caused the regional countries to try to integrate into the Western system; the influence of the USA, the EU, and NATO increased in the Balkans; and the Russian influence decreased.

With the end of the Cold War, every post-Communist Balkan state, namely Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania, tried to be included in the Western system. These countries experienced an economic and political transition period in which they transformed their political systems to democracy and their economic policy to market capitalism. For both of these processes, they needed Western support, since both their political and economic systems were more or less bankrupt.

The primary post-Cold War policy of Albania was to integrate with the West and to put the economy in a stable position with the credits and loans coming from

[527] Buzan and Wæver, p. 391.

the West.[528] For the case of Bulgaria, the primary aim was again integration with the West, and full membership in NATO and the EU.[529] Yet for Bulgaria, its dependence on the USSR during the Cold War made it difficult for Bulgarian diplomacy to follow a completely pro-Western foreign policy. During the Cold War, 80 percent of the Bulgarian foreign trade had been conducted with the COMECON countries and 60 percent of that was directly with the USSR. Moreover, in terms of energy supply, Bulgaria had been dependent on Russia.[530] Thus, Bulgaria tried to conduct good relations with the Western countries without harming its relations with Russia. Romania, on the other hand, benefited from the dissolution of the USSR in strategic terms. Throughout the 1990s, Romania actively pursued NATO and EU membership, and tried to integrate into the economic and political structure of the West.[531] These aims were the main focus of its diplomacy during that period. It also managed to secure the support of the Western world in these aims.[532]

The US and the EU countries supported the efforts of these countries to integrate into the Western system. In addition to Western efforts to resolve the conflict in the former Yugoslav republics, the US and the EU also tried to build close relations with the post-Communist states as well. Most of these efforts were carried out through financial assistance and cooperation organizations. From 1991 to 1999, the EU, its members, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

[528] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, Arnavutluğun Dış Politikası ve Balkanlarda Arnavut Sorunu, p. 72.
[529] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Bulgaristan'ın Dış Politikası," in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, edited by Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, (Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2001). p. 233.
[530] Mustafa Türkeş, "Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri: Bulgaristan Örneği," in *Türkiye'nin Komşuları*, edited by Mustafa Türkeş and İlhan Uzgel, (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2002). p. 193.
[531] Mihael Manea, "Soğuk Savaştan Günümüze Romanya Diplomasisi," in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, edited by Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, (Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2001). p. 263.
[532] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 158.

extended 22 billion Euros in its grants and loans to the Balkan states, excluding Greece, Turkey, and Slovenia.[533] The financial assistance of the US, on the other hand, was more limited compared to the EU. It should be argued on that point that these grants and loans were considered by several circles as rewards by the West for good cooperative diplomatic behavior, in a sense, similar to the Truman Doctrine. The aid was granted to countries that followed Western policy lines.[534] Regional cooperation institutions, which were mostly forced by the West, on the other hand were considered by several Balkan politicians not as a preparation to integration with the West, but as a slowdown effort.[535]

The enlargement of NATO to the East was another problem, considering the fact that it would definitely be perceived by Russia as a threat and the US wanted to integrate Russia into the New World Order. Considering the NATO enlargement to East, the US wanted to include a limited and small number of states carefully selected for political reasons, but several other NATO members, such as France, Italy, Canada, Belgium, Spain, Luxemburg, Portugal, Greece, and Turkey, wanted broader enlargement. Indeed, this enlargement was conceived as a threat by Russia to its own national security. Russia believed that these actions of NATO were an effort to replace Russian influence in the region and later on encircle Russia.[536] Nevertheless, Russia could not prevent the enlargement process and could remain only vocal in its opposition.

With the dissolution of the USSR, the influence of Russia in the Balkans decreased for several reasons. The area geographically became more distant from Russia. At the same time, Russia was involved with domestic matters, such as its

[533] Lampe, p. 290.
[534] Anastasia Karakasidou, "The Burden of the Balkans," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 75, no. 3 (Summer 2002). p. 585.
[535] Barışa Çağrı, p. 21.
[536] Kaufman, p. 145.

own political transition, economy, and other domestic problems, such as the conflict in Chechnya. On the diplomatic level, the main interest of Russia was concentrated on the former Soviet republics, as a result, the main Russian interests lay in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and thus Russia had a limited influence in the Balkans.[537] Nevertheless, Russia still tried to pursue an active Balkan and East European policy throughout the 1990s. Especially after the conflicts in the region took on more serious dimensions and the prospect of Western enlargement towards the former communist countries became more visible, Russian interests in Eastern Europe and the Balkans started to became more visible.

In August 1993, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Kozyrev announced that Eastern Europe had never ceased to be an area of interest for Russia.[538] Russia's official stance was to contribute to the development of stability in the region through the reaching of a consensus among all interested parties and the establishment of cooperation among various regional countries with the aim of serving European and world peace.[539] Controversies in the Western policy could have made things easier for Russian diplomacy as West prepared to help Eastern Europe, but had no burning desire for an immediate integration with it. Moscow only had to use difficulties of the European countries to develop good relations with them.[540] Still, the Russian influence in these regions throughout the 1990s was limited, and certainly less visible than the Western efforts due to several different factors, such as Russian dependence on the West in terms of the economy and domestic instability in Russia.

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[537] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir işbirliği ve rekabet alanı olarak balkanlar, p. 405.
[538] James Sherr, "Doomed to Remain a Great Power," *The World Today*, 52, no. 1 (January 1996). p. 9.
[539] Albert S. Chernishev, "Balkans and Russia," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 243.
[540] Sherr, p. 9.

The breakup of Yugoslavia was the third and most dramatic reason for change in the Balkans. These conflicts influenced the regional dynamics and had an effect on world politics, as many regional and global actors had to be involved in the conflict in one way or another, almost irrespective of their own will. All of these actors were affected by these conflicts, and all of them had to establish policy lines as the conflicts started. Moreover, these conflicts did not only devastate the peace in the former Yugoslav countries, but could lead to a total Balkan war, affect the security in Europe, and decrease the credibility of the New World Order. For that reason, it is important to understand the policy lines of these global and regional actors towards the Yugoslav conflicts. The next part is devoted to attitudes of these actors.

The Attitudes of the International Actors towards the Yugoslav Conflicts

As mentioned above, the attitudes of the international actors towards the Balkans and the Yugoslav conflicts are important to explore in order to develop a better understanding of the political structure of the Balkans during the 1990s. These attitudes also provide an insight into the Turkish foreign policy as well, since the attitudes of these actors often influence each other. For that reason, in this part I will attempt to explore the policy lines of the major international actors.

I will first analyze the attitudes of the major global actors involved in the conflicts, namely the US, Russia, the UK, France, and Germany. Later on, I will analyze the attitude of the UN. After that part, I will analyze the policies of regional actors, namely Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania.

The attitude of the US seems to be the most important one to explore, since the US involvement in the region increased dramatically during the 1990s, though not in

the early phases of the conflict. Still, it was eventually the US diplomatic efforts that brought an end to the conflict in the region and as the hegemonic power of the post-Cold War world structure; it was the US that assumed the leadership in the Balkans.[541]

As the conflict started, the US, similar to European countries, was reluctant to accept the fact that Yugoslavia was disintegrating. The USA was not completely unaware of the fact that Yugoslavia was disintegrating. In November 1990, the *New York Times* reported that US intelligence was predicting that Yugoslavia would break apart, most notably in the coming 18 months and that civil war in that multinational Balkan country was highly likely.[542] In May 1991, as the crisis was much advanced, the US State Department issued a statement supporting the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and declaring that the US would not encourage or reward secession.[543] On 21 June 1991, as Slovenia and Croatia were on the verge of declaring independence, US Secretary of State James Baker visited Belgrade and stated that the US opposed the breakup of Yugoslavia, but also opposed the use of force to hold it together.[544] During the early phases of the conflict, it did not consider the Balkans as tied to its own direct interests.[545] For that reason, its foreign policy was late to take a stance in the conflict. In addition to these factors, the US position was to consider this issue as a European affair.[546] In the early 1990s, the Balkans was not a vital

[541] Aydın Babuna, "European Integration, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Stability in the Western Balkans: A New Strategy," *Perceptions*, 19, no. 2 (Summer 2014). p. 2.
[542] Tom Gallagher, "Milosevic, Serbia, and the West during the Yugoslav Wars, 1991-1995," in *The Balkans and the West: Constructing the European Other, 1945 - 2003*, edited by Andrew Hammond, (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004). p. 157.
[543] Ibid., p. 155.
[544] Ibid., p. 156.
[545] Kaufman, p. 61.
[546] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 638.

interest of the US, as its diplomatic efforts were concentrated on Moscow and expected the European countries to resolve the possible crisis in Yugoslavia.[547]

When asked about speculations that the US was planning military intervention against Serbia, President Bush said on 11 June 1992 that the US was not the policeman of the world.[548] During that period, the Bush administration's guarantee of New World Order or his failure to show his decisiveness in Iraq towards Bosnia and Herzegovina created disappointment in the US foreign policy in the international arena. In 1992, Bush stated that he did not want to send young men into war where he could not see that they were going to prevail and prevail quickly.[549] The US attention started to be attracted to Bosnia and Herzegovina as the conflict grew more violent. Moreover, by 1992, the State Department was picking up signals from its allies in the Islamic world, especially from Turkey and Saudi Arabia.[550]

The American perspective started to change with the Clinton administration, as Clinton believed that a failure to act would mean relinquishing American leadership.[551] In 1992, he campaigned against President Bush on domestic issues, but during his term of office he was unable to ignore the Balkan problem, since it had started to challenge the role of the US in the post-Cold War European security and order.[552] Tomas Halverson cites several points to show the US interests in the Balkans. First, the crisis arose at a time of international transition period where the US tried to implement its New World Order. Second, the conflicts threatened the security of Europe and NATO members, such as Turkey and Greece. Third, the USA tried claim a strong influence over the Balkans that was left with the dissolution of

[547] Lester H. Brune, *The United States & the Balkan Crisis, 1990 - 2005: Conflict in Bosnia & Kosovo* (Claremont, Calif: Regina Books, 2005). p. 17.
[548] Ramet, War in the Balkans, p. 96.
[549] Brune, p. 20.
[550] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia: Third Balkan War, p. 222.
[551] Kaufman, p. 93.
[552] Brune, p. 31.

the USSR. Moreover, US foreign policy considered ethnic conflicts as dangerous in the world system.[553]

The US diplomacy became engaged in the problem in 1992, but the major US efforts that produced an outcome started in 1994, especially after the intensified attacks of the Serbs against the civilian population. After that point, the USA assumed leadership and tried to convince the European powers on coercive diplomacy.[554]

The US foreign policy makers were not united in their decisions. Holbrooke states that there were two different camps of US policy makers. One camp argued that the USA should intervene for either moral or strategic reasons, whereas the other camp believed that if the USA intervened, it would become entangled in a Vietnam-like quagmire.[555] According to Holbrooke, it was the intensified attacks of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the end, the Sarajevo market bombardment on 28 August 1995 that finally convinced the US to follow a hard power policy.[556]

During the Dayton negotiations, the US took full responsibility and started to limit the influence of other members of the Contact Group and the UN. In the end, it was the US efforts that brought the conflict to an end. After the war, considering the economic and public opinion sides of the matter, it wanted to establish international peacekeeping missions in the region.[557] Although it was ready to contribute to a NATO-led peace implementation force, the US foreign policy makers wanted the major reconstruction efforts for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be paid by the

[553] Thomas Halverson, "American Perspectives," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Denchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). p. 2.
[554] Brune, p. 40.
[555] Holbrooke, p. 360.
[556] Ibid., p. 132.
[557] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alanı Olarak Balkanlar, p. 425.

