

# STRATEGY QUESTION IN COUNTER-TERRORISM: “TURKISH CASE”

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## **Abstract:**

Many academic institutions and individuals throughout the world studied the intellectual framework for developing counter-terrorism strategies in different countries. At the first quarter of the twenty-first century, international terrorism remains a vital threat to national and global security interests. Turkey has also experienced sporadic and relentless subnational and government-sponsored terrorism for decades. Terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy now challenges to the world's stability particularly in and around the Middle East. Countering all forms of terrorism requires effective national, regional, and global efforts. The purpose of this study, by examining the Turkish case in combatting the PKK, is to offer a comprehensive “best practices” counter-terrorism strategy agenda for the twenty-first century.

**Key Words: Terror, Counter-terror, Strategy, Turkey, PKK.**

## **Introduction:**

In the aftermath of the Cold War, conventional threat was drastically off the international agenda. In the most part of the world, security threats are not only resulted from soldiers in contrast to one used to assume in the past. Problems like economic depression, political pressure, famine, excessive population growth, ethnic differences, environmental damages, terror, crime and illness have also been added into security threats<sup>1</sup>. Today's crisis, as it can be seen in the example of global terror are without identity, without government, unpredictable, unsolid, unethical, without land and beyond nationalities. From 19th century to today terror has been undergoing a certain evolution. There are two characteristics that differentiate the terror in the second half of the 20th century<sup>2</sup>. One of them is that terror has been predominantly used by separatists and extremists or by political movements. Second characteristic is that terror holds a place as an intervention method in the international arena by leading it out of the national framework. In the 1980's civilians are also included as the target of terrorist activities (as in the example of PKK).

As Mao states, every war has its own special conditions and success requires a strategy in accordance with the conditions of environment<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless there are lots of common denominators that could be deduced from war against terror. These denominators create an information accumulation for not only the countries which are victims of terror but also for the humanity to think about the results of it. In this study by setting out the relationship between terror and state, terror, guerilla war and theoretical foundations of strategy problem within the concept of fighting against terror are all focused. Subsequently the strategies that Turkey put in force against the divisive terror of PKK and their results are evaluated. In the final chapter, results that are beneficial to countries are also introduced within the concept of the lessons learned from the fight against terror. In this context the importance of international cooperation is emphasized.

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<sup>1</sup> Ken Booth: “*Security and Setting Freedom (Güvenlik ve Özgürleş(tir)me)*”, Euroasia File (Avrasya Dosyası) Periodical, Special For Security Sciences (Güvenlik Bilimleri Özel), Vol.: 9, No.: 2, (Ankara, Summer 2003), p.59.

<sup>2</sup> Yevgeni M. Primakov: “September 11 and the World After Iraq Intervention (11 Eylül ve Irak'a Müdahale Sonrası Dünya)”, Trans. Fatma and Serdar Arkan, (İstanbul: Doğan Books, 2004), p.3.

<sup>3</sup> Mao Tse-Tung: “*On Protracted War*”, (Peking, China: Foreign Language Press, 1960); Mao Tse-Tung: An Anthology of His Writings, Anne Fremantle, ed. (New York: New American Library, 1972), p.2.

## 1. Theoretical Roots For Strategy Question in Counter-Terrorism

### *Terror and Guerilla War:*

It's a real fact that terror and terrorism has been changing at an important rate in the 21st century. The communication over the nation, trade and travel possibilities provides rather good advantages for the terrorist groups. The terrorists do not only use the technology for communication, but also for educational and logistical support. These groups become sufficient on their own<sup>4</sup>. Terrorism has become to be a struggling way of the weaks by using the advantages of not being visible, hiding themselves, organizing and moving against the powerful rival in an asymmetric form. On the other hand, today guerilla wars have been turned to government-supported terrorism in many ways by leaving the classical sight of the early 1950's. We often come across the guerilla wars at the interior fights and especially during the movements of independence. Types of terrorism and fighting are shown on Chart 1.

**Chart 1: Types of Terrorism and Fighting**

Type of Terrorism	Type of Fighting
State Terrorism	
Rebelling Terrorism	
Ideological - Left revolutionist(SL, FARC) - Right wing - Radical Religious (GIA)	Revolutions/Ideologies
Nationalist-Separatist	Identity/Divident
Economics/Factionist	Factionist
International Terrorism	

Source: Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, Hugh Miall: "*Contemporary Conflict Resolution*", 2nd Edt. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p.71.

The final aim of guerilla type terror activities is to gain some rights for the ethnical or religious groups that claim to be represented, to have identity, and to make the wills of separation accepted by the political authority. This needs a lot of cultural cooperation in and out of the country where the struggle is going on. The political and logistical support is in need of an exterior support from one or more foreign country. It's nearly impossible for the continuation of a guerilla activity without an exterior support<sup>5</sup>. The actions prepared and made against Turkey by PKK and similar terrorist groups are mainly guerilla type activities, from the point of quantity and quality they're accepted as divident terror activities.

### *Strategy of Terror:*

Although there is no outstanding single theorist of terrorism, it is not a new strategic concept. The theory behind terrorism is fairly straightforward. A weak, usually non-governmental actor uses random violence, often directed against civilian targets to produce terror. It's a timing subject for the terror organization to be organized, to provide the active effort and skill at a certain district and to practice the different phases of the strategy. Having communication with the local people, the support from the exterior allies and sympathizers form a source for legality at the

<sup>4</sup> The White House: "*National Strategy For Combating Terrorism*", (Washington D.C., Feb 2003), p.7.

