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FROM AN EXTERNAL THREAT TO AN ENERGY ROUTE SECURING NEIGHBOR: IMAGE OF GREECE IN TURKISH PARTY'S ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS (1999-2008)

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Abstract

Following the 1999 national elections the government program of the coalition refers to Greece by stating: "preconditions for improving relations with Greece [is, it] should stop supporting terror acts in Turkey; Greece should accept dialogue for the resolution of bilateral conflicts; the shadow of EU should not be put on our relations." When it comes to 2007 national elections it was observed that none of the political parties perceived Greece as a country supporting neither terrorism in Turkey nor an indirect threat to its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Since 2007, the incumbent party JDP (AKP) refers to Greece only as a neighbor sharing the energy route of Trans Adriatic Pipeline. In the early 2000s, not only the bilateral cooperation between two countries enhanced by radically changing the foreign policy of each country towards each other, but also contributed to the improvement of the literature on the Greek-Turkish relations. Greece, even though it does not have a territory on Blacksea coast, is one of the most important regional members of BSEC, for being a gateway of EU to the Black Sea, having cultural proximity with Turkey and also linking Turkey to the EU. Many researches have been conducted relating to the influence of public opinion, on the debated issues (namely Aegean and Cyprus) and about the EU objective of Turkey on Greek-Turkish interactions, mainly within the field of international relations, security politics and conflict resolution. However, the role of the real decision-makers on Greek-Turkish relations in other words the effect of the political parties on the foreign policy change has been ignored. This study indicates that as electoral manifesto substantially applied in the government programs, for bilateral relations 'elites' framing' is very crucial to influence foreign policy and public opinion. While foreign policy remains as a secondary or indifferent factor in the manifesto of the parties unless the party played a more active role in the previous ruling term, it is linked to national security issues, and parties intended to follow the status quo as the opponent parties can use any clear decision as a threat against them.

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Introduction

The coalition government program of DSP-MHP-ANAP government which was formed after 18 April 1999 national elections refers to Greece by stating: "preconditions for improving relations with Greece [is, it] should stop supporting terror acts in Turkey; Greece should accept dialogue for the resolution of bilateral conflicts; the shadow of EU should not be put on our relations." Turkish parties and winner pro-Islamist party AKP government's (Justice and Development Party/JDP) perception of Greece highly moderated in 2002 elections, as the party emphasized 'mutual economic interests with Greece' rather than long-lasting frozen problems or 'its supporting activities to terrorism in Turkey'. It was observed that in 2007 national electoral campaigns none of the political parties perceived Greece as a country supporting terrorism in Turkey nor an indirect threat to its territorial integrity and sovereignty.Moreover, since the establishment of Turkey-Greece natural gas pipeline in 2007, the incumbent party AKP mentions Greece only as a neighbor sharing the energy route of Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP).

The era of détente for Greek-Turkish relations that remarked the 21st century, and 1999 Helsinki Summit that granted Turkey European Union candidacy after Greece's removal of its long-standing veto on Turkey's candidacy embarked the most crucial point of this rapprochement. In the early 2000s, not only the bilateral cooperation between two countries enhanced by radically changing the foreign policy of each country towards each other, but also contributed to the improvement of the literature on the Greek-Turkish relations. Many researches have been conducted relating to the influence of public opinion, on the debated issues (namely Aegean and Cyprus) and about the EU objective of Turkey on Greek-Turkish interactions, mainly within the field of international relations, security politics and conflict resolution.[1]