Europeans.[558] In other words, the US did not want to be involved in the financial aspect of the conflict and left this issue to the European countries.

During the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the US was the primary supporter of the Bosnian cause among the global powers, the US efforts were not considered sufficient by the Bosnian Muslims for a long period of time. They believed that even though the US supported them in rhetoric, this support did not bring any material outcome and did not alleviate their suffering.[559] David Owen argues in his book that until 1994, the Clinton administration had wanted power without responsibility in the Balkans, and states that only after 1995 President Clinton did accept the responsibility of US political power in the region.[560]

Considering the Kosovo conflict, on the other hand, the US diplomacy was much quicker to react to the crisis. The policy makers in the US did not question this time whether this was a European affair of a direct strategic interest of the US. By that time, the US already had assumed the responsibility in the Balkans and a failure to act would jeopardize its credibility. In that regard, if the US had backed down after the negotiations in Rambouillet, NATO and the US would not only have lost their credibility in the Balkans, but in the international arena as well. Moreover, Clinton believed that if the US did not confront Milosevic adequately over Kosovo, the situation would likely jeopardize Macedonia, and with it the entire Balkan peninsula. For that reason, doing nothing was out of the question for the Clinton administration.[561] In its policy line, the US did not support the independence claims

[558] Carl Bildt, *Peace Journey: The Struggle for Peace in Bosnia* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998). p. 83.
[559] Glenny, Heading off War in the Southern Balkans, p. 100.
[560] Owen, p. 366.
[561] Charles A. Kupchan, "Kosovo and the Future of U.S. Engagement in Europe: Continued Hegemony or Impending Retrenchment?" in *Alliance Politics, Kosovo, and NATO's War: Allied Force or Forced Allies*, edited by Pierre Martin and Mark R. Brawley, (New York: Palgrave, 2001). p. 77.

of Kosovo, yet still regarded Ibrahim Rugova, the political leader of the Kosovar Albanians, as a legitimate political leader and supported the cause of Kosovo against Serbia. In May 1998, Clinton even welcomed Rugova at the White House.[562]

During the early phases of the conflict, the Contact Group members failed to adopt a united front against Milosevic as several members of the group such as Russia, Italy, and France opposed direct action.[563] In contrast to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the US this time directly favored to use coercive diplomacy and tried to convince the Contact Group members. After negotiations with Milosevic failed, and was proven to be a non-compliant political leader, the US could more easily persuade the reluctant members of NATO for air operations.[564]

Several political elites in the US were still reluctant about the air operations. Republican opposition, for example, did not miss the opportunity to use the air operations in an attempt for a fresh offensive against Clinton and argued that the US should pull out of the campaign and let its European partners continue the campaign on their own.[565] Henry Kissinger, on the other hand, stated prior to the bombing campaign that the proposed deployment of US troops in Kosovo would not deal with any threat to US security as traditionally conceived and if Kosovo presented a security problem, it was to Europe, not to the US.[566] Still, the US led the air campaign by persuading NATO members and once again it was US efforts that brought the conflict to an end.

Another important point to note regarding the Balkan policy of the US is that throughout the 1990s, one of the primary aims of the US diplomacy was to reverse

[562] Brune, p. 88.
[563] Ibid., p. 87.
[564] Ibid., p. 94.
[565] Sabrina Petra Ramet, "The USA: To War in Europe Again," in *The Kosovo Crisis: The Last American War in Europe?* edited by Tony Weymouth and Stanley Henig, (London: Reuters, 2001). p. 172.
[566] Kupchan, p. 77.

the growing polarization between two NATO members, Greece and Turkey. The USA tried to keep the tensions due to the Aegean and Cyprus disputes between the two countries from exacerbating the Balkan conflicts, and tried to balance the interests between Athens and Ankara.[567]

Regarding the US policy in the Balkans during the 1990s, it could be argued that even though the US was slow to act in the crisis, it finally assumed responsibility and leadership, and in the end it was the US diplomacy that resolved the conflicts through coercive diplomacy. After the conflict was resolved, the US wanted the European powers to assume more responsibility in the region, especially when it came to the ground forces and reconstruction.[568] On the security front however, NATO operations in the region proved that the US would be engaged in the European security setting in the new millennium as well.[569] In his book, Holbrooke states that the US involvement in the Balkans also determined the role and position of the US in Europe in the post-Cold War era.[570]

Russian perspectives on the Yugoslav conflicts are important to analyze as well, since Russia stood as the second superpower in the world order during the Cold War period and seemed to stand as the strongest supporter of Serbia during the conflicts. The Yugoslav conflicts started during a period of political and economic transition for Russia. Thus, the main focus of Russia was on domestic issues and its foreign policy was concentrated on other regions than the Balkans. Moreover, during the early 1990s, as Russia desperately needed Western support, it tried to prove itself as a reliable partner to the West. Nevertheless, Milosevic immediately sought Russian political support as the conflicts started.

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[567] Glenny, Heading off War in the Southern Balkans, pp. 106-107.
[568] Kupchan, p. 78.
[569] Ibid., p. 75.
[570] Holbrooke, p. 434.

During the early phases of the breakup process, Russia, similar to the Western countries, supported the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, but as the breakup became inevitable, it did not hesitate to recognize the newly independent republics. As the conflict started in Slovenia, the Serbs and the JNA approached Soviet Defense Minister Dmitry Yazov for military guarantees, but their attempts were made during the transition period in Moscow. In August 1991, conservatives in Moscow including Yazov launched an unsuccessful coup against President Gorbachev and as a result of this failed attempt, Boris Yeltsin rose to become the president of Russia. Misha Glenny states that since Milosevic publicly had welcomed the coup prior to its failure, he managed to earn Yeltsin's lasting antipathy and was left with little support abroad.[571] Yet due to the historical and cultural ties between Russia and Serbia, Russia nevertheless became the main supporter of Serbian cause.

Before 1993, Russia organized a diplomatic activity within the UN as the Russian diplomats tried to prevent any military action and to promote Russia's leading role as the actor responsible for the political solution of the crisis. They also tried to be the mediator between Belgrade and the rest of the world.[572] On the other hand, Russia backed most Western policy initiatives including the sanctions on Serbia until 1994, where the UN threatened Serbia to use air power.[573] Although Russia leaked the trade embargo on Serbia, it still maintained the arms embargo. Spare parts were obtained by direct arrangements with Russian generals on the black market, but not only by Serbs, but by Croats as well. David Owen on that issue states that the Serbs did not need to import more weapons as they already had the military

[571] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 637.
[572] Andrei Edemskii, "Russian Perspectives," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Denchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). p. 37.
[573] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 639.

advantage and they did not choose to spend their very limited reserves of hard currency on new and sophisticated Russian weapons.[574]

In February 1992, Russia decided to participate in UNPROFOR, aiming to demonstrate its credentials as a fully fledged partner of the West. In addition to that, since Yeltsin considered a NATO force in the Balkans as a direct threat to Russian interests, he preferred a more multinational UN force and tried to be more active in the UN.[575] Moreover, Russia wanted to establish its position as a world power in the New World Order as well and by participating in the peacekeeping operation, it had the right to be consulted, and to accustom the West to regard the Balkans as an area of direct Russian interest.[576] Indeed the Russian strategic position was strong during the early phases of the conflict, as Russian policy makers believed Russia was a world power unlike the European members of UNPROFOR, but not an ocean apart from the region like the US.[577] As Edemskii states, the crisis was an opportunity for the Russians to implement its position as a great power in the international community.[578]

However, the Balkans and Serbia were not a paramount interest of Russia, in contrast to Caucasus, Central Asia, or Iran, where economic interests played a major part in defining Russian foreign policy.[579] Owen states that Russian Serbian relationship was one of declining sentiment, and not one of vital interest. But it did become the symbolic measure within Russia of whether Russians were being treated as genuine partners by the US and Europe.[580]

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[574] Owen, p. 349.
[575] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia: Third Balkan War, p. 281.
[576] Sherr, pp. 8-9.
[577] Ibid., p. 10.
[578] Edemskii, p. 46.
[579] Sherr, p. 10.
[580] Owen, p. 358.

After 1993, as military involvement of NATO became more visible, Russia started to oppose military involvement and sought complete participation of Russia in conflict regulation on an equal footing. Andrei Edemskii lists main features of Russian policy regarding the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina after 1993 as explicit resistance to a military decision without UN Security Council resolution, seeking a more independent role in the conflict as it tried to implement its position as a great power, attempts to find a Russian carrot for Serbia to make Milosevic accept the requirements of the international community, and cooperation with the West on equal footing.[581] Russia did not become as influential as it wanted to be and could not prevent the military intervention. Although Russia was a member of the Contact Group and Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov took part at the Dayton negotiations, he was more or less excluded, not consulted, and uninformed.[582]

During the Kosovo conflict, as NATO was much quicker and more decisive to act, it could be argued that the Russian position was even more ignored. During the conflict, Russian viewpoint was that Kosovo was part of Serbia and ethnic conflict was an internal matter of the Serbs. In addition to its political support to Serbia, Russian engagement in a conflict in Chechnya that showed parallels with the conflict in Kosovo might have strengthened the Russian policy on that issue. Once again, it could be claimed that what Russia really wanted was to be consulted, and once again it was the Russian dependence on West and the IMF for loans reduced the influence of Russian foreign policy.[583] Indeed, Russia's loss of its superpower status, its

[581] Edemskii, p. 43.
[582] Sherr, p. 11.
[583] Mark Smith, "Russian Policy during the Kosovo Conflict," in *Britain, NATO, and the Lessons of the Balkan Conflicts, 1991 – 1999*, edited by Stephen Badsey and Paul Latawski, (London: Frank Class, 2004). p. 141.

economic collapse, political instability, and growing reliance on the West during the 1990s for financial aid left Russia little room for maneuver.[584]

On the diplomatic level, Russia could not prevent the NATO air campaign, yet Russia's vocal opposition was harsh. On 24 March 1999, when the NATO operation started, Yeltsin stated that NATO did not only violate the UN Charter but also the founding act of mutual relations, cooperation, and security between Russia and NATO. He furthermore stated that NATO attempted to enter the twenty first century in the uniform of a world policeman, and Russia would never agree to that.[585] In April 1999 Yeltsin accused the USA of wanting to seize Serbia and make it a protectorate, and further claimed that he had warned NATO, the Americans, and the Germans not to push Russia towards military action, or otherwise the situation could lead to a European or even a world war.[586] In May 1999, Ivanov stated that the Balkan tragedy had been provoked by NATO aggression against Yugoslavia.[587]

Yeltsin made clear that Russia would not become militarily involved or supply Serbia with arms, and that Russia would only use diplomatic measures to resolve the crisis.[588] The Russian dilemma here was that it could not be seen to condone NATO's use of force against Serbia, but at the same time Russia was not willing to risk a major confrontation with the West as Russia still depended on IMF loans.[589] The USA and NATO indeed knew that Russia was in no position to intervene militarily over Kosovo, since it neither had the desire nor the capability to do so. Nevertheless, Russian position was still regarded as important by the Western

[584] Chrisopher Williams and Zinaida T. Golenkova, "Russia: Walking the Tightrope," in *The Kosovo Crisis: The Last American War in Europe?* edited by Tony Weymouth and Stanley Henig, (London: Reuters, 2001). p. 208.
[585] Smith, p. 140.
[586] Ibid., p. 141.
[587] Williams and Golenkova, p. 204.
[588] Smith, p. 141.
[589] Ibid., p. 141.

powers and to soften the position of Russia, the Clinton administration sanctioned an IMF loan of 4.8 billion USD in April 1999.[590] As Russia realized that NATO was unlikely to end the bombing, it adopted a tactic of mediating between the West and Milosevic.[591]

Throughout the 1990s Russia failed to be influential in the region due to its transition period, its dependence on the West, and its economic and political instability. It could not prevent the air campaign for neither the Bosnia and Herzegovina and nor the Kosovo conflicts. It only managed to mediate between the West and Serbia, and this was way lower than the initial expectations of Milosevic.[592] Russia also could not prevent NATO expansion and the Eastern enlargement of the EU as well. It viewed these actions as serious threats to its security interests and this led to an increase in the concerns of several Russian analysts and political elites that the West could not be a trustable partner for Russia.[593]

The attitudes of the three major European powers also need to be discussed at this point for several reasons. First, they were involved in the conflict since its early phases. Second, the inability of the European powers to resolve the conflict was harshly criticized during the Yugoslav conflicts. And third, as mentioned above, with the end of the conflicts in the Balkans, the internal dynamics of the region was gradually dominated by European power dynamics, thus the Balkans started to cease to be a region of its own to a certain degree, though not completely.