<sup>5</sup> Pulat Y.Tacar: "*Terror and the Democracy (Terör ve Demokrasi)*", (Ankara: Bilgi Publishing House, 1999), p.143

same time. To have a formation of the social and cultural factors and to provide moral reason to the struggle to reach the political result are the main point of success.

Terror organizations are likely to “use violence” as strategy to reach their targets. Terrorism doesn’t target the real victims, but the watchers while using violence. The point is moving psychological effects to huge crowds. The final aim of terrorism is to provide pressure over the governments by gaining the support of international public and to legalize themselves as an additional fact. At this unsecure atmosphere, the state, sooner or late will have a reply to the desires of the terrorists. Terrorist organizations, when necessary, use their forces to fight against the armies and if they’re on location of guerillas, they discipline them just like the armies do. Their advantage is, generally by using the dilemma and the potential fighting events, they can arrange massive support abilities.

### ***State and Terror:***

Although ostensibly the attitudes of states towards terrorist organizations are officially negative, it is known that especially large states are supporting these organizations in a clandestine manner. To some, terrorism is a new type of war<sup>6</sup>. Together with the fact that aids such as providing financial or logistic support and hosting of some states such organizations on their own territory are considered illegal and have been prohibited by international law. It is not always possible to adopt a common attitude and block the support given to terrorist act. While which methods of combatting terrorism should be conducted with and the nature of punishment to be applied or the description of terrorists and, the support given to terrorism varies from state to state.

The support states give to terrorism or the level of participation is classified in four categories<sup>7</sup>. Under the circumstances in which the state cannot use transboundary terrorism directly, using it as a different weapon to get strategic advantage is ‘state patronage’. Providing training, weapon, explosives, equipment, intelligence, communication, finance or logistic support is called ‘state backing’. Knowing about the existence of terrorist groups on the land within the borders of its own, yet neither supporting them nor having a policy that prevents them is under the category called ‘state tolerance’. Despite not wanting to overlook the terrorists within a state’s own territory, being inadequate in responding effectively or developing national policies creates a situation called ‘state immobility’.

### ***Strategy Question in Combatting Terrorism:***

The strategies of states against terrorism are generally oriented to spotting and destruction of guerillas or terrorists and preventing popular support. The war against the groups which maintain guerilla fighting are localized in a particular area. To state leaders, separating guerilla from sympathiezer, operating without harming the civilian population and mobilizing the military force constantly are expensive and destructive for the national power. Measures should be taken to destroy the terrorists through social, cultural and financial ways. Despite all these, wiping out terrorism is a time-consuming act which requires source and patience. This war is above all gaining ‘hearts and minds’ should not be forgotten<sup>8</sup>. All the citizens should be convinced that the state’s war is their own war as well.

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<sup>6</sup> David E. Long: “*Anatomy of Terrorism*”, (New York: The Free Press, 1990), p.5.

<sup>7</sup> Richard J. Erickson: “*Legitimate Use of Military Force Against State Sponsored International Terrorism*”, (Alabama: Air University Press, 1996), p.34.

<sup>8</sup> John C. Donnel: “*Viet Cong Recruitment: Why and How Men Join*”, RM-5486-1-ISA, (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1967), p.97.

Terrorists are likely to disappear when not been accepted by the public. Social isolation demoralizes terrorists in time and causes the others to be captured. It should be ensured that terrorists' places are not filled up and it is a necessity to develop a careful political strategy to weaken the complex political and cultural power which brings about the rise of terrorism. It is a must to block politically those who create them<sup>9</sup>. The determination of the government in the combat, protection of the rule of law, informing the media adequately will reduce legitimization discussions. One of the important issues of combating terrorism is cutting down foreign support. Isolating the terrorists from their support base is one of the most significant issues. Isolating should not only separate physically but also destroy their political messages to the public.

### ***Military Tactics in Fighting Against Terrorism:***

Fighting against terrorism requires having strong economic and military infrastructure in order to use sophisticated methods or to develop advanced technology in the field of security. Moreover, it is required to equip the armed forces with capabilities to support the counter-terror operations. Accordingly, besides regular army in combating terrorism must have preventive and coercive means to deny and destroy the advantages of the terrorist organization. Of the most popular tactics in counter-terrorism is the one suggested by Samuel Griffith. It is the "three-stage fight"<sup>10</sup>; *localization, isolation, and eradication*. Initially, to defeat the aggressors, it is important to detect the physical places in terms of time and location. To do that it is required to have an organization to give early warning, information gathering, and analyzing.

Until September 11th, 2001 Western strategy of combating terrorism was focusing on intervention called 'fisherman' practiced following an aggression. After September 11th, that role has been switched to 'hunter' and agreed on a strategy based on information and destruction of the cells<sup>11</sup>. The ex minister of foreign affairs of The Russian Federation Yevgeni Primakov suggested more optimum strategies to distinguish the civilian from the terrorists based on their experience in Chechnya. According to Primakov, the terrorists outside the slots must be localized and the politicians also should take the responsibility for a solution in own dimension<sup>12</sup>. Another statesman, Richard Perle offers three things that must be done to prevent terrorists from attacking; (1) to prevent them from entering the country (2) to reduce freedom of movement in the country (3) to deprive financial and moral support for them from the country<sup>13</sup>.