[1] *Greek-Turkish relations in an era of détente*, editors Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin, (Routledge: London, 2005); *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s*, ed. by Dimitri Costas, (Mac Millan: London, 1991); *Greek-Turkish relations in the era of globalization*, edited by Dimitris Keridis and Dimitris Triantafyllou (Dulles, VA : Brassey's, 2001); "Turkish policy toward Greece" by Tozun Bahcheli , "Turkey and the Cyprus question" by Clement H. Dodd, "Turkey and the European Union" by Atila Eralp in *Turkish-Greek Relations: The Security Dilemma in the Aegean*, edited by Mustafa Aydın, Kostas Ifantis, (London And New York: Routledge, 2004);
Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, *Turkey's new world : changing dynamics in Turkish foreign policy*, (Washington, DC : Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000); Nicholas Sambaris and Michael Doyle, "International Peacebuilding: A theoretical and Quantitative Analysis", American Political Science Review, Vol. 94, No.4, (Dec.2000), 779-801; James Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes", American Political Science Review, vol.88, no.3, 1994; Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and domestic politics,

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However, the role of the real decision-makers on Greek-Turkish relations in other words the effect of the political parties on the foreign policy change has been ignored.

In Turkey, because of the three military coups (in 1960, 1970 and 1980) which caused high level of volatility and fragmentation in the party systems; the political culture, electoral results and foreign policy change are intensively bound to each other and compose crucial parts of the behavior of the political parties. This political culture that positions the military in Turkey as the protector of secularism and democracy, and in terms of the Greek-Turkish relations the main decision-maker on the nationally interested issues such as Aegean and Cyprus, started to display a substantial change after Turkey's approaching to the European Union which brought new reforms on the civil-military relations in Turkey and diminished the influence of the military on politics. Again due to the decadal occurred military coups, especially after the 1980 military coup with the banning of the political parties and leaders, not only p*olitical socialization*[2] in the Turkish political system is destructed, but also Turkey experienced unsuccessful coalition governments until 2002 elections as well despite its high national threshold.[3] In addition to the weak coalition governments that failed to make substantial foreign policy changes, the high level of volatility and fragmentation avoided the ruling and opponent parties to have a clear stance on their foreign policies in order to widen their vote spectrum and not to loose the potential votes. Therefore, related to the political culture in Turkey, in the electoral manifesto and electoral campaign of the political parties, foreign policy remained as the secondary or indifferent factor unless these parties played an active role and made a step that broke the status quo in the foreign policies.

This study aims to examine the role of political parties on the Greek-Turkish relations, mainly by evaluating the perspective and position of the effective incumbent and opponent parties related to the debated Greek-Turkish issues after and before the Helsinki Summit (December, 1999), with the intention to analyze the changes and continuities of the parties' stance after granting EU candidacy.

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the logic of two-level games", International Organization, vol.42, no.3, 1988.

[2] Political Socialization is the process whereby individuals become aware of tenets of political culture, political facts, and political values. It happens through the influence of parents, the media, friends, employment and a variety of other stimuli.

[3] The national threshold was increased to 10% with the 1982 Constitution which was adopted after the 1980 military coup. The high threshold aimed to solve the problem of weak coalitions and mainly to prevent the political participation of the pro-Kurdish parties.

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Therefore, the study mainly questions the hypotheses that:

1) Can mutual cooperation in trade, energy, security and tourism create a bridge to overcome the 'living history' to solve the frozen problems?
2) Turkey's foreign policy towards Greece and the debated issues has been changed after 1999 Helsinki Summit, which has been followed by 2002 Copenhagen Summit that put pressure and conditioned good-neighboring and achiving a settelement in Cyprus problem to Turkey as the membership criteria.
3) Single party government of AKP that came to power with 3 November 2002 national elections displayed a more active role in foreign policy compared to the coalition government of DSP-MHP-ANAP which was formed after 18 April 1999 national elections. However, it returned back to status-qou line of Turkish state following the international and domestic challenges occurred in 2007.
4) Turkish-Greek relations despite the criticizing of Turkish side is highly related to Turkey's EU relations, hence motivations for good neighborhood varies depending on its proximity to EU accession process
5) In Turkish electoral campaigns, foreign policy is linked to national security issues, and parties intended to follow the status quo as the opponent parties can use any clear decision as a threat against them. Therefore 'collective support' by the other parties, at elite-level and from public opinion is crucial for the solution of bilateral and domestic problematic issues.
6) Foreign policy remains as a secondary or indifferent factor in the manifesto of the parties unless the party played a more active role in the previous ruling term.