The inability of the European powers to resolve the Balkan conflicts was criticized in many circles. As Misha Glenny states, for a long period of time, the

[590] Williams and Golenkova, p. 214.
[591] Ibid., p. 215.
[592] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, p. 156.
[593] Williams and Golenkova, p. 208.

Western leaders were unwilling to recognize that Yugoslavia was disintegrating and the presidents of the six republics were not capable of regulating this process in a peaceful manner.[594] Furthermore, as the Western powers were indecisive in their actions, the crisis grew dramatically in a very short period of time. Kaufman, on that issue, argues that by not acting earlier in the crisis, the Western powers allowed the situation to escalate, thereby making it harder for them to act later on.[595]

The Report of the International Commission on the Balkans, named Unfinished Peace, described the reasons for the inability of the EU countries as their inability to understand the nature of the conflict, the social and cultural restrictions of democratic countries that had lived in peace for 50 years, and institutional contradictions and conflicts in determining a common security and foreign policy in a newly emerging EU.[596] The same report argues that the three main mistakes of the West during the conflicts were first, defining the events not as aggression, but as an humanitarian catastrophe, avoiding using force, and failing to create safe havens.[597]

Carl Bildt, special envoy of the EU for the Balkans during the Yugoslav conflicts, on the other hand, states that during the early phases of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU had the ambition to emerge as a political player, yet its abilities did not match this ambition, since the common foreign and security policy of the EU after the Maastricht Treaty had not even been ratified. Moreover, deep disagreements between the key member states on how the crisis should be handled, and the fact that national policy lines were often dominated by domestic considerations rather than by a sense of common European responsibilities downgraded the ability of the EU even further. He further states that as the events

[594] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia: Third Balkan War, p. 235.
[595] Kaufman, p. 73.
[596] Barışa Çağrı, p. 87.
[597] Ibid., pp. 99-104.

were too soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe was unprepared for such crisis.[598]

The foreign policies of the three major European powers were influential in determining the shape of events during the Yugoslav conflicts, and thus need to be analyzed carefully. Like most of the powers involved in the conflict, most European countries supported the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. According to Tanıl Bora, the efforts of the West in protecting the integrity of Yugoslavia were to discourage ethnic nationalities in their efforts to found their own states, and through that, to prevent a set of conflicts that would spill over to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics for similar reasons.[599]

During the early phases of the crisis, a high delegation of the EC went to Yugoslavia in May 1991 and supported Yugoslav integrity. This approach was reinforced on 23 June 1991 at a meeting of EC foreign ministers. The statement issued in the aftermath of the meeting declared that the EC would not recognize any unilateral declaration of independence by either Slovenia or Croatia.[600] On 27 August 1991, the EC issued another declaration, stating that none of the six republics would be recognized as independent states unless there was an overall settlement reached that was acceptable to all six republics, with the conditions of no changes to the borders except by peaceful agreement.[601]

As stated above, however, the European countries were not unanimous in their policies regarding Yugoslavia. As will be discussed below, Germany followed a more positive attitude towards recognizing the independence declarations of Croatia and Slovenia. On 8 November 1991, the EC issued another statement and referred to

[598] Bildt, Peace Journey: The Struggle for Peace in Bosnia, p. 376.
[599] Bora, Bosna-Hersek, p. 226.
[600] Peter Radan, *The Break-up of Yugoslavia and International Law* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002). p. 161.
[601] Ibid., p. 163.

the prospects of recognition and independence of those republics wishing it. According the Peter Radan, it was at this stage that Germany assumed the initiative within the EC, as it had been maneuvering to secure Western recognition to Slovenia and Croatia since July 1991.[602] France and the UK, on the other hand, opposed German policy of supporting the independence of Slovenia and Croatia, arguing that it would lead to bigger problems, and instead argued for pursuing a negotiated way out of the crisis through the offices of international conference on Yugoslavia.[603]

Regarding the British diplomacy toward Yugoslavia, it should first be noted that the UK was in an excellent position to shape international policy on Bosnia and Herzegovina since it held the presidency of the EC council in 1992.[604] Throughout the Bosnian conflict, the UK supported a solution within the UN, joined at UNPROFOR with troops, and supported the imposition of sanctions on Serbia.[605] Moreover, the UK provided an important amount of humanitarian aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina.[606] The main aspect of British policy was the use of diplomacy and opposition to the use of power against the Serbs and opposition to the lifting of arms embargo on Bosnia and Herzegovina, even though Article 52 of the UN Charter provides the right to individual or collective self defense to all member countries.[607]

One of the major British efforts during the war was the London Meeting in 1992. British Prime Minister John Major, who also was the temporary chairman of the EC and an influential figure in the gathering of the meeting, firmly opposed

[602] Ibid., p. 163.
[603] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 637.
[604] Gallagher, pp. 161-162.
[605] James Gow, "British Perspectives," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Denchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). p. 91.
[606] White, p. 251.
[607] Gallagher, 161.

military intervention.[608] He believed that diplomatic pressure would be enough to stop the Serbian aggression and humanitarian suffering. In that regard, he threatened the Serbs during the conference by stating that if the Serbs did not cooperate, the pressure would inexorably increase and parties that stood in the way of agreement should expect even tougher sanctions and isolation.[609] However, diplomatic pressure was not enough to stop Serbian aggression and, as Tom Gallagher states, British efforts at the London Conference only allowed the Serbs to keep doing what they had been doing.[610]

Major remained reluctant to contemplate the use of military coercion and preferred to work towards a tightening of the sanctions, even after the Bosnian Serb administration rejected the Vance-Owen Peace Plan.[611] For all these factors, British policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina was harshly criticized in the international community for being pro-Serbian, claiming that it was a policy of appeasement and indifference. Throughout the war, Clinton, Izetbegovic, and the leaders of many Muslim countries openly criticized the policy of the UK.[612]

During the Kosovo conflict, the British diplomacy changed dramatically, as the Blair government openly supported military intervention on Serbia, even more vocally than the US. Blair assumed the role of the leading hawk in the West, as he relentlessly argued that NATO had to consider the option of sending ground troops to evict the Serbs from Kosovo, even though the Clinton administration was more than

[608] Türkeş, Bosna-Hersek Problemi: 26-28 Ağustos 1992 Londra Konferansı ve Siyasi Sonuçları, p. 472.
[609] Laura Silber and Allan Little, *The Death of Yugoslavia* (London: Penguin, 1996). The Death of Yugoslavia, p. 287.
[610] Gallagher, 163.
[611] White, 245.
[612] Gow, pp. 87-88.

reluctant of sending ground troops.[613] In March 1999, Blair declared that it was known from bitter experience throughout the century, most recently in Bosnia, that instability and civil war in one part of the Balkans inevitably would spill over into the whole region and would affect the rest of Europe too.[614] In April 1999, he declared that the West must not appease dictators, must act to save thousands of innocent people from humanitarian catastrophe, from death, barbarism and ethnic cleansing by a brutal dictatorship.[615] During the negotiation period, Blair believed that the credibility of NATO was at stake in Kosovo, and furthermore he also tried to seize the opportunity to stake its claim to the leadership of a key aspect of European integration, namely a common defense policy.[616]

French policy towards the Yugoslav conflicts, especially during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was also criticized harshly for being pro-Serbian. In fact, several scholars claimed that France supported Serbia with the aim of counterbalancing the growing German influence in the Balkans.[617] Indeed, President Mitterrand tried not to blame Serbia for the outbreak of the civil war and with aggression. In May 1991, while welcoming last Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Markovic in Paris, he declared that there was a historical Franco-Serbian friendship, and in the later months French diplomacy tried to mediate between Serbia and the rest of the world.[618]

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[613] Louise Richardson, "A Force for Good in the World? Britain's Role in the Kosovo Crisis," in *Alliance Politics, Kosovo, and NATO's War: Allied Force or Forced Allies*, edited by Pierre Martin and Mark R. Brawley, (New York: Palgrave, 2001). p. 145.
[614] Stanley Henig, "Britain: To War for a Just Cause," in *The Kosovo Crisis: The Last American War in Europe?* edited by Tony Weymouth and Stanley Henig, (London: Reuters, 2001). p. 40.
[615] Ibid., p. 40.
[616] Richardson, pp. 152-154.
[617] Bozzo and Ragionieri, p. 262.
[618] Olivier Lepick, "French Perspectives," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Denchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). p. 78.

According to Olivier Lepick, there were three main objectives of French diplomacy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to put an end to the violence and find a solution equitable for all ethnic groups based on the rule of international law, to assert a French concern in the peace process, to prevent the conflict from spreading to other regions of the Balkans.[619] Similar to the UK, France also favored a solution within the UN through diplomacy and strongly opposed to the lifting of the arms embargo. As Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Alain Juppe explained, the French government believed that lifting the embargo would lead to the immediate renewal of war and the defeat of the Bosnian Muslims. He further claimed that lifting the embargo would prolong the fighting and end in a blood bath.[620]

Until June 1992, France maintained a neutral attitude in the war and did not accuse the Serbians of aggression. Only in June 1992, at the Lisbon Conference of the EC, Mitterrand blamed Serbia for being the aggressor, and two days later he visited Sarajevo under siege, yet he tried to keep a policy of balance between sides. This policy finally ended, when the Serbs refused Vance-Owen Peace Plan, which was firmly supported by France.[621]

During the Kosovo conflict, France no longer provided support for Serbia. In the negotiation process, France tried to pursue its place among the major players of the international system to affirm its presence and influence. French policy makers knew that it was the US that brought an end to the fighting and France, along with other European powers, was excluded from the final settlements.[622] During the negotiations and later on the air campaign, France advocated that after a settlement, the EU should assume full responsibility for civil administration over Kosovo.

[619] Ibid., p. 77.
[620] Ibid., p. 83.
[621] Ibid., pp. 80-81.
[622] Macleod, p. 117.