### ***International Cooperation for Counter-Terrorism:***

It is required to develop cooperation among the countries for counter-terrorism. It will be beneficial to strengthen the cooperation between the intelligence agencies of the different countries, especially to increase the exchange of information, establishing a data bank in this area. Nevertheless, on the basis of mutual interest to be conducted, anti-terrorist fight is required for cooperation on the common basis; the information obtained must be evaluated from a collective and analytical view. On the basis of this cooperation, methods that are not coherent with the level of development in the world will be excluded in course of time. Thus the

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<sup>9</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski: "Choice (Tercih)", Trans.: Cem Küçük, (İstanbul: İnkilap Publications, 2004), p.50.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Griffith: "Mao Tse-Tung on Guerilla Warfare", (Wesport CT: Praeger Publishers, 1961), p.112.

<sup>11</sup> Rohan Gunaratna: "The Changing face of Terrorism", (Singapore. Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2005), p.20.

<sup>12</sup> Yevgeni M. Primakov: *ibid*, (2004), p.177-185.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Perle, David Frum: "End to Devil, How To Win A War Against Terror? (Şeytana Son, Terörde Savaş Nasıl Kazanılır?)", (İstanbul. Truva Publications, 2004), p.126-131

basis of USA's counter-terrorism and war strategies are formed by the cooperation with the other countries to eradicate the roots of terrorism in narrowing the field of terrorism<sup>14</sup>.

After Turkey's effort to include the terrorism into New Strategic Concept of NATO as an element of threat in Washington Summit, terrorism was identified as an aggression method. And the following of aggressions in September 11th, 2001, NATO classified it as article 5 type of threat. European Union emphasized the importance of anti-terror measures focusing on the cooperation of intelligence services, and some arrangements in justice and legal order<sup>15</sup>. EU countries agreed on several issues such as the general definition of terrorism, the compliance of punishments given to terrorism, common detention system, capturing and freezing terrorist belongings<sup>16</sup>. A communication network was established against threats for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons. Likewise, in order to investigate such crimes on terrorism 'Eurojust' and 'European Police Office' was established under Europol for anti-terrorism<sup>17</sup>.

## **2. Turkey in Combatting with the Separatist Terror:**

### ***Turkish Case, PKK Struggle:***

The PKK (Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan or Kurdistan Workers' Party), led by Abdullah Ocalan (currently in custody), is an insurgent movement seeking to establish an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey. This terrorist organization claims to pursue the rights of Turkey's Kurds<sup>18</sup>. According to the PKK's party program, "Kurdistan" (the lands where the PKK hopes to set up an independent state in the future) is divided by four "colonizers", namely, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria, which are also "clients of imperialism" themselves. The aim is to destroy colonization and establish an independent, democratic, and united Kurdish state<sup>19</sup>. Afterward of its military defeat by Turkish security forces in 1990s, the PKK has somewhat changed its rhetoric from pursuit of independence to recognition of the Kurdish identity and limited autonomy<sup>20</sup>.

Kurds are estimated to represent approximately 20 percent of Turkey's 70 million people. There is no legal or other forms of discrimination against Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin who have enjoyed full political rights under the Turkish constitution. Access the system has never really been an issue. In this regard, Turkish Kurds have risen to high levels of government in both elected and appointed positions. Launched in 1984 and further exacerbate the PKK and terrorism common process, Turkey has been kept in conditions of low-intensity conflict for 30 years<sup>21</sup>. In this period which is described as "low-intensity warfare" Turkey was winning the fight on the military front, maintaining territorial integrity and the PKK could not reach the purpose of establishing an independent state by invading territory of east and southeast

<sup>14</sup> The White House: *ibid*, (Feb 2003), p.2.

<sup>15</sup> Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen: "Homeland Security, American and European Responses to September 11 th", (Copenhagen: Danish Institute For International Studies, 2004), p.177.

<sup>16</sup> European Union Council Decision 2002/475/JI; Council Document 14867/1/01REV 1.

<sup>17</sup> European Council: *A Secure Europe in A Better World*, (Thessaloniki, June 20, 2003), p.10-11.

<sup>18</sup> Gunduz S. Aktan and Ali M. Koknar: "Turkey" in Yonah Alexander (Edt.), "Combatting Terrorism Strategies of Ten Countries", (The University of Michigan Press, 2005), p.262.

<sup>19</sup> Ismet Imset: "PKK" (Ankara: Turkish Daily News Publications, (1993).

<sup>20</sup> The latest statement on the PKK claims made by the Murat Karayılan the current PKK leader. He cites the PKK's position as: "We are no longer in the pursuit of neither a sovereign state nor a federation but live with equality and freedom. We want cultural rights with Kurdish identity." Milliyet (Turkish Daily Newspaper), 08-09 May 2009: Hasan Cemal's Talk to Murat Karayılan, "Notes For the Northern Iraq".

<sup>21</sup> Fikret Bila: "What PKK? (Hangi PKK?)", 3.Press, (Ankara: Ümit Publishing, 2004), p.9.

### ***Military Strategy and Tactics of the PKK:***

In addition to dispersed militants in some neighborhood countries like Iran, Syria etc., it is assessed that the 4,500 to 5,000 PKK terrorists across the border in northern Iraq continues to pose a major threat to Turkey. The PKK established a network of sympathizers-civilians whom provided sanctuary, supplies, and funds to terrorists. The PKK recruited foreigners to serve in its armed formations. Apart from voluntary contributions from the Kurdish diaspora, whose inhabitants support the PKK, the main source of financing is drug trafficking<sup>22</sup>. The method that PKK had chosen to reach its goal was a long-term public war. PKK, stated that guerrilla war will be on the basis of its political struggle. The strategy of this war is to put the rural sector on base and accelerate military and political efforts to increase the creation of guerrilla bases to the region while doing political work in the city, breaking a long-term war of attrition in rural areas to remove from the state to capture cities<sup>23</sup>.