Beside these arguments related to government's foreign policy changes and incentives, the study also aims to understand first whether Greece which is a NATO, EU and BSEC members hence also Turkey's gateway to Europe should be such underestimated to only trade and energy relations. Secondly, whether Turkey's trade and energy volume with Greece is significant to emphasize by the incumbent party?

In order to scrutinize these arguments, this paper utilized a panel comparative method and examine the party programs, electoral manifestos and announced government programs of the effective political parties that managed to pass the national threshold from 1999 to 2018 period (1999; 2002; 2007; 2011; 2015 and 2018) national elections. On the other hand, because the

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incumbent party of 2002, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi [*Justice and Development Party*-AKP], also became the leading party in 22 July 2007 elections, and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi [*Republican People's Party*-CHP] continues to be the main opponent party, the electoral manifesto of these parties during 2007 electoral campaign will be also evaluated in order to indicate how foreign policy changes can be used as an electoral tool, and why parties are backing to make a crucial step if they do not have the sufficient electoral support. Moreover, as it is an advantage to observe the alternation at the approach of the far rightist Milliyetçi Halk Partisi [*Nationalist Movement Party*-MHP] which had took place at the coalition government of 1999 elections when Greek-Turkish rapprochement was first initiated, and after its failure in 2002 national elections managed to get into the Parliament with the 2007 elections, the paper also encompasses the new party program and electoral manifesto of MHP into its research area.[4]

Within this framework, the paper will examine 5 periods of government and effective opposition parties[5]:

1. 57th Government of Turkey (18 April 1999 election): DSP-MHP-ANAP Coalition.
2. 58th Government of Turkey (3 November 2002 election): AKP single-party government under the presidency of Abdullah Gul, main opposition party is secular social-democrat CHP.
3. 59th Government of Turkey (14 March 2003 Siirt election): AKP single-party government under the presidency of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, main opposition party is CHP.
4. 60th Government of Turkey (22 July 2007): AKP single-party government under the presidency of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, main opposition parties are CHP, MHP, and DTP.

[4] As the methodology, mainly a comparative qualitative research is applied to control the hypotheses. The party programs of the effective parties are taken from their own websites. For the electoral manifesto of the parties, the data is derived from www.belgenet.com. It should be noted that except the website of AKP, the other parties were lack of presenting an adequate documentation, only the electoral manifesto of the last 2007 elections were put on the website and most of the documents were given in Turkish. The text used for this thesis is translated by the author and she has the whole responsibility for the translation. In order to display the role of volatility and fragmentation in the Turkish politics and its influence on the foreign policy change, the electoral results of the 1999, 2002 and 2007 national elections will be also utilized. The data is taken from www.secimsonucu.com.

[5] DSP (Democratic Left Party): center-left social democrat party; MHP (Nationalist Movement Party): nationalist party; ANAP (Mainland Party): liberal center-right party; AKP (Justice and Development Party): pro-Islamist and rightist party; CHP (Republican People's Party): center-left social democrat party. DTP-BDP-HDP line: pro-Kurdish and left-wing.

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5. 61st-66th Government of Turkey (2011-2018): AKP single-party government under the lidership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, main opposition parties are CHP, MHP, and (DTP-BDP-HDP)

The analysis shall begin with the brief introduction to the history of the debated issues between Greece and Turkey, Aegean and Cyprus conflicts, which will be followed by Turkey's accession path to the European Union towards late 1990s and early 2000s. Then, 57th government of Turkey (18 April 1999- 3 November 2002) which is formed by DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition will be analyzed by focusing on their attitudes towards Greek-Turkish relations, which will utilized the government program of the coalition and electoral manifesto of the parties. Third part will examine the ruling period of the first AKP term until 2007 (3 November 2002- 22 July 2007), question whether there are continuities or ruptures between the single-party AKP government and the preceding DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition government in their foreign policy towards Greece. The last part which includes AKP's governing period between 2007-2018 is crucial to understand whether the party's approach to Greece has changed after the global economic crisis and disappointments regarding EU relations and Cyprus's accession to EU. Therefore, findings will develop a model to summarize the foreign policy change and differences between the preceding DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition government and single party AKP government, and also within AKP government.