Acknowledging however that the responsibility would be assumed by the UN, France had to soften its position. After that point, France concentrated its diplomatic efforts on the UN Administration to be handed by an EU personality. President Chirac at this point lobbied successfully for his country's candidate, Health Minister Bernard Kouchner.[623]

German foreign policy towards the Yugoslav conflicts created controversies in the international arena as well. Germany strongly supported the independence decisions of Slovenia and Croatia and tried to persuade other European countries to recognize them as independent countries. This activism was criticized and several scholars accused Germany's attitude, arguing that it accelerated the dissolution process and the civil war.[624] While moderate observers saw the newly united Germany as not capable of responding adequately for the security challenges of the post-Cold War world, others accused Germany of trying to build hegemony in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.[625] German support to these countries increased after the Serbian assaults. Serbian administration during that period tried to find parallels between the German policy towards Yugoslavia and Nazi Germany, arguing that Germany was trying to build a sphere of influence in the Balkans.[626]

During the Bosnian crisis, Germany supported the Western policy line, and provided support for sanctions, humanitarian aids, and peace plans. On the other

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[623] Alex Macleod, "France: Kosovo and the Emergence of a New European Security," in *Alliance Politics, Kosovo, and NATO's War: Allied Force or Forced Allies*, edited by Pierre Martin and Mark R. Brawley, (New York: Palgrave, 2001). p. 120.
[624] Bora, Bosna-Hersek, p. 227.
[625] Marie-Janine Calic, "German Perspectives," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Denchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). p. 52.
[626] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Geçmişten Günümüze Almanya'nın Balkanlar Politikasının Analizi: Değişim Mi Süreklilik Mi?" *Avrasya Dosyası*, Balkanlar Özel Sayısı, 14, no. 1 (2008).p. 343.

hand, Germany argued that Russia must be included in the peace processes.[627] Germany followed a strong policy in terms of humanitarian aid. During the war, it welcomed more than 400,000 refugees, which was twice the number of all other European countries combined, and provided a financial aid of 1 billion DM. It should be noted that these aids were delivered despite the Serbian threats to shoot down German planes in the Bosnian air zone.[628]

Due to its constitutional reservations and political limitations on the deployment of force, Germany stood away from military option until late 1994. German Minister of Foreign Affairs Klaus Kinkel declared that although German policy had to have some reservations due to constitutional and historical reasons, it was trying to help the humanitarian missions and urged other European countries to take more refugees as Germany was doing.[629]

As the peace negotiations and diplomatic efforts failed however, Germany reacted positively to NATO's air campaign in 1995. Chancellor Helmut Kohl stated that NATO operation was necessary and the aim of the Bosnian policy was to give a quick end to the barbaric use of violence.[630] After the operations as well, Germany argued that the inclusion of Russia was a prerequisite for the establishment of peace in the region, and furthermore Russian participation would also improve relations between Moscow and NATO.[631]

During the Kosovo conflict, Germany was quick to respond. In the Fall of 1997, even before the escalation of the conflict, France and Germany undertook a joint diplomatic initiative in which the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of these countries

[627] Ibid. p. 353.
[628] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, *Turkey, Germany and the Wars in Yugoslavia: A Search for Reconstruction of State Identities* (Berlin: Logos Verlag Berlin, 2006). pp. 256-257.
[629] Ibid., pp. 256-257.
[630] Ibid., p. 260.
[631] Ibid., p. 260.

Kinkel and Vedrine sent a letter to Milosevic and pressed for a negotiated solution. Germany during that period avoided acting alone and worked with the existing multilateral frameworks such as the Contact Group, the EU, and NATO.[632] As the conflict started, and the prospect of a NATO operation became visible, Germany tried to follow an intermediary policy between the members of the Contact Group. As the US and the UK favored coercive force and France, Russia, and Italy sought to restrain them, the German government tried to keep channels open with both its more hawkish and more dovish partners.[633]

Germany was supportive of the air operations. Chancellor Schröder wanted to avoid any impression that Germany under the new government would be an unreliable member of NATO and during his visit to Washington before assuming office; he assured President Clinton that Germany would support potential military actions against Serbia.[634] German parliament supported military action as well, as 500 out of 580 members of the parliament voted in favor of German participation in the operations, with members of the East German-based party of Democratic Socialism representing the bulk of the 62 dissenting votes.[635] German policy makers believed that every possibility of diplomatic solution had failed and argued that a military operation was the only way to bring an end to the conflict in Kosovo. Furthermore, Germany had been accused during the Bosnian war of not firmly supporting the peace efforts by several countries, mostly by the US, and for that reason wanted to play a more active role during the Kosovo conflict. Another

[632] Peter Rudolf, "Germany and the Kosovo Conflict," in *Alliance Politics, Kosovo, and NATO's War: Allied Force or Forced Allies*, edited by Pierre Martin and Mark R. Brawley, (New York: Palgrave, 2001). p. 132.
[633] Sabrina Petra Ramet and Phil Lyon, "Germany: The Federal Republic, Loyal to NATO," in *The Kosovo Crisis: The Last American War in Europe?* edited by Tony Weymouth and Stanley Henig, (London: Reuters, 2001). p. 86.
[634] Rudolf, p. 133.
[635] Ibid., p. 134.

contributing factor was that throughout the conflict Germany welcomed around 140,000 Kosovar refugees and feared that this number might increase if the war was prolonged any further.[636]

An important point to note here is that Germany's availability for combat operations outside its own borders had long been prohibited by the country's constitution.[637] Thus, German participation in the NATO operations in Kosovo was the first military involvement of Germany since World War II. For that reason, it was not an easy decision for German policy makers to participate in the operations. Mostly in an effort to avoid possible criticism, the German foreign policy makers tried to represent the issue as not for selfish national interests but for moral values alone.[638] In his speech on the Kosovo conflict in the Bundestag on 12 June 1998, Kinkel stated that Germany would do everything to bring an end to the conflict in Kosovo.[639] In another statement, he declared that Germany could not remain a bystander to a humanitarian catastrophe.[640]

At this point I shall discuss the perspectives of the UN towards the conflicts in Yugoslavia, since especially during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the inefficiency of the UN to resolve the conflict was harshly criticized. In fact, many scholars of International Relations, especially the realists, saw the failure of the UN as the inability and inefficiency of international organizations within world politics. John Mearsheimer, for example, claimed that institutions by themselves could not

[636] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, Geçmişten Günümüze Almanya'nın Balkanlar Politikasının Analizi, pp. 359-360.
[637] Ramet and Lyon, p. 83.
[638] Rudolf, p. 135.
[639] Loquai, p. 111.
[640] Ibid., p. 119.

prevent or stop a war, as they had not in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a recent example.[641]

The criticisms on the UN concentrated on several aspects. First of them is the inadequate response of the UN to the conflict and second is the inefficiency of the UN Peacekeeping missions in the Balkans. The inadequate response of the UN must the thought of within the context of international law. The UN Charter did not address the problems in internal conflicts or dissolution processes and in practice this situation created important problems. To start with, the UN Charter does not clearly explain the right to self determination and sovereignty, and in practice this issue created several crucial problems in the Balkans.[642] Moreover, there is a serious gap between reality and rhetoric in international law when it comes to conflict resolution and war. For example, international law does not provide any minority rights in state dissolution laws, and there are no clear rules in international law for domestic matters or atrocities in dissolution processes.[643] In sum, it would not be wrong to argue that the UN system was not designed to address communal conflicts, and for that reason was inefficient throughout the whole process.[644] Another problem related to international law and the UN system was the fact that the Bosnian Serb army participated in the conflict as a non-state actor, which made negotiations by the UN

[641] John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security,* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1995/1994). p. 49.
[642] Barışa Çağrı, pp. 65-66.
[643] Hampson Françoise, "Law and War," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Denchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). pp. 149-152.
[644] Adam Roberts, "Communal Conflict as a Challenge to International Organization," in *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict*, edited by Alex Danchev and Thomas Halverson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). p. 198.

extremely complicated, and as a consequence ceasefires were often violated and repeatedly failed.[645]

It should be noted however that these criticisms were not pointed towards the UN system alone, but several UN officials as well, for their indifferent attitude in the conflict. In his only visit to Sarajevo in 1992, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali made a comment to journalists to the effect that Bosnia was a rich man's war and that, although he understood the frustration, the situation in Sarajevo was better than ten other places in the world.[646] Considering the level of humanitarian suffering and the fact that Sarajevo siege was the longest siege in modern history, his comment was more than unacceptable.

Other criticism directed towards the UN was the inability of the peacekeeping missions, especially when it came to the safe havens. The inability of UNPROFOR to create safe havens resulted in human catastrophe. In December 1994, Boutros Boutros-Ghali reported that the safe area concept was dangerously flawed and it put the UNPROFOR officials in the vulnerable position of being taken hostage. Indeed, in July 1995, the small number of Dutch peacekeepers in Srebrenica proved unable to prevent the fall of the town, and the genocide of the Bosnian Muslims by the Serbian forces. In addition to Srebrenica, Zepa was another town where UNPROFOR could not prevent the fall of town.[647] Another criticism of UNPROFOR was that it only disarmed the Bosnian Muslims, but not the Serbs, and thus gave a strategic upper hand to the Serbian militias in the war and put the Bosnian Muslims in an even

[645] Frances Pilch and Joseph Derdzinski, "The UN Response to the Balkan Wars," in *Reflections on the Balkan Wars: Ten Years after the Break-up of Yugoslavia*, edited by Jeffrey S. Morton, R. Craig Nation, Paul C. Forage, and Stefano Bianchini, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). p. 103.
[646] Holbrooke, p. 214.
[647] Pilch and Derdzinski, pp. 99-100.

more vulnerable position.[648] Adam Roberts, on the peacekeeping missions, notes that it was never a strong option, as they could not fight to end the conflict and the leaders were not willing to agree to a ceasefire.[649]

Several other accounts claim that UNPROFOR was useful in the given conditions. Carl Bildt notes that as UNPROFOR began to its duty, there was no peace to keep, no peace agreement to enforce, and no peace plan to pursue. Their mission was essentially humanitarian and of great importance, as it made it possible to avert a mass starvation in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the winter of 1992.[650] Owen, on the same account, states that the presence of UNPROFOR saved thousands of lives during the early years of war.[651]

One of the primary criticisms on the UN during the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the insistence of the UN not to lift the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims. As soon as the war started, the UN imposed an arms embargo in all former Yugoslav republics. However, it became certain after a very short while that the Serbians were the aggressors of this war. Thus, many countries, including Turkey as was discussed in Chapter 3, argued that the UN should immediately lift the arms embargo in order to provide the Bosnian Muslims with the opportunity to protect themselves against the aggression. Article 51 of the UN Charter on that point clearly provides the right of individual or collective self defense to any member of the United Nations under an armed attack. It has been rightly argued by many that the arms embargo on Bosnia and Herzegovina prevented the Bosnian Muslims from exercising this right against the Serbian forces, who were using the full power and equipments of the JNA.

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[648] Kut, Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990 – 1993, p. 332.
[649] Roberts, p. 190.
[650] Bildt, Peace Journey: The Struggle for Peace in Bosnia, p. 377.
[651] Owen, p. 349.

It is, however, important to note here that the decision to lift the arms embargo depended on the Security Council, and several permanent members of the Security Council, such as the UK, France, or Russia, were insistently against this decision, and thus prevented it on the grounds that such decision would prolong the warfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main problem here regarding the UN and the international law is the fact that the arms embargo itself was unlawful, as it was clearly against Article 51 of the UN Charter, and thus should have never been imposed by the Security Council.