However, since in 1992 the Turkish army started operations especially in northern Iraq. PKK began to be shaken, and declared a cease-fire several times, and in 1996 PKK was admitted into the process of extinction. After that period, the PKK gave weight for suicide action and political activities abroad. For this purpose, PKK put weight on the studies for the recognition of Kurdish identity, cultural rights and participation in domestic politics through legal ways. The phenomenon of suicide bombings emerged in the late 1990s in a desperate attempt by the PKK to make up for the ground it had lost in the rural areas and to export terrorism to urban centers. Defeat of the PKK has become concrete by the removal of Öcalan from Syria's interests, and has finally been caught and brought to Turkey.

Losing the Armed struggle, PKK emerged in the political field with a different rhetoric. In the previous period before Abdullah Öcalan's capture, the separatist PKK which intended to establish an independent Kurdish state. However it first changed its name to KADEK after Öcalan's capture and then altered to KONGRA-GEL with the thesis of ‘‘Turkey with two international partners’’. In this respect, PKK has retreated the thesis of ‘Independency’ with the Öcalan’s capture and put the thesis of ‘democratic union’. By this way, it is aimed to quarentee the survival of Abdullah Öcalan. The recognition of Kurdish identity and cultural autonomy has been switched to the target axis in the political civil disobedience method<sup>24</sup>.

### ***Turkish Combat to PKK:***

When the PKK first struck in 1984, the authorities in Ankara dismissed its adherents as common bandits without developing so much as a curiosity about their leadership, bases, and supporters. The civilian authorities were clearly unprepared to handle such a responsibility in a low intensity conflict environment before securing the efficient cooperation of the Turkish military<sup>25</sup>. It has been about 30 years since PKK first started their actions. During this 30-year-period, 35,000 people have lost their lives in Turkey alone due to these actions<sup>26</sup>. There are about 200,000 people who have been injured, crippled, and whose lives have changed dramatically because

<sup>22</sup> F. Hault, J.C. Salomon, and J.L. Vanner: “Two Typical Degenerate Guerrilla Groups: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Kurdistan’ Workers’ Party”, (Paris: Paris Criminology Institute, 1996), p.30.

<sup>23</sup> Nihat Ali Özcan: “Ideology and Way of the PKK (PKK (Kürdistan İşçi Partisi) Tarihi, İdeolojisi ve Yöntemi)”, (Ankara: Publications of EuroAsia Strategic Rserach Center, 1999), p.66-67.

<sup>24</sup> Fikret Bila: *ibid*, (2004), p.124.

<sup>25</sup> Mehmet Ali Kışlalı: *Güneydogu: “The Southeast: Low-Intensity Conflict (Dusuk Yogunluklu Catisma)”*, (Ankara: Umit Publishing, 1996), 8.

<sup>26</sup> Ümit Özdağ: “PKK Operations of the Turkis Army (Türk Ordusunun PKK Operasyonları)”, 5.Edt., (Ankara: Pegasus Publications, 2007), p.7.

they were sent to prison during this time. As seen on Chart 2, the year 1994 marks the height of PKK's campaign<sup>27</sup>. The struggle between Turkey and PKK have occurred as low-intensity or unconventional clashes including such countries as Iran, Syria and Iraq to a certain extent. It is not an overstatement to say that what Turkey has gone through was a Proxy war<sup>28</sup>.

**Chart 2. Terrorist Incidents in Turkey**

Years	Number of Incidents
1985	489
1994	6,400
1995	4,000
1996	1,500
1997	900
2000	500

Kaynak: Gunduz S. Aktan and Ali M. Koknar: "Turkey" in Yonah Alexander (Edt.), "Combatting Terrorism Strategies of Ten Countries", (The University of Michigan Press, 2005), p.262.

The Turkish defense strategy against PKK can be categorised into two distinguished terms; the period of terrorist activity forme 1984 to 1999 and the period of political activity, beginning form the capture of Abdullah Ocalan in 1999 being the turning point to the present. During the period when PKK terrorist activities soared, Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) which had prepared for a conventional war, did not assume direct responsibility, but they reinforced Gendarme. Since the establishment of state emergency in 1991-1992, TAF took control of the armed power of the PKK. However, Northern Iraq has become a hiding place for the PKK<sup>29</sup>. This terrorist organisation has started almost every strategic activity from Iraq, and whenever they were hit in Turkey, they emerged safely in Iraq. In the period until the capture of Abdullah Ocalan in 1999, Turkey has performed operations in Iraq with air forces and armoured troops, 50,000 in number and eventually beat PKK militarily.

#### ***Politicalisation of the PKK:***

Defeated PKK has gone into the phase of politicalisation by misusing the initiation process of Turkey's entrance into the European community in particular, in order to obtain their objectives which they could not accomplish in military way. Turkey has gone into general elections with some political parties since 1995 such as HEP, DEP, HADEP and DEHAP which were banned for their close link with the PKK. DTP, which is currently regarded as the political extension of PKK today, gained an overall %5.02 votes in the local elections in 2009, mostly in the east and south eastern parts of the Turkish constituencies and they won 8 mayoralties or municipal presidencies<sup>30</sup>. It is interesting to realize that they collected %65 votes in Diyarbakır, %73 in Hakkari, %59 in Batman and %53 votes in Van. DTP has been going on to function as a polical wing of a district party and of divisive Kurdish

<sup>27</sup> Suat İlhan: "(Terror: Why Turkey? Teror: Neden Türkiye?) (Ankara: Nu-Do, 1998), p.319-20.