1. Literature Review : Greek-Turkish and Turkey-EU Relations

Turkey and Greece, although they have not make war against each other since the 1920s and they have been involved in the common alliance (NATO) since 1952, are two countries that do not manage to establish good neighboring. As the former Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs declare "among the obstacles that prevent not only the solution but even the discussion of the 'real' problems is the distrust between the two nations created by their living history".[6] Moreover, both Turkey and Greece constructed their nation-state identity as a result of their struggle they made against each other and the process of their mutual interaction.[7] Since 1974, Greek-Turkish relations have been frustrated mainly by two sets of issues: Cyprus and Aegean.

[6] Şükrü Sina Gürel, *Tarihsel Boyut İçinde Türk-Yunan İlişkileri, 1821-1993* (Turkish-Greek Relations in Historical Context, 1821-1993), (Ankara: Ümit, 1993), p.10.

[7] Leften.S.Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453*, (London : Hurst & Company, 2000).

1.1 Aegean Problem

Although these two issues seems to be linked to each other, it can be said that of the two, the dispute over the Aegean is more challenging because, unlike the Cyprus issue, it touches more directly on essential national interests concerning national security and territorial sovereignty for both countries. The Aegean conflict is composed of a set of four separate issues. These include: 1. delimitation of the maritime boundaries and continental shelf; 2. breadth of territorial waters; 3. control of the air space beyond the territorial waters; 4. Greek militarization of eastern Aegean islands.[8] Operational control of the Aegean can also be added as the fifth issue.[9]

The dispute over the breadth of territorial waters emerges on Greece's claim to extend its to 12-mile territorial sea (currently operating 6-miles limit) both for its mainland and for its islands in the Aegean by referring to the international law "the Law of Sea" (1982), which would increase Greek sovereignty and virtually would restrict all passage to high seas from Turkish Aegean and Black Sea ports through areas under Greek sovereignty and jurisdiction if the 12-mile limit be implemented.[10] Greece's insists on stating her rights to extend its territorial waters is perceived by the Turkish side as an attempt to turn the Aegean into a Greek lake and hence the Turkish governments have repeatedly declared that if Greece goes ahead with the unilateral adoption of 12-mile territorial waters in the Aegean, it would represent a *casus belli.*[11]

Since the 1924 Lousanne Treaty, Greece and Turkey have never had delimitation agreement regarding maritime boundaries in the Aegean, therefore the continental shelf dispute also originates tension in Aegean time to time. The Greeks argue that most of the Aegean continental shelf belonged to them with an assisting economic zone because of the numerous Greek islands, and

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[8] Mustafa Aydın, "Contemporary Turkish-Greek Relations: Constraints and Oppurtunities", *Turkish-Greek Relations: The Security Dilemma in the Aegean*, edited by Mustafa Aydın, Kostas Ifantis, (London And New York: Routledge, 2004), p.27-32.

[9] Thanos M. Veremis, *Greeks and Turks in War and Peace*, (Athens News, 2007), p.180.

[10] Under the present 6-mile limit, Greece holds approximately 43.5% of the Aegean Sea and Turkey 7.7%, the remaining 49% being high seas. Should the 12-mile limit be applied, Greek territorial waters in the Aegean will increase to 71.5% whereas Turkey's share will increase to 8.7%, and the area of high seas will be drastically reduced to 19.7%, which will also be fragmented due to the existence of Greek islands. See Aydın, "Contemporary Turkish-Greek Relations: Constraints and Oppurtunities", p. 27.