Another point that needs to be mentioned regarding the perspectives of the UN is the opinion that the real reason why the UN was inefficient at solving the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the disagreements between the major diplomatic actors involved in the region. Moreover, the UN officials also blamed the global powers for not supporting the peace plans. Carl Bildt argues that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was prolonged by the disagreements between the US and European states.[652] Owen, on the other hand, argues that the real reason for the failure of the Vance-Owen Peace Plan was the lack of diplomatic support by the US and the European powers.[653]

During the conflict in Kosovo, the UN was mostly ignored during the peace negotiations, due to its inefficiency during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The legal aspect of the NATO operations, however, created a huge controversy in the international community, since the operations were regarded as a violation of international law by several circles as they were carried without a UN Security Council Resolution. NATO supported its decision through a concept of humanitarian intervention, and as it seems, the UN officially sided with NATO on that issue. UN

[652] Bildt, Peace Journey: The Struggle for Peace in Bosnia, p. 380.
[653] Owen, p. 358.

Secretary General Kofi Annan, in his annual report to General Assembly in 1999, supported the NATO operation and claimed that the humanitarian intervention undoubtedly saved lives in the Balkans.[654]

At this point, I will discuss the perspectives of the regional actors. The violent breakup of Yugoslavia surely affected world politics, yet it undoubtedly affected the regional setting to a greater extent; thus, every Balkan state had to develop a foreign policy regarding the conflicts. Leaving aside the fact that the instability in the region and a prospect of a spread of the conflict to the whole region deeply affected the Balkan countries, another major problem arose with the sanctions on Serbia and with the disrupted trade with Western Europe due to the conflicts in the region. The countries whose attitudes will be analyzed at this part, namely Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania, all depended on Serbia both as a commercial partner and a trading route to Western Europe. Misha Glenny states the sanctions gave the international community leverage in its diplomatic dealings with Belgrade, yet these sanctions also encouraged economic decline in the Balkans and set the region further adrift from the rest of Europe.[655] Considering the fact that Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania were involved with the troubles of transition and already experiencing several troubles, their economic problems were increased due the war and the sanctions.

It should be noted that the embargo was not upheld by all these countries. Various reports suggested at that time that Greece continued to sell oil, food, and weaponry to Serbia.[656] Albania, too, benefited from ignoring the international

[654] Kofi Annan, Secretary-General Presents His Annual Report to General Assembly, Press Relase SG/SM/7136/GA/9596 http://www.un.org/press/en/1999/19990920.sgsm7136.html (Accessed last on 18.04.2015).
[655] Glenny, The Balkans, p. 639.
[656] Ramet, War in the Balkans, p. 96.

sanctions against the Serbs, mainly through the black market.[657] Bulgaria benefited from the sanctions through oil export to Serbia on the black market.[658] Romania broke the embargo by selling oil and weapons to Serbia for economic gains.[659] All of these countries officially supported the UN embargo and most of the trade was carried through unofficial sources and black market. Moreover, another point must be added regarding these three countries is that their main focus was on domestic politics and transition problems, rather than their foreign policies in a complex crisis.

The foreign policy of Greece during the 1990s towards the dissolution process of Yugoslavia and the Balkans needs to be analyzed with special emphasis, mainly because Greece's policy towards Yugoslav breakup and problematic relations with Albania and Macedonia drew much criticism from the international arena. Greece accepted the demise of Yugoslavia later and with more reluctance than any state in the world.[660] The breakup Yugoslavia was indeed a terrible nightmare for Greek political elites. The reluctance of Greece had several reasons. First, the only trade route between Greece and the rest of Europe except the sea routes passed through Yugoslavia. Second, during the Cold War period, nonaligned Yugoslavia had acted as an important buffer between Greece and the communist Balkan countries; thus, relations with Yugoslavia had constituted an important element of Greek foreign policy for decades. Third, Yugoslavia had served as an important constraint on Macedonian irredentism, which was a nightmare for Greek foreign policy.[661]

Greek foreign policy towards the Balkans will be analyzed in three main dimensions, the Greek policy regarding Turkey, the Greek policy regarding

[657] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 50.
[658] Türkeş, Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri: Bulgaristan Örneği, p. 196.
[659] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, p. 155.
[660] Pettifer, The New Macedonian Question, p. 22.
[661] Stephen F. Larrabee, "Greece's Balkan Policy in the New Strategic Era," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 5, no. 3 (September 2005). p. 408.

Macedonia and Albania, the Greek policy regarding Yugoslavia. All of these three dimensions were interrelated with each other, and indeed it is difficult to separate them from one another when it comes to the policy determinants. During the 1990s, Greece tried to be active in the Balkan politics like Turkey, and as Turkey tried to secure the support of the US, Greece tried to secure the support of Russia and European countries.[662]

The 1990s were a complicated period for Greek-Turkish relations due to their bilateral problems regarding the Aegean Sea and Cyprus. The two countries had come to edge of the war in 1996, over a tiny island in the Aegean Sea, named Imia in Greek and Kardak in Turkish. Although both countries in their foreign policies did not want to add the Yugoslav conflicts to their already existing disputes, it was not easy to achieve. Considering the fact that these two countries had supported different sides during that period, this aim became even more difficult to achieve.

During that period, as the Turkish political elites believed that Greece was trying to build an Orthodox belt, Athens believed that Turkey was building a Muslim belt in the region.[663] Indeed many Greek politicians considered the Turkish activism in the region as an aspiration of neo-Ottomanism, and regarded these aspirations as a crucial threat to the peace and stability in the Balkans.[664]

Larrabee states that Turkey's rapprochement with Bulgaria, the immediate recognition of Macedonia, and close relations with Albania set off alarm bells in Athens, and led the Greek foreign policy makers to forge close ties with Serbia after 1990 in an attempt to counter Turkish efforts to expand its influence in the Balkans. He further states that the Turkish activism in the region caused great concern in Athens, giving more impetus to already tense Greek-Turkish relations, and leading

[662] Uzgel, 90'larda Türkiye için bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alanı Olarak Balkanlar, p. 427.
[663] Bechev, 212.
[664] Couloumbis and Yannas, p. 214.

many Greek officials and analysts to consider this activism as a part of a calculated effort by Ankara to encircle Greece by creating a Muslim arc of client states along the northern border of Greece.[665]

During the early phases of the 1990s, Greece's relations with two of its neighbors, Macedonia and Albania, were problematic as well. Between 1990 and 1995, the governments founded by Mitsotakis and Papandreou followed strong nationalist policies and refused any compromises in their relations with these countries.[666] Indeed, as Greece had diplomatic problems with these countries, Turkey managed to build closer relations with Tirana and Skopje during that period.[667] Greek policy makers considered the nationalist tendencies in these countries as extremely dangerous, yet it should be noted that neither Albania nor Macedonia had the material power to create any security threat for Greece.

Regarding Macedonia, Greece's initial diplomatic efforts were concentrated on blocking the recognition of Macedonia in the international community. Yet after 1992, more and more European countries and the US as well recognized Macedonia, although not with its constitutional name, but as Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).[668] In return, Greece followed a policy of embargo for Macedonia in order to make changes in its constitution, flag, and name. This embargo not only affected the Macedonian economy, but the Greek economy as well. In order to find a solution to the problem, special envoy of the UN Secretary General Cyrus Vance, special envoy of President Clinton Mathew Nimetz, and chief US negotiator in the Balkans, Richard Holbrooke, mediated between the two sides,

[665] Larrabee, p. 417.
[666] Ibid., p. 409.
[667] Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War, p. 240.
[668] Larrabee, p. 409.

and finally, on 13 September 1995, the two countries signed a temporary consensus document.[669]

Even though this agreement solved the problem of embargo, the problems still continued, as they do even today. Although Macedonia compromised on the flag and the constitution of the country, Greece continued to demand a change in the name of the country, mainly for historical reasons. On an interview given on 25 August 1997, Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov stated that Macedonia refused any compromise on the name of the state, and Greece had no grounds to try and resolve the problem through a UN Security Council resolution.[670] Indeed in 1995, despite the strong nationalist tendencies, both Papandreou and the public opinion in Greece were ready to accept the compromise of lifting the embargo in return for a new Macedonian flag, a revised constitution, and an end to other official statements implying any claim on territory of Greece.[671] In strategic terms, Greece favored the maintenance of a relatively weak buffer state north of its border, since the ambitions of greater Albania, Bulgaria, or Serbia towards Macedonia were considered as extremely dangerous by Greek foreign policy, as such a partition process would possibly involve Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, Serbia, and Turkey in a destructive Balkan war.[672]

Greek policy towards Serbia drew much criticism from the international community. During the early 1990s, Greece was the main regional partner of Serbia and supporter of the Serbian cause in Yugoslavia. On the strategic level, their common stance against Macedonia, Albania, and Turkey constituted a strong ground

[669] Murat Hatipoğlu, Kuruluşundan Günümüze Makedonya Cumhuriyetinin Dış Politikası ve Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri (1991 – 2000), p. 174.
[670] Kiro Gligorov, "The Unrealistic Dream of Large States," in *The New Macedonian Question*, edited by James Pettifer, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). p. 103.
[671] Lampe, p. 287.
[672] Couloumbis and Yannas, p. 206.

for these countries to act together.[673] On the other hand, the cultural and historical ties between Greece and Serbia were another factor that brought these two countries together. Stephen Larrabee argues that it was mainly the historical Orthodox connection that brought Greece and Serbia closer. He adds that this partnership should not be considered as an elite driven top-down event, but largely as a bottom up phenomenon with deep sociological and cultural roots. According to Larrabee, the collapse of communism replaced old political dividing lines in the region with new civilizational and cultural divisions.[674]

Greek support of Serbia during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was visible in several ways. Greek business and especially oil companies systematically violated the UN embargo on trade with the knowledge if not tacit approval of the Greek government.[675] Moreover, Greek diplomats also mediated between Serbia and the rest of the world on some occasions. The most important one of these efforts was during the Vance-Owen Peace Plan negotiations, where Greece unsuccessfully mediated for the Bosnian Serbs to accept the plan.[676] Radovan Karadzic signed the plan in May 1993, before it was rejected by the Bosnian Serb parliament, in Athens under the supervision of Greek Prime Minister Konstantinos Mitsotakis. Even though the Bosnian Serbs lost their international credibility to a great degree after the rejection of the plan, Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs Michalis Papakonstantinou claimed that Greece would continue to remain on the side of the Serbian people, providing moral support to Serbia in its most problematic period.[677]

Greek foreign policy during that period resulted in a huge loss of reputation for Greece within the international community, as it supported the aggressor and

[673] Barışa Çağrı, p. 50.
[674] Larrabee, p. 410.
[675] Ibid., p. 410.
[676] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, p. 157.
[677] Ibid., p. 157.

managed to develop problematic relations with Albania and Macedonia, two countries that were considered to be crucial for the stability in the Balkans and thus received strong support from the Western circles. Moreover, Greek support of Serbia also increased the Turkish-Greek rivalry in the region.[678]

The close relations between Greece and Serbia did not only put Greece in a difficult position in the Balkans, and in its relations with its Western allies as well. During the early 1990s, Greece tried to find a line between its NATO obligations and its relations with Serbia. It did not condemn Serbian atrocities as strongly as the Western world and opposed the use of force against Serbia until 1994. By 1994, Greece faced diplomatic isolation both in the Balkans and in the Western world.[679] Due to these problems, Greece had to revise its Balkan policy, starting in the last years of the Papandreou government and finally with a greater momentum with the Simitis government, which came to power in January 1996.