<sup>28</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman: "Military Balance in the Middle East XVI Weapon of Mass Destruction", (Washington D.C.: CSIS, 1999), p.9.

<sup>29</sup> Ümit Özdağ: *ibid*, (2007), p.19.

<sup>30</sup> Hürriyet (Daily Turkish Newspaper): "Results of Local Elections (Yerel Seçim Sonuçları), (March 31, 2009), <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yerelsecim2009/>, (Access: 31 March 2009).

movement<sup>31</sup>. The votes that DTP collected in the district have been accepted as an indication for the formation of a political geographical location based on ethnic elements.

In the meantime, increasing votes mean to suggest people's displeasure with prevailing major parties rather than the PKK partisanship or sidedness. By means of such new politics certain naive demands have been put forward within the framework of human rights and, thus, some political and judicial grounds have been sought after. The main objective has therefore been to get acceptance in the pursuit of independence both in political and judicial fields. The fact that European Union impose on Turkey some of their demands and priorities for PKK within this period, it is therefore interpreted by some parties and public in Turkey as though European Union has been backing up PKK<sup>32</sup>. Hence, the tactic of getting the state and the public against one another has been applied under the slogan of so-called democratic and cultural rights. Despite the erosion of PKK's military power to a large extent, there is no giving up or end the dream of a Kurdish state in PKK leadership, yet by means of changing the vehicles, politicalisation and thus some cultural rights have been tried to be obtained through political ways under the shield of European Union orientation period.

#### ***Conter-Terrorism Strategy Implemented:***

Despite the long term of brutal urban and rural terrorism, Turkey has managed to preserve its western-style parliamentary democracy and the rule of law under its constitution without making significant compromises from its way of life. Since 1984, the Turkish military bore the brunt of the casualties, with nearly 4,000 officers, noncommissioned officers, enlisted men and the national police killed in counterterrorism operations. The national economy has been seriously impacted by the cost of fighting terrorism. Since 1984, Turkey has spent almost \$ 100 billion on fighting terrorism and injecting capital to kick start the local economy in the southeastern part of the country, where only 10 percent of the population lives<sup>33</sup>. The Turkish government invests many times more than what it collects in taxes in southeastern Turkey, the region most affected by terrorism.

Turkish counter-terrorism policy's backbone is a "no compromise" or "no negotiations" approach. However, after Ocalan's incarceration, Western pressure on the Turkish government to enter into negotiations with the PKK has increased. Fortunately, Turkey did not make this fateful decision, thanks in part to its military success and in part to the political determination of its successive governments<sup>34</sup>. The Turkish government made good use of the "repentance law", passed in the 1980s. Under this law, more than 2400 terrorists surrendered to security forces in order to qualify for reduced sentences. Many repentant terrorists were "turned" into informers and actively participated in counter-terrorist operations, yielding positive results.

#### ***Military Tactics of Turkish Security Forces:***

During the 1980s and the 1990s, Turkey encountered forms of violence that it had not experienced before. Turkey has been late to develop a political and military strategy against the political violence concept applied by PKK very consciously<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> Fikret Bila: *ibid*, (2004), p.64.

<sup>32</sup> Nihat Ali Özcan, Ö. Rengin Gün: "PKK'dan KADEK'e: Değişim mi, Takıyye mi?", *Stratejik Analiz, Aylık Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Araştırmalar Dergisi*, ASAM Yayınları, sayı 25, Mayıs 2002, s.16.

<sup>33</sup> Necip Torumtay: "Turkey at the Center of Changing Strategies (*Degisen Stratejilerin Odagında Türkiye*) (Istanbul: Milliyet, 1996), p.233.

<sup>34</sup> USIP (U.S. Institute of Peace), Special Report: How Terrorism Ends, (Washington D.C.:USIP, 1999), p.2.

<sup>35</sup> Ümit Özdağ: *ibid*, (2007), p.8.



Not until the beginning of the 1990's the anti-terrorist tactics were under implementation solely to eliminate the PKK militarily and they resulted with a great success between 1994-1998. Realizing in the late 1980s that they were not prepared for the low intensity conflicts, Turkish security forces, both military and civilian, launched an effort to adapt their training and equipment to this new type of warfare. In the early 1990s, the strategy of the Turkish Armed Forces began to shift from a defensive to an offensive one. The General Staff adopted a new strategy based on "a battlefield domination concept" in their fight against the PKK. Reestablishing area control by benefiting from numerical and firepower superiority was the essence of the new strategy<sup>36</sup>. The Turkish military was especially effective in cordon and search operations at the battalion level during conducting counterinsurgency operations.

Turkey deployed a combined force of more than 300,000 in the emergency area. This number included 150,000 army troops, 10,000 from the air force, 50,000 Gendarmerie (the military rural police force), 40,000 police officers, and 95,000 Village Guards. Since 1993, the primary counterterrorism enforcement authority in the emergency area lies with the military, organized under three corps commands (two army and one Gendarmerie corps). In the meantime, defensive tactics were also employed to pre-empt the terrorists' own tactics. Remote villages and hamlets, often the target of terrorist attacks, were evacuated and their residents encouraged to relocate to safer zones, especially in the early 1990s. The Turkish government is investing millions of dollars in rebuilding villages destroyed by the PKK. The inhabitants of which were relocated to safer zones. So far, more than 32,000 inhabitants of more than 330 villages and hamlets have returned to their homes after security was restored.