[11] Ahmet O. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement", *Greek-Turkish relations in an era of détente* / editors Ali Çarkoğlu, Barry Rubin, (Routledge: London, 2005).

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reject any Turkish right in areas to the west of the Greek islands since this, according to Greece, would constitute a threat to its sovereignty. The Turks, on the other hand, have argued that much of the Aegean continental shelf is geologically an extension of the Anatolian mainland, or that it should be delimited on an equitable basis.

The conflict over the airspace is also related to dispute on territorial waters, in which Greece claims that "the width of the territorial waters concerning issues of air force and its policing, at ten miles", by referring to the 1944 Chicago Convention on Civil Aviation declaring that the width of the territorial seas determines the air-space.[12] Turkey disputes this and frequently exercises 'its right' to fly over international airspace of the Aegean up to a distance of 6 miles to the Greek mainland, thus inciting regular protests from Greece on the ground that Turkey, yet again, violated Greek national airspace. Operational control of the Aegean became a dispute since 1974 Cyprus intervention, when Greece insisted on to use its Flight Information Region (FIR) to monitor Turkish movements over the Aegean.

The settlement of these issues[13] seems to be difficult because Greece suggests solving the issues individually, while Turkey considers all the five issues linked to each other; Greece demands the involvement of the international authorities as a mediator (traditionally International Court of Justice), while Turkey successfully avoids such an involvement where Greece would be advantaged. Moreover, the pressure coming from the public opinion and from the opponent parties composed the biggest obstacle for the settlement as according to Aydın, each of these issues is entangled with the general mistrust between the two nations and with their attempts to gain political advantage in settling outstanding differences.[14]

1.2 Cyprus Problem

Beside the disagreements in the Aegean, the issue over Cyprus also

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[12] Greece claims a 10-mile national airspace over its current 6-mile territorial waters. Incidentally, Greece's 10-mile airspace is not recognized by other states; including NATO countries which often 'violate' Greek airspace during NATO exercises in the Aegean.

[13] This thesis only represent overall looking to these issues, for the detail information on them and Cyprus issue the sources given below in reference 8 & 9 and *Greek-Turkish relations in an era of détente*, editors Ali Çarkoğlu, Barry Rubin, (Routledge: London, 2005) which are written by Turkish and Greek scholars and reflect the opinions of the both sides would be very useful.

[14] Aydın, "Contemporary Turkish-Greek Relations: Constraints and Oppurtunities", p. 27.

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constructs another handicap for the Greek-Turkish relations[15] that it may act as a catalyst for broader conflict, such as 6-7 September Events of 1955.[16] The condition that the two communities living in the island identify themselves as Greek and Turk also includes Greece and Turkey as parts to the problem. Moreover, Cyprus Crisis in 1963-64 and in 1973-74, also caused major eruptions in Turkey's Western oriented foreign policy.[17] Before the Turkish intervention and the division of the island in 1974, the issue was based on the representative rights of the Cypriots Turks in the Cyprus state and Turkey's objection on the attempts of the Greek side to unite the island with Greece. After the intervention of 1974, it can be said that Turkey aimed to continue the status quo which favors the total division of the island, whereas the Greek side demanded the unification of the island by rejecting the demands for a federation composed of two communicates and equal representative rights as a result of declaring itself the only representative of the whole island. Therefore as Veremis argues, in the Aegean and the Cyprus problem, Turkish and Greek sides follow differing strategies, in which for Aegean issue, Greece tries to pursue the status quo and Turkey aims to change the legal status, however regarding Cyprus, the Greek strategy aimed at overturning the fait accompli and, therefore the status quo that emerged as a result of the 1974 intervention[18].