During the Kosovo conflict, the Simitis government had to establish a delicate balance between showing sensitivity to Greek public opinion and maintaining solidarity with NATO. Thus, despite the strong public opposition to the NATO air campaign, which was around 96 percent according to a survey and created strong anti-US and pro-Serbian feeling, the Greek government supported the NATO campaign.[680] It should be noted here that, although Greece was the main regional partner of Serbia during the Yugoslav conflicts, its support remained limited due to Greece's commitments to NATO and the EU. It could have vetoed the air campaigns both in 1995 and 1999 as a member state of NATO, but chose not to use this right.[681] After 1995, Greece also started to develop its relations with Albania and Macedonia,

[678] Hale, p. 206.
[679] Larrabee, p. 410.
[680] Ibid., p. 411.
[681] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, pp. 156-157.

but it was not until the fall of Milosevic that Greece could align its foreign policy with that of the West.[682]

An important thing to mention due to Greek foreign policy in that period is the fact that with the mid-1990s, Greece started to follow a more pragmatic foreign policy. It started to follow a political-economy driven foreign policy, putting less emphasis on its strategic and cultural based concerns in the Balkans. In that regard, Greece had a considerable advantage in the region. It was a stable country, a member state of the EU and NATO, and a solid example of market capitalism and the democratic rule of law. Thus, the improvement of Greek relations with its neighbors was particularly visible in the economic sphere. Beginning in the late 1990s, Greece expanded its trade and investment in the region, emerging as the single largest investor in the Balkans. Greek commercial activity and the investments started to shape, as they still do, key sectors of the Balkan economies, especially the banking, food, and telecommunication sectors.[683] Between 1992 and 1999, Greek exports to the region nearly tripled as a share of the total from 4.3 percent to 12.6; and its imports were more than doubled, reaching 10.9 percent.[684] It should be noted that the considerable European economic activism and prospect of an EU enlargement towards the Balkans was a beneficent factor for Greece during that period.

Finally, a few words must be said regarding Greek-Turkish relations in the region. Considering their rivalry in the Balkans, both sides in the late 1990s had come to recognize that preventing the spread of instability in the Balkans was a common interest for both Turkey and Greece. Indeed, the two countries cooperated closely to prevent a spillover of the conflicts to the other parts in the Balkans.[685]

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[682] Larrabee, p. 412.
[683] Ibid., p. 412.
[684] Lampe, p. 287.
[685] Larrabee, p. 417.

Regarding their bilateral disputes, officials and diplomats from both countries put considerable effort into finding a just solution to these problems in the late 1990s and into developing good neighborly relations. Although the main problems between the two sides, namely the Aegean and Cyprus disputes, remained unsolved, Greece and Turkey managed to develop their relations dramatically in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Albanian foreign policy towards the Yugoslav conflicts is crucial to understand. Although Albania was among the weakest countries in the region, it had a special position since only 3.3 million of the Albanian people out of six million in total in the Balkans lived in Albania.[686] For that reason, the Albanian minority in the neighboring countries constituted a crucial aspect of the Albanian foreign policy in the Balkans. Due to the minority problems, Albania during the 1990s had difficulty in its relations with Serbia, Greece, and Macedonia. In 1992, Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha stated that Albania would get involved in the conflict, if the war spread to Kosovo.[687] In 1994, Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Paskal Milo stated on the minority issue that the Albanian national problem, namely the minority issue, was the primary problem of the domestic policy of Albania and constituted the main frames of its foreign policy.[688]

In 1991, when Kosovo declared independence, it was only recognized by Albania. In the later periods, however, Albania decided to follow a foreign policy coherent with the international arena and gave up policy lines that were considered unacceptable by the international community.[689] During that period, Albania received

[686] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, Arnavutluğun Dış Politikası ve Balkanlarda Arnavut Sorunu, p. 67.
[687] Bora, Bosna-Hersek, p. 202.
[688] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, Arnavutluğun Dış Politikası ve Balkanlarda Arnavut Sorunu, p. 75.
[689] Ibid., p. 79.

strong support from the Western world, and especially from the US, for not getting involved in the conflict. Berisha managed to win international acclaim from refraining from expansionist policies about the plight of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia.[690] It is important to remember that the low level of economic and material power was the main reason that limited the expansionist ideology among the Albanian political elites, as the economic matters were necessarily considered as more crucial than nationalist dreams.[691]

Similar to the other Balkan countries, the embargo on Serbia created economic problems for Albania as well. In addition to the instability in the region, the embargo dropped the trade volume of Albania and restrained international investors from investing in Albania.[692] Thus, resolution of the conflict was crucial for Albania, both for political and economic reasons.

As a result of these consequences, Albania tried to follow a pro-Western foreign policy during that period. Its main aim was to mobilize the international community to resolve the crisis. Both during the Bosnian and Kosovar crises, Albanian policy line advocated a military intervention of NATO into the conflicts.[693] In addition to its minority policy, its strategic importance during the wars was crucial for the Western powers. By opening its harbors and airports to the use of NATO, Albania managed to improve its relations with the Western countries as well.[694]

Bulgarian foreign policy during the 1990s was complicated, as it tried to keep a balance between Russia and Western powers in its foreign policy. Ekaterina Nikova notes that Bulgaria's Balkan policy has always been the most important element of

[690] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 50.
[691] Glenny, The Macedonian Question, p. 141.
[692] Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, Arnavutluğun Dış Politikası ve Balkanlarda Arnavut Sorunu, p. 79.
[693] Ibid., pp. 79-80.
[694] Ibid., pp. 74-75.

its foreign policy and due to the changes in Bulgaria, changes in the Balkans and changes in the international arena, the 1990s were a difficult time for Bulgarian foreign policy.[695] Bulgaria in the early 1990s tried to improve its relations with the West without harming its relations with Russia. In the same period, it also tried to develop good relations with both Turkey and Greece. In the early phases of the conflict in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria argued that the Balkan countries should not get involved in the conflicts and claim that a pact of nonaggression must be signed between the Balkan states.[696] During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria tried to exercise a cautious and moderate policy and tried not to interfere in the conflicts. It favored an international solution, and despite the fact that the embargo on Serbia caused a monthly loss for Bulgaria around 40 to 60 million USD, it officially supported the UN decisions, including the embargo.[697]

Two historical problems for Bulgaria arose with the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the historical Macedonian question and the Bulgarian minority in Serbia, mostly located in Western Serbia, on the Bulgarian-Serbian border. Regarding the second problem, Bulgarian policy makers followed a cautious policy and avoided any confrontation with Serbia while mentioning the Bulgarian minority in Serbia.[698] The second problem was more problematic, considering the fact that Bulgaria traditionally had been the power with most direct designs on Macedonian territory. Still, Bulgaria was the first country that recognized Macedonia as an independent country, yet it still continued to argue Macedonians were not a nation, but came from

[695] Ekaterina Nikova, "Changing Bulgaria in the Changing Balkans," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 189.
[696] Soysal, p. 181.
[697] Nikova, pp. 192-193.
[698] Türkeş, Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri: Bulgaristan Örneği, p. 196.

the same ethnicity with Bulgarians, and furthermore planned to involve itself in its affairs.[699]

Bulgaria was unable to follow a clear foreign policy during the early 1990s due to the political instability and fragile coalition governments. Only with the government that was established in 1997 did Bulgaria manage to establish domestic political stability and concentrated on integration with the West, most notably membership to NATO and the EU.[700] During the Kosovo crisis, Bulgaria opposed the independence claim of Kosovo, arguing that it would increase regional instability, yet declared that it would support an international peacekeeping force in the region in October 1998.[701]

Regarding Romanian foreign policy during the 1990s, Romania mostly tried to stay aside from the conflicts. Indeed, it was the country least affected by the conflicts in Yugoslavia in the region. As Albania was drew into the conflict by the Kosovo crisis, Bulgaria by the Macedonian question, and Greece by its historical ties with Serbia in addition to the Macedonian question, Romania did not have such deep historical problems, thus it was easier for Romania to stay out of the conflict. In fact, Romania tried to be seen as not Balkans initially, but later on wanted to establish its role as a stabilizing actor. Through such policy, it tried to strengthen its position in the West by playing a constructive role in a complicated region.[702] Throughout the conflict, Romania supported the Western policy line, arguing that the solution must

[699] Pettifer, The New Macedonian Question, pp. 25-26.
[700] Türkeş, Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri: Bulgaristan Örneği, p. 198.
[701] Ibid., p. 204.
[702] Buzan and Wæver, p. 391.

be found within Western international organizations, and despite the great losses inflicted on its economy, Romania officially supported the UN embargo.[703]

To make a general evaluation of the policies of the Balkan countries towards Yugoslav conflicts, it could be stated that Greece's attitudes were determined by its strategic concerns and its historical ties with Serbia until 1995 and caused a loss of reputation for Greece in the international arena. Bulgaria and Albania, on the other hand, could not follow a clear foreign policy due to political and economic instability at domestic levels, but followed a pro-Western policy generally. Romania on the other hand tried to exclude itself from the problems in the region and to concentrate on its relations with the West.

Final Notes on the Yugoslav Conflicts and the Transformation of the Balkans into Southeastern Europe

The Balkan crisis during the 1990s attracted the attention of the international community. As it was the first major crisis in the new world structure, the attitudes of international actors towards these conflicts were of great importance. Moreover, this crisis also had a determining role both on the New World Order, and the roles of the global powers within this new structure. In this part of this chapter, I will add some final notes on this conflict, and discuss how the Balkans, which constituted a region with its own internal dynamics, started to be dominated by the European Regional Security Complex.

As discussed above, while the Balkan region was not an immediate concern of the international arena in the early 1990s, all major global actors became involved in

[703] Valeriu Tudor, "Romania and the Security Problems in the Balkans," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (İstanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 1995). p. 218.

the conflict at one point, almost irrespective of their own choices. Buzan and Wæver argue that even if the US, the EU, or Russia tried to stay out of the conflict, they still would be influencing the situation. Furthermore, they state that in addition to the security interdependence between the Balkans and Europe due to spillover effects such as migration, intense media coverage and morality in the West, with an increasing impact in the late phases of the war, did not allow for passivity as well. The Western politicians were forced to do something about the situation, since the Balkans were seen as Europe, compared to the different reactions to tragedies in Africa.[704] This, in fact, may stand as strong proof of the influence of public opinion in foreign policy.

The Balkan countries involved in the crisis relied on their stronger friends abroad as well, hoping for support. Serbia relied on Russian support, Croatia on German, and Bosnia and Herzegovina on the US during that period. This reliance on one level made these countries less inclined to compromise in the crisis.[705] This logic can be applied to the regional powers in the Balkans as well, since Turkey tried to secure the support of the USA, and Greece tried to secure the support of the EU and Russia. This is understandable, considering the fact that the great power politics deeply influenced and involved in the Balkan politics starting with the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the region

The peace and stability in the Balkans had been closely connected to the security in Europe since the nineteenth century. Indeed, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Balkans had been regarded as the powder keg of Europe by the international community. As a result, the region since that period had been open to the influence and interventions of the great powers. During the

[704] Buzan and Wæver, pp. 387-388.
[705] Ibid., p. 383.

nineteenth century, it had been the cooperation of the great powers with the fear of the destruction of the status quo in Europe after 1815 that had kept the region stable. As this cooperation came to an end in the early twentieth century, the region had been left to its own dynamics, which had resulted in the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913. During the interwar period, the region had been under hegemony of the European powers, as the regional setting had been determined by the peace treaties in 1919. During the Cold War period the USSR had become the hegemonic power in the region, deeply influencing its affairs. With the fall of the Communist Bloc, and the attention of the international community had been directed to other issues, the Balkans had been once again left to its own devices.