#### ***Capability Development in Fighting with Terror:***

All branches of Turkish security services created and enhanced their special operations departments, recruiting, training, and equipping operators capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations. The Turkish National Police, responsible for urban law enforcement, formed a new Special Operations Department. The Turkish military created a Professional enlisted corps, which filled the gap between career noncommissioned officers and draftee enlisted men who are discharged after eighteen months of service. The creation of this government militia force, Village Guards, contributed a great deal of the security forces' tactical success in the field.

Turkish utility helicopter fleet was expanded with European and American utility helicopters, boosting the security forces' airlift capacity tremendously. Both law enforcement agencies and military units acquired second- and third-generation night vision devices as well as thermal imaging equipment, enabling them to conduct surveillance and proactive operations under low light conditions. The military made use of light and heavy mortars, mobile and stationary, as well as medium- and heavy-caliber artillery pieces, some of which were airlifted to remote mountaintop firebases. In reaction to the PKK mine warfare, the Turkish security forces countered by utilizing mine-resistant wheeled and tracked armored personnel carriers and acquiring modern mine detection and clearance equipment.

Turks also boosted their intelligence capability to better fight terrorism. This measure meant improving both their human intelligence (HUMINT) and signals

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<sup>36</sup> Ümit Özdağ and Ersel Aydınli: "Winning a Low Intensity Conflict: Drawing Lessons from the Turkish Case", The Review of International Affairs, Vol.2, No.3 (Spring 2003), 111.

intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities. Innovative new methods, such as satellite imagery obtained from NATO allies and Israel as well as aerial imagery obtained by Turkish Air Force reconnaissance flights over the emergency area and northern Iraq, proved useful. Turkey has also gained great experience to utilize the unmanned air vehicles for intelligence purposes. Psychological operations were also conducted on multiple fronts. While the military conducted its own “winning hearts and minds” campaign in eastern and southeastern Turkey, providing mobile health clinics and assisting schools in Kurdish-populated areas, the General Staff set up a civil cooperation bureau that liaised with the Turkish press and also utilized the Muslim clergy in spreading its antiterrorist messages.

#### ***Northern Iraq as Heaven for PKK:***

In the aftermath of the first Gulf War, with the creation of a no-fly zone above the thirty-sixth parallel, the PKK found a safe haven in northern Iraq, where the region became a sanctuary for the PKK terrorists, who began to operate from northern Iraq. Between the two Gulf Wars, Turkey launched air strikes and cross-border operations against PKK targets in northern Iraq and Iran on numerous occasions, destroying bases and training camps and forcing PKK units to more remote mountainous areas far from major roads, making their supply lines long and arduous. The frequency of Turkey’s cross border operations resulted in the formation of de facto security zone with a certain Turkish military presence in northern Iraq<sup>37</sup>. This strategy contributed to the containment of PKK’s military threat.

Turkey entered into agreements with Iraqi Kurdish groups, especially the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (IKDP) of Masood Barzani, and in the summer of 2000 with Jalal Talabani’s PUK, by which IKDP’s and PUK’s own fighters (*pashmarga*) participate in Turkish cross-border operations against PKK bases in northern Iraq and deny sanctuary to PKK terrorists in their zones of control. However, there are today more than three thousand armed PKK elements who control a number of enclaves in northern Iraq. Ankara’s major concern is that the PKK, taking advantage of the post-war instability in Iraq, may resume its incursions into Turkey. Despite Turkey’s military victory the PKK continues to exercise a certain amount of political influence in southern Turkey and northern Iraq.

#### ***Turkey in EU way and the PKK:***

Turkey has preferred to give many concessions that PKK and its supporters asked for, in the name of democracy during the period of application of full membership to EU. In 2002 capital punishment in Turkey has been abolished in a way including Abdullah Öcalan within these regulations. AKP governments have made some arrangements within the adaptation reform packages of EU accession process<sup>38</sup>:

- Broadcasting in different languages and dialects, including Kurdish, has been presented. TRT Şeş TV Channel, broadcasting in Kurdish, started in 2009.
- The way to giving Kurdish names to the children has been opened in 2003.
- State Security Courts have been abolished in 2004.

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<sup>37</sup> Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu: “Experience In Counter-Terrorism: The Relevance Of The Classical Strategic Thought”, Proceedings of the First International Symposium on the Global Terrorism and International Cooperation, (Ankara, March 23-24, 2006), Turkish General Staff, COE-DAT, (Ankara, 2008), p.86.

<sup>38</sup> Fikret Bila: *ibid*, (2004), p.172-173.

- Propaganda was only accepted as an offence if it supported activities of violence and terror. Thus, some judicial cases about the leading characters of HADEP and DEHAP have been cancelled.

- Within the regulations of the new government, the cases and investigations which have been started for the villagers who applied to have Kurdish education; and for those who helped the PKK terrorists by food and clothes have also been cancelled.

Although the arrangements mentioned above was considered as filling the missing points at the EU Improvement Reports due to Copenhagen criteria from the view of the governments, it was a piece of the period of legalising for PKK and it was seen as an earning on the political field to create the basement of legality due to “cultural rights”. To make it short and clear the conclusion of those reforms, what Turkey tried to make for EU was meaning “to get result” for PKK<sup>39</sup>. AKP government has started an unofficial negotiation with PKK through the Kurdish groups in northern Iraq under the pressure of U.S.A. and EU in 2008. These talks is going to turn to a Kurdish Conference in 2009 and PKK will try to again new concessions like political remission to the terrorists, Kurdish language and identity in exchange for leaving the weapons<sup>40</sup>.