As Tozun Bahceli predicted[19], the issue of Cyprus' EU membership yet created lasting difficulties for both Turkish-Greek and Turkish-EU relations as no settlement of the island' dispute proved attainable when Cyprus (in effect, the Greek-Cypriot controlled territory) joined the EU in 2004. Furthermore, it again caused tension for Turkey's Western oriented foreign policy as before losing the elections on 3 November 2002, the coalition government led by Bulent Ecevit took a hard line on the Cyprus issue, warning that Turkey might annex the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and close the doors permanently to any hope of re-unifying the island if Greek Cypriot accession is allowed prior to a settlement. On the other hand, after the elections of 3

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[15] As a detailed discussion of the Cyprus issue is beyond the scope of this thesis, for a comprahensive political and historical overlook to the Cyprus problem see Murat M. Hakkı, *The Cyprus Issue: a documentary history, 1878-2006*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007).

[16] Veremis, *Greeks and Turks in War and Peace*, p. 144.

[17] Yasemin Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999), pp.48-51.

[18] Veremis, *Greeks and Turks in War and Peace*, p. 212.

[19] Tozun Bahceli, "Turning a New Page in Turkey's Relations with Greece?: The Challanging of Reconciling Vital Interests",in *Turkish-Greek Relations: The Security Dilemma in the Aegean*, edited by Mustafa Aydın, Kostas Ifantis, (London And New York: Routledge, 2004).

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November 2002, the elected Justice and Development Party have considered the UN plan of 11 November 2002, as acceptable as a basis for negotiations. Leader Tayyip Erdoğan, and other senior members of the government, have encouraged Turkish Cypriot leader Denktaş to strive to reach a settlement before Cyprus is admitted as an EU member in May 2004. As many scholars declare, this represents a vital departure from the hard-line policy of former Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit who took a major role in the 1974 Turkish intervention and championed separate Turkish Cypriot statehood and even stated that the Cyprus issue was resolved in 1974 when Turkey's intervention partitioned the island. Unlike its predecessors, the Justice and Development Party appears committed to pursue a reformist agenda and to secure Turkish entry into the EU, and furthermore, to remove the Cyprus issue as an impediment to Turkish accession.

1.3 Turkey-EU Relations: 1999 Helsinki Summit

During the Cold War period, due to the threat of an expansionist Soviet Union and security concerns of the Western states, a favorable geo-political environment created the opportunity for Turkey to join to several European organizations.[20] Moreover, two years after the Rome Treaty asserting "any European country can apply to become a member", in 1959 also 16 days after the Greek application[21], Turkey applied for an Association with EEC and became the Associate member of the EC with the Ankara Treaty[22] in 1963. With the end of Cold War during the 1980s, due to internal chaos and rupture from democracy in Turkey and international level crisis with Greece, EU-Turkey[23] relations was frozen and unstable almost for two decades, until in 1987 after the recovery of democracy, Turkey applied for full membership in

[20] In 1948 Turkey joined to the Organization for European Economic Cooperation; in 1949 it joined the Council of Europe; in 1952 it joined NATO; in 1959 applied for an Association with EEC, and in 1963 became the Associate member of the EC with Ankara Agreement. For the chronology (Meltem Müftüler Baç, "Turkey's Political Reforms and the Impact of the European Union", South European Society & Politics, Vol. 10, No.1, April 2005,p.19.)

[21] Another important factor in Turkey's application for associate membership was, of course, Greece's application for associate member status. Traditionally, Turkish policy has been to balance Greece in international organizations and platforms.

[22] Article 28 of the Ankara Treaty stipulates that Turkey's full membership would be possible when both the EC and the Turkish political elite find that Turkey would be able to meet the obligations of membership.

[23] In order to avoid the confusion, through out this study I will use EU-Turkey relations although in the mentioned time EC might be used instead of EU.

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the EC. In 1995, when it signed the Custom Union[24], it was (and still) the only country sign this agreement without being an EU member state. However, despite the positive milieu emerged with the Custom Union agreement, the 1997 Luxembourg Summit caused a crisis for the EU-Turkey relations when EC decided not to include Turkey among the list of candidate countries. It should be noted that due to the Ankara Treaty, the EU cannot rule out Turkey's membership application based on eligibility; however Luxembourg Summit was suggesting a clear rejection.