Benjamin Miller argues that until 1995, it was the international organizations that unsuccessfully had tried to reduce the conflict, and only after another hegemonic power, namely the US, assumed the leadership, the conflict in the Balkans could be resolved.[706] Buzan and Wæver take a similar approach as well, arguing that between 1991 and 1995, the initiative had been with the local actors, while the external powers, mostly represented by the EU, tried to soften the consequences.[707] The report of the International Commission also states that in 1995, the clear result had been that the external mediation must had been supported with a coercive force in order to make the regional actors to accept any compromise.[708] The report further adds that the most important lesson to learn from the Yugoslav conflicts is the inefficiency of diplomacy absent from a coercive force to support it.[709]

These arguments comply with my arguments in the Kosovo chapter, stating that one of the most important factors to explain the reduced efficiency of Turkey

[706] Miller, p. 217.
[707] Buzan and Wæver, p. 383.
[708] Barışa Çağrı, p. 33.
[709] Ibid., p. 37.

during the Kosovo crisis compared to the Bosnian crisis was the increase in the involvement of the global actors in the Balkans. During the early 1990s, the region was left to its own devices, allowing the regional powers to play a more active role in the region. After the Dayton Agreement, the internal dynamics of the region were repressed by the external powers and the region was forced into peace against its own will.[710] This should not be understood as the internal dynamics in the Balkans losing their prominence in the regional setting completely. Indeed, the Kosovo crisis was closely related to the political situation not only in Belgrade or Pristine, but also in Ankara, Athens, Skopje, Sofia, or Tirana.[711]

It does mean, however, that the dynamics of the region were repressed by the involvement of the global powers in the Balkans. Benjamin Miller argues that the region was unstable and prone to war due to regional and domestic factors, and the great powers became efficient in that process to promote regional conflict reduction, as they, not the local parties played the critical role in the peacemaking process.[712] An important point to note here is that the conflict resolution brought by external actors did not comply with the dynamics of the region. For this reason, many accounts argued a decline in the great power involvement in the region, or the disengagement of international peacekeeping forces would once again lead to a war in the region.[713]

Under normal circumstances, this phenomenon also might lead to another argument, claiming that as the external powers could only bring a conflict reduction into the region, but not solve the war prone dynamics of the region, it would be up to the regional dynamics to find permanent solutions to the existing problems. In such a

[710] Buzan and Wæver, p. 378.
[711] Abazi, Kosovo: War, Peace, and Intervention in a Nutshell, pp. 60-61.
[712] Miller, p. 207.
[713] See for example, Barışa Çağrı, p. 33, Miller, The Global Sources of Regional Transition from War to Peace, p. 207, and Buzan and Wæver, p. 378.

scenario, we might have expected that Turkey's influence in the region as a regional power would have increased with the end of the Kosovo conflict. As Turkey was an influential regional power during the 1990s, it could also play an important role in order to solve the problems in the region. As mentioned above, the influence of Turkey in the Balkans was reduced during the Kosovo crisis, but it could have increased again in the post-war period and Turkey could have become even more influential in Balkan politics. However, this was not the case that was witnessed, due to the fact that the great power involvement in the region continued to exist, and more importantly, that involvement resulted in a dramatic shift in the Balkan politics, changing the internal dynamics in the region, and highly influencing the power and security dynamics within the Balkans.

Immediately after the Kosovo War, the Western powers became increasingly involved with the domestic policies in Serbia and strengthened the opposition to Milosevic, actively participating in the foundation of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia, which consisted of 18 opposition parties to Milosevic's Socialist Party, for the general elections in January 2000. The US and the EU, most notably Germany, provided the Serbian provinces that were governed by the opposition parties with financial support, and declared that if opposition leader Vojislav Kostunica was elected, the sanctions would be removed and Serbia would return to the international system. Before the elections, President Clinton and Chancellor Schröder declared their open support of Kostunica, stating the dictatorship in Serbia constituted a threat to the international peace.[714] In their efforts to strengthen the opposition, the US provided 77 million USD, whereas Germany provided 44 million USD.[715]

[714] Uzgel, Bağlantısızlıktan Yalnızlığa Yugoslavya'da Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika, pp. 167-168.
[715] Ibid., p. 168.

Western involvement in the region was indeed necessary for many countries in the Balkans. In the late 1990s, especially the countries that had experienced the war were in terrible condition. Bosnia and Herzegovina remained dependent on foreign help with its huge trade deficit, very limited domestic investment, unsustainable budget, massive unemployment, and corrupt and inefficient institutions. The economic structure in Serbia was even worse than that of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Inefficient and corrupt socialist institutions in addition to the years of sanctions by the international community and years of warfare left the Serbian economy a complete mess. Moreover, there were around 700,000 Serbian refugees who fled the war, mostly from Croatia and Kosovo.[716]

Every successor state of Yugoslavia experienced similar problems during that period. All of them were unfinished states, had democratic deficit, and experienced troubles in the transition to market economy and privatization.[717] Moreover, as a result of inefficient and corrupted institutions, organized criminal enterprises had carved out autonomous structures of power in the region that profited greatly from the conflict, and continued to be efficient in the domestic affairs after the conflicts.[718] The countries that avoided war wanted Western involvement in the region as well. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the primary aim of foreign policies of almost every Balkan country was integration with the West.

The Western involvement in the region had two main dimensions, to promote regional integration and to integrate with Europe, initially by building closer ties with the EU. The approach was based on the twin beliefs that the Balkan states were independent and that the problems of this region had impacts on the EU; thus, the EU

[716] Bildt, A Second Chance in the Balkans, pp. 152-153.
[717] Agh, pp. 185-186.
[718] *Lawless Rule versus Rule of Law in the Balkans,* United States Institute of Peace Special Report, (December 2002). p. 1.

tried to promote regional cooperation and Western European norms and values in the region.[719]

During that period, the international community firmly believed that in order to promote peace and stability in the region, it was essential for the West to assume leadership. Carl Bildt stated that only integration with Europe and political reforms according to the European system would help alleviate the nationalist tensions in the Balkans.[720] The Report of the International Commission on the Balkans also stated that regional cooperation efforts could only succeed if the Western countries assumed the leading role in that process.[721] Bideleux and Jeffries state that only by accepting an EU framework would the Balkan countries be able to resolve their domestic and regional problems.[722]

Since the mid-1990s the Western countries, mostly represented by the EU, were committed to the transfer of resources and the spread of their norms and values to the European periphery, the Balkans, on an unprecedented scale. The most notable of these mechanisms was the Stability Pact, initiated by the EU in July 1999.[723] According to Carl Bildt, the main aim of the Stability Pact was to link regional integration efforts with European integration, along with the stabilization and association agreements which provided a structure for integration into the EU.[724] In that regard, as Lampe also states, it is safe to claim that these stabilization and association agreements represented much more than stabilization alone.[725] Indeed, it was established as a framework for implementing European norms and values in the

[719] David Phinnemore and Peter Siani-Davies, "Beyond Intervention? The Balkans, the Stability Pact and the European Union," in *International Intervention in the Balkans since 1995* edited by Peter Siani-Davies, (London: Routledge, 2003). p. 172.
[720] Bildt, A Second Chance in the Balkans, p. 157.
[721] Barışa Çağrı, p. 172.
[722] Bideleux and Jeffries, p. 586.
[723] Phinnemore and Siani-Davies, p. 173.
[724] Bildt, A Second Chance in the Balkans, p. 156.
[725] Lampe, p. 293.

Balkans, thus allowing the European powers to play a more active role in the regional affairs, and in a way preparing the region for European integration. Buzan and Wæver on that issue argue that the integration promise to the EU and NATO emerged in a context of the Stability Pact, allowing the external interventions being conducted in the name of Europe and European values, and in the aftermath integrating the region into plans for the EU and NATO enlargements.[726]

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was led by the European Commission of the EU and the World Bank. It involved around 40 countries, including Turkey, the US, Russia, Japan, Norway, Switzerland and EU member states, and international organizations, which had committed themselves to promoting democratization, economic development, and regional security.[727] According to the official statements, the original aim of the Stability Pact was to strengthen the countries of Southeastern Europe in their efforts to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights, and economic prosperity in order to achieve stability in the whole region.[728]

The Stability Pact was modeled on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe with three working bodies, concentrating on democratization and human rights; the economic issues such as reconstruction, trade development, investment, and infrastructure; and security issues.[729]

The pact was organized as a forum for cooperation with no independent financial resources of implementing structures, thus the pact is an intergovernmental body rather than an international organization.[730] The pact, on one hand, reassured

[726] Buzan and Wæver, p. 378.
[727] Lampe, p. 290.
[728] Phinnemore and Siani-Davies, p. 176.
[729] Babuna, European Integration, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Stability in the Western Balkans: A New Strategy, p. 5.
[730] Ibid., p. 175.

the US, which had taken the lead in the military and diplomatic campaigns, that the EU was willing to play its expected role in the post-conflict reconstruction. It was decided that the US would pay only the 10 percent of the funds, and the rest was mainly expected from the European partners.[731] On the other hand, it allowed Russia to be integrated into wider Balkan peace process and the political structure of the region.[732]

Despite high ambitions, the pact initially could not convince the donors to raise the expected amount of money needed for the projects. The donors' conferences could only raise 2.4 billion Euros, compared to the projected six billion Euros to the region within five years.[733] In 2008, it was replaced by Regional Cooperation Council as a new body to guide and monitor regional cooperation.[734] Nevertheless, it could be argued that the pact managed to achieve most of its political designs, integrating the security and power dynamics of the Balkans in the European complex by playing the most determining role in shaping of the internal dynamics of the region, naming it as Southeastern Europe.

Aydın Babuna states that the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and Stabilization and Association Process determined the turning points in the approach towards the Balkans adopted by the international community and most notably by the EU, as with these projects, the West moved away from its traditional policy of containment and intervention towards integration with the region.[735]

Despite the high ambitions of the Balkan countries for integrating with the Western organizations in the early 1990s, the EU prior to the Stability Pact showed

[731] Lampe, p. 290.
[732] Phinnemore and Siani-Davies, p. 175.
[733] Lampe, p. 290.
[734] Babuna, European Integration, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Stability in the Western Balkans: A New Strategy, p. 5.
[735] Ibid., p. 4.

little ambition to integrate with the Balkans.[736] These projects, however, signaled the regional countries a future prospect for EU membership, although this would entail several stringent conditions for them to follow, such as introducing a market economy; privatizing state-owned properties; reestablishing economic cooperation; respecting human rights; minority rights and democratic principles; and fully cooperating with the ICTY.[737]

Since the mid-1990s and decisively with the war in Kosovo, the influence of European powers in the Balkans has reached to overwhelming degrees.[738] In the early 1990s, the security interdependence of the regional countries was linked to each other; thus, it was the internal dynamics of the region that shaped the regional affairs. The power of the surrounding actors, however, was so overwhelming in the post-2000 political setting that the regional affairs were gradually dominated by the European region. Thus, due to the asymmetry of power between the actors in and around the Balkans, it was in the hands of the external powers to force the Balkans into the European region, or the European Regional Security Complex, as Buzan and Wæver call it.[739] At that point, it was certain that the Balkans would no longer be left to its own devices, as the West had ambitiously taken over development.