### ***International Cooperation To Fight With The PKK:***

Turkish security agencies cooperated closely with their counterparts abroad, especially in the United States, Germany, and Israel. Turkish intelligence also conducted its own HUMINT collection missions in neighbouring countries and Europe, where the Kurdish terrorist organizations are the most active. These covert missions often helped to detect early warning signals of planned terrorist activities in Turkey such as suicide bombings. Since 2008, both the support of “real time intelligence” contributed by the U.S.A. and The Turkish Air Forces’ victorious air operations based on the security intelligence of that kind have been forging an element of oppression, especially in recent times, by restricting the activities of PKK in northern Iraq. However, the terrorist attacks in Turkey have been going on increasingly since Iraq had been invaded by the U.S.A. in 2003.

For years, the U.S. government has best understood and appreciated the Turkish counterterrorism effort. Unfortunately this sentiment was not fully shared by Turkey’s European allies. Save for a symbolic ban in Germany the PKK continued to operate unimpeded in Western Europe. Several European Union states are reluctant to see the PKK in blacklist, to the dismay of NATO ally Turkey. While the EU listed the PKK as a terrorist organization, it omitted the PKK’s political wing. The PKK makes about \$10 million from donations, extortion, and drug running in Europe every year. Turkey has advised its NATO allies that the PKK uses bank accounts in Switzerland, Jersey Island, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, and Southern Cyprus to launder its money. Albeit various attempts of Turkey, Denmark has tolerated the tv broadcasting (e.g. Roj TV) of PKK in the country.

### **3. Lessons Learned From Turkish Experience:**

#### ***Lessons Learned:***

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<sup>39</sup> Fikret Bila: *ibid*, (2004), p.167.

<sup>40</sup> Fikret Bila-Murat Yetkin: “Backstage of Ankara (Ankara Kulisi)”, NTV TV Political Debate Programı, (05 April 2009, 22.30-24.00).

From these experiences, Turks were able to draw some lessons that might be applicable to similar situations elsewhere. Most particular one is that the Turkish experience show that the determination is the key in fighting with the terrorism. Even when the PKK was at the height of its campaign during the mid-1990s, the Turkish government did not consider entering into negotiations with it. This determination paid off later, as the terrorists' strength was diminished. By providing money, intelligence and training possibilities, state sponsored terrorism is extremely dangerous and destructive for the victim state<sup>41</sup>. Turkey was only able to end the support that Syria gives to PKK by showing its determination for using its self-defense rights.

Military force is useful and under certain circumstances necessary for an effective fight against terrorism. The Turkish experience showed that the use of military threat can be successful to compel and deter states sponsoring terrorism. However, it is extremely difficult, indeed impossible to eliminate terrorism by using military force only. Any strategy of counter-terrorism should be taken into consideration the political nature of terrorism and of war termination. Accordingly, the implementation of non-military measures (political, socio-cultural, economic) would be required to terminate terrorism<sup>42</sup>. While having a struggle with terrorism, a holistic way of combatting which comprises all units of the state, is well-rounded and, is able to get rid of all procuring causes of terrorism.

Some of the tactics the Turkish government applied in its counterterrorism efforts did not yield the desired results and exposed severe shortcomings in certain areas. These shortcomings included the lack of coordination among the various Turkish intelligence services, the failure of the correctional system, the inability to apply capital punishment, corruption among security personnel, and an inadequate government response to new forms of violence. Coordination and information sharing among the various intelligence and security services in Turkey, especially in the 1980s and early 1990s, were far from satisfactory, resulting in a duplication of efforts and setbacks for the common cause. Today, Turkish intelligence service is beginning to take steps of overcoming the deficiencies in foreign intelligence and obtaining the space-based capabilities.

Turkey has not been very successful in curbing the undergrounds economy and money laundering by criminals. On account of their involvement in trafficking narcotics, the PKK has been able to launder their profits and transfer funds in and out of Turkey. A degree of corruption occurred among the security forces engaged in the fight against terrorism mainly because of the narcotics involved. The lessons we have learned from the struggle emphasize that the following issues should be realized for an effective counter-terrorism effort; strong intelligence, effective crisis management, information-sharing, interagency coordination at national and international level, sustainable security measures against terrorism, effective control of entry into/exit from the country, and international cooperation.

Fighting terrorism requires cooperation and coordination internationally as well as between a country's domestic agencies, and also the cooperation and trust of the public<sup>43</sup>. The institutional cooperation will not be limited only to the military

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<sup>41</sup> Sertaç Başeren: "Terrorism With Its Differing Aspects", Proceedings of the First International Symposium on the Global Terrorism and International Cooperation, (Ankara, March 23-24, 2006), Turkish General Staff, COE-DAT, (Ankara, 2006), p.17.

<sup>42</sup> Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu: *ibid*, (2008), p.88.

<sup>43</sup> Andrew Mango: "Terrorism: Learning By Experience", Proceedings of the Second International Symposium (Ankara, 10-11 March 2008), (Ankara: TGS, 2008), p.18.

perspective. The aim of the struggle shouldn't be limited to punishing the terrorist action and the institutional cooperation must be shaped to lessen the merging impacts and in this way to inactive the terrorist actions. To promote effective action against terrorist organizations and the states that support them, a permanent, international anti-terrorism institution must be given the authority to identify nations and organizations considered to be involved in terrorism, and determine sanctions and actions to be taken against them. It would include experts from different countries who should study global terrorism and on the basis of their findings, would publish an annual list of nations supporting terrorism.

International sanctions could then be adopted against countries included on that list, in accordance with the scope of their support, so as to force them to stop or limit their involvement<sup>44</sup>. Some goals can be achieved through the establishment of a "League of Nations Fighting Terrorism" by a few countries, with others joining later on. It is a fact that the collective actions like United Nations will stay only at the written norm level and so it is necessary to consider this subject in the frame of an alliance. This attitude requires an approach for the counter-terrorism as collective defense rather than international security perception and it is now becoming compulsory to fulfill the points that the idealism can not reach by means of realist practices.

#### ***Soft Power in Combatting Terrorism:***

It has long been understood that a country would not be able to get a result in terms of combatting terrorism by using solely military force as it is seen in the examples of Turkey against the Kurdish movement and the USA in Iraq. In this age of global knowledge, power itself, especially in developed countries, is seen as a less tangible and compelling quality. Soft power can call forth much more effect and possibility of control than the traditional one can. According to Joseph S. Nye, who is the originator of the concept, when your policies become legitimate in the others' eyes, your soft power improves<sup>45</sup>. In the space of international relations which is quite unpredictable and ambivalent, the soft power revealed from knowledge, thoughts and ideals will allow political actors to accomplish their objectives<sup>46</sup>. In the 21st century, power implementations will be based on a combination of both hard and soft instruments.

The utilization of the soft power concept against terrorism and improving a framework mechanism to support the cooperation not only among the national agencies but also internationally should be taken into consideration as a new approach to the subject. The vital point is how to approach counter-terrorism from a soft-power perspective. In this sense the southeast Turkey including northern Iraq extensions can also be considered a region to activate a soft-power strategy for the counter-terrorism. As a war strategy against terrorism, a multi-dimensional coordination is compulsory. This means that the political, social, cultural, and economic structure would be organized to overcome the terrorism in versatile dimensions. For instance, in the political dimension, in order to democratize the region the soft power will first shape the democratic culture, which in turn should be

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<sup>44</sup> Boaz Ganor: "Terrorism In The Post-Cold War Era", Proceedings of the First International Symposium on the Global Terrorism and International Cooperation, (Ankara, March 23-24, 2006), (Ankara: TGS, 2006), p.31.

<sup>45</sup> Joseph S Nye Jr.: "Soft Power and American Foreign Policy, Political Science Quarterly; Summer 2004; 119, 2; Research Library Core, p.256.

<sup>46</sup> Andreas Wenger: "The Growth of Soft Power and the Challenges of Global Governance", Information & Security, Volume 7, (2001), p.5-11.

followed by the preparation of the infrastructure and become operational with its institutions and regulations.

From the international perspective, the problem of terrorism Turkey faces today is concurrently a result of state-supported terrorist attempts which has also been lying behind the security problems in the Middle East. For that reason, a new approach and alliance structure have to be developed by putting the concept of soft-power forward in terms of contributing support to the peace of Middle East. It is vital to develop a collaboration in order to assemble all political, economic and socio-cultural instruments into one concept of soft-power by means of counter-terrorism in the international arena. In this alliance respect, it will be smart to create a synergy between the U.S.A. and Turkey in collaborating soft power instruments. This construct of soft-power between the U.S.A. and Turkey will serve the purpose of both bringing Middle Eastern people to be integrated into modern values and contributing some palpable changes in terms of mainly development in the field economy. This model would be a milestone in creating a culture of collectivity and improving mutual cooperation against international terrorism.

### **Conclusions:**

In the past three decades, the Republic of Turkey has endured much hardship because of terrorism. However, the Turkish government's determination not to give in to the demands of the terrorists, who wish to change the Turkish regime, has prevailed. While combatting terrorism, the boundary Turkey drew via its political and military institutions is to protect its territorial integrity, secularistic and unitary structure. Turkey, in terms of political and military issues, got a violent and widespread terrorist attacking period over militarily, but found a Kurdish ethnic-based movement politically. The support this political formation got from the EU and *de facto* Kurdish settlement in northern Iraq from the U.S.A. has brought out such demands of a federation or/and an independent Kurdish State.

The future of both this *de facto* statement which has begun with the invasion of Iraq by the U.S.A. and Turkey's accession process to the EU is one the most crucial trends of Turkey's combat against terrorism. The concern of Turkey regarding Iraq issue has been, from the very beginning, on the risks of its having the capacity targeting Turkey's territorial integrity and national unity. Because of this concern, Turkey has been standing against disintegration of Iraq and it's likely giving birth an independent Kurdish State to be settled in northern Iraq. The fundamental problem Turkey faces today is how to dissolve this structure in both inside and outside the country albeit the low intensity war which has been tried to be nourished again recently.

It is necessary to accept that terrorism is a sophisticated structure that can't be handled solely from a military perspective and that has political, economical, socio-cultural grounds. Thus, besides intelligence, police and the military forces, it is mandatory to use the non-governmental organizational and socio-cultural instruments together in soft-power perspective. Impact management is more prior than the supervision of effect. Turkey initially must determine it's political, economic and socio-cultural approaches in order to build up the conceptual codes of practice in combatting against terrorism which has been spreading from the country's southeastern parts to the western parts. Simply in this way, that is, by composing the theoretical background of soft power, an efficient and persuading political pattern might be imposed upon it's citizens' ways of thinking.

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