At this point, I shall argue that it was specifically for this reason that regional countries, namely Turkey in this instance, started to lose their influence in regional affairs in the Balkans. This should not mean, however, that regional powers were no longer relevant in respect to the regional politics in the Balkans. Indeed, with its active and constructive diplomacy during the 1990s, Turkey managed to be involved in the Stability Pact, and continued to play an active diplomacy in the region during

[736] Ibid., p. 5.
[737] Ibid., p. 6.
[738] Buzan and Wæver, p. 395.
[739] Ibid., p. 377.; For a more detailed explanation of the Regional Security Complexes, see Chapter 2.

the first decade of the 2000s and 2010s as well. Nevertheless, as the Balkans were partly absorbed by the European powers, it became a much more difficult task for regional countries to became active and influential in the regional politics, though not completely impossible or making them irrelevant.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis examined the diplomatic influence and capacity of a regional power during a time of crisis through a case study, in which Turkish foreign policy towards the Yugoslav dissolution wars was analyzed. It was emphasized that the importance of regional powers increased in world politics following the end of the Cold War and the bipolar world structure, mainly due to the removal of the superpower rivalry overlay dominating regional structures.

As a theme of growing importance in post-Cold War International Relations scholarship, with the end of superpower rivalry over regional structures, the regions were set free and the inner dynamics of the regions became the main determinants of regional political affairs. In such structure, the regions emerged as the main areas in which conflicts were both produced and resolved. In other words, as the possibility of a conflict among the great powers decreased, the conflicts in the post-Cold War world order became regionalized as well.

As a direct consequence of the increased importance of regions and regional politics in the world structure, the importance of regional powers has proportionately increased as well. Regional powers are considered to be the preeminent powers of any given region, and for that reason are the most crucial elements of regional politics. Therefore, regional powers have progressively drawn more attention both in the international community and the International Relations scholarship. Nevertheless, studies on regional powers constitute a relatively new area within the

International Relations scholarship, and therefore there are several gaps in the existing literature. This thesis explored one of these gaps within the existing literature, which is on the regional power influence during a time of conflict in a region, and contributing to the discipline by bringing a further explanation of the nature of regional powers and their influence in their respective regions.

The capacities of a regional power during a time of conflict and crisis within a region is an important point to analyze, since such periods often constitute the best examples to examine the true nature of the diplomatic ability of either a great or regional power. Moreover, regional conflicts often attract the attention of the great powers, thus regional actors generally are not left to their own affairs.

The Yugoslav dissolution wars in the 1990s were a result of the inner dynamics of the region; however, the conflicts immediately attracted the attention of the international community. These wars developed into the most violent conflict on the European continent since World War II and deeply influenced the construction of the post-Cold War security relations among the great powers. Indeed, many accounts regard the Balkans during that period as the security laboratory of Europe. As the great power involvement in the Balkans increased to considerable levels, it simultaneously decreased the influence of regional powers.

This thesis showed that the influence of a regional power in a specific region decreases in proportion to the attention brought by the great powers. To prove this point, I compared the influence of Turkey during the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, underlining that due to the inadequate and late response of the international community regarding the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey managed to be influential in the region. Nevertheless, Turkish influence started to wane as the US started to assume leadership. In the Kosovo conflict, international

community was quicker to react and assumed the responsibility in the conflict, thus Turkish diplomatic influence was lower compared to the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to this factor, Turkey also chose to follow a more low profile diplomacy during the war in Kosovo due to several constraints.

Through a detailed analysis of Turkish foreign policy during the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, this thesis argued that regional powers can still pursue an active foreign policy and operate in a certain field of maneuver with particular policy options, despite the increased involvement of the great powers in the region. These policy options are stated in this thesis primarily as mediating between the warring parties, mobilizing the support of the regional parties for political desires, active diplomacy within particular international organizations, forming alliances with the great powers involved in the regional affairs, and using soft power elements such as humanitarian aid and economic assistance. It was argued that a regional power, as the most preeminent nation state in the region, could follow an active and influential foreign policy for its own national interests, despite the increased attention of the great powers, especially by using its familiarity with the inner dynamics of the region.

All these measures, however, are not enough to capture the true diplomatic influence of a regional power. The conflict resolution in a warring region is often brought by the involvement of the great powers. Yet, such arrangements are not generally carried in accordance of the regional dynamics. Indeed, this was the case in the Balkans as well. The internal dynamics of the region were not ready for conflict resolution and it was brought to the region by the efforts of the great powers, most notably the US. Conflict resolution brought against the internal dynamics of a region, however, leads to a certain outcome; that is, the region would return to warfare if the

great power overlay should leave the region. In other words, the establishment of permanent peace depends on the internal dynamics of the region. For that reason, as discussed in this thesis, several accounts regarding the post-conflict settlements in the Balkans argued that the region would once again fall into conflict if the international peacekeeping missions left the region.[740]

Thus, the expectation regarding the post-conflict settlements in the Balkans would be an increase in regional power influence in regional affairs, as it is up to internal dynamics to establish a permanent peace in the region. In such a scenario, it could be expected that Turkey would increase its influence in the region. However, the case was different in the Balkans regarding the post-conflict settlements.

This thesis underlined the fact that following the conflicts in the Balkans, decisively with the war over Kosovo, the Balkans increasingly came under the influence of European dynamics. As a result, the internal dynamics of the Balkan region started to be influenced by the security overlay of the European Security Complex to substantial degrees. This scenario occurred through two main developments. The first important development in this regard was the Stability Pact. As discussed in Chapter 5, the European powers took over the development of the Balkan region after the Kosovo War through the Stability Pact, which was transformed into the Regional Cooperation Council in 2008. Decisively with the Stability Pact, the West changed its diplomatic attitude towards the Balkans by replacing its policies of containment and intervention with enlargement. Indeed, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in 1999, and the Stabilization and Association Process in 2000, have signaled the prospect of a future EU membership

[740] See Chapter 5.

for Balkan countries under the stringent circumstances of strictly following European political, economic, and social values.

Another important development following the Stability Pact is the enlargement of the EU, which also included several Balkan countries. It should be noted that integration with the EU and the Western system became the primary aim of most post-Communist Balkan countries. European influence in the region, however, was not restricted to the Balkan countries that managed to achieve full membership at the EU. Countries, which were excluded from the European integration so far started to become highly influenced by European politics as well.

Thus, it was stressed in this thesis that although the Balkans experienced the last decade of twentieth century as a separate region, the gradually increasing influence of the EU started to dominate the internal dynamics of the region with the late 1990s and early 2000s. The involvement of the EU in the Balkans thus was not limited to the conflicts, but it started to be even more influential in playing the determining role in the political affairs of the Balkan region. For that reason, it became much more difficult for the regional powers to increase their influence in the Balkans. This, however, is not to claim that Turkey completely lost its regional power status in the region, but it emphasizes that the ability of Turkey to influence the regional politics decreased due to the high level of influence of the European powers.

To examine the foreign policy attitude of Turkey towards the conflicts in the Balkans, this thesis analyzed Turkish diplomatic initiatives during the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. Numerous studies regarding Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans in that period have been done. Nevertheless, the empirical chapters of this thesis may still well contribute to the existing literature, as most of

the studies on this subject were written as policy analysis papers in the 1990s, which primarily aimed at explaining Turkish foreign policy attitudes and determinants and brought the issue no further.

There have been only a few further studies on that particular issue since the 1990s, as this subject lost its preeminence both in international agenda and Turkish foreign policy. This thesis, however, aimed at answering a theoretical question on regional powers by using the empirical data on Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans in the 1990s. By using further primary sources and analyzing the existing literature in depth, this thesis aimed at bringing a more profound explanation on Turkish foreign policy attitude in that period.

It was shown that during the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey was the most vocal supporter of the Bosnian case in the international arena. It would not be wrong to claim that this conflict became the top foreign policy agenda of Turkey during the early 1990s. Turkey pursued a very active foreign policy, holding frequent meetings with the regional parties, international organizations, and great powers to find a solution to the conflict. This thesis argued that the main determinants of Turkey during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina were strategic and identity-based.

The primary strategic concern of Turkey regarding this conflict was the fact that the Balkan region was located on Turkish trade routes to Western Europe. The war seriously harmed Turkish trade as Turkish traders had to find new routes during the conflict. The main identity-based determinant was the common history between the Balkans and Turkey, and the fact that the war was an act of aggression against a Muslim community in the region. Intense support of public opinion for the Bosnian case was given as another important determinant that forced Turkey to pursue an active foreign policy.

Other determinants of Turkish foreign policy regarding the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina were presented as increasing Turkey's reputation in the international community, cooperation with its Western allies and most notably the US, and perhaps most primarily establishing Turkey's status in the region as a regional power, recognized both by the regional parties and the international community.

Regarding the war over Kosovo, it was argued Turkey had several constraints preventing it from following an active foreign policy. These constraints were stated in this thesis as, first, the fact that Kosovo was an autonomous region within Serbia, not a separate republic like Bosnia and Herzegovina, second, the prospect of a spillover of the conflict in Kosovo to the whole region due to the fragile situation in Macedonia, and last, the parallels between the Kosovo crisis and the Kurdish question in Turkey. Turkey still followed an active foreign policy in the region and tried to mediate for a solution between sides and again held frequent meetings with the international community and the regional parties to negotiate a peaceful solution to the crisis.

As argued above, however, the high level of involvement of the great powers, most notably the US, prevented Turkey from becoming more influential in the region. The Turkish ability to make a difference in the region was decreased compared to the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was also underlined that Turkey followed a more region-based foreign policy in Kosovo, due to the increasing attention and influence of the great powers in the Balkans.

Similar to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it was argued in this thesis that strategic and identity-based concerns determined the main motivations of Turkey in its foreign policy line. In addition to these factors, the influence of public opinion, the tiny Turkish minority in Kosovo, Turkey's reputation in the international arena,

and opportunity to cooperate with Turkey's Western allies were also presented as determinants of Turkish foreign policy in this period.

To make a final evaluation of Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans during the 1990s, it could be claimed that Turkey followed a constructive and successful foreign policy during the Yugoslav conflicts, as it tried to contribute to the forces for resolution of the conflict and appeared on international stage as a positive influence in this process. It managed to build close relations with every Balkan country, excluding Serbia and Greece. Rapprochement with these countries, on the other hand, started in the late 1990s with Greece and in the aftermath of Kosovo conflict with Serbia. During this period, active and constructive foreign policy of Turkey aiming at stability in the region helped Turkey to emerge as a recognized regional power in the region. During this period, Turkey remained rather cautious and realist in its foreign policy goals, aimed at not to follow an ambitious foreign policy, and closely cooperated both with regional parties and international community in the region throughout the conflicts.

Following the Turkish example, this thesis argued that a regional power can still be influential in a conflict in its respective region, despite the high level involvement of the great powers. To accomplish this goal, several policy options were presented in this thesis were drawn from Turkish policy initiatives in the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. It is still important to keep in mind that it was in the end the great powers, and most notably the USA, that forced the warring parties to a solution. Thus, conflict resolution was indeed a high and ambitious aim for a regional power in the Balkans.

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