However, two years later then this application rejection, in 1999 Helsinki Summit Turkey is granted the status of a "candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate states".[25] As this was the first time that Turkey was given a clear perspective for membership, this in turn increased the impact of the EU on Turkey's political Europeanization process, and as the Turkish government had a strong incentive for its democratization and political reforms in terms of distinct possibility for full membership of the EU if it fulfilled the latter's political conditions, from 2001 to 2004 (despite the big economic crisis experienced in February, 2001) various political reform packages[26] were adopted in order to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria[27] that resulted in deepening Turkey's Europeanization process.

For the conclusion of negotiations with Turkey, beside the three Copenhagen criteria such as the prevalence of democracy, human rights and the protection of minorities; the existence of a 'functioning market economy' capable of competing within the EU; and the administrative and institutional capacity to implement EU rules and regulations; three more criteria are given as conditionality for Turkey. These are Turkey's 'unequivocal commitment to

[24] An economic association of states based on an agreement to eliminate tariffs and other obstacles to trade, and which also includes a common trade policy vis-a-vis third countries, usually by establishing a common external tariff on goods imported into the union.

[25] The Council of the European Union, Luxembourg *Presidency Conclusions*, Dec. 12–13, 1997, http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/dec97.htm; The Council of the European Union, Helsinki *Presidency Conclusions*, Dec., 1999, http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/dec99.htm.

[26] These reforms can be summarized under the broader headings of increased legal protection of social, cultural and political rights of all Turkish citizens irrespective of religious and ethnic origin, the role of military in Turkish politics, and freedom of expression in Turkey. Baç, "Turkey's Political Reforms", pp.22-23

[27] 1993 Copenhagen Summit states that the stability of democratic institutions and respect for human rights are essential pre-conditions for candidacy status as well as for opening accession negotiations. (Fadi Hakura, "Partnership is No Privilege: The Alternative to EU Membership is No Turkish Delight", European Programme, Chatham House, September 2005, pp.2-3)

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good neighborly relations' an indirect reference to Greece and Armenia; continued support for a comprehensive resolution of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework and in line with Union principles, and normalization of relations with Greek Cyprus; and the fulfillment of obligations under the 1963 EU-Turkey Association Agreement, including the Additional Protocol extending the Agreement and Custom Union to the 10 new member states, including Greek Cyprus.

Because Copenhagen criteria imposed good neighboring and the solution to Cyprus problem as preconditions for negotiations, it can be said that Turkey's own interest in advancing towards EU membership has created a strong incentive to solve the Aegean issue and to help achieve a settlement in Cyprus. On the other hand, Greek-Turkish rapprochement also initiated the improvements in Turkey-EU relations. With the mutual aids during the earthquakes energizing bilateral dialogue, Greece lifted its veto on Turkey's candidacy for EU membership at the EU's Helsinki Summit in December 1999. Since 1999, bilateral meetings between Turkish and Greek officials have yielded more than a dozen agreements on largely non-controversial issues related to economic and cultural ties, border security, terrorism and cross-border crime.

In sum, Turkey's EU candidacy not only created incentives for Turkey to change its foreign policy towards Greece and its approach to Cyprus problem, but as Nicolacopoulas points out the Greek decision to support the offer of EU candidacy to Turkey at the December 1999 Helsinki summit – although emphasizing particular conditions favorable to Greek interests- reflected a new, strategic approach to the future of relations with Ankara, and it represents a major step towards dampening the sources of unintended spirals.[28]

2. Change In Turkish-Greek Relations between 1999-2002 and Its Reflections on Electoral Campaigns

The 57th Government of Turkey came to power with the 18 April 1999 national elections. According to the election results, Demokratik Sol Parti [*Democratic Left Party*- DSP] became the first party by gaining 22.17% of the votes, followed by Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi [*Nationalist Movement Party*- MHP] with a vote ratio of 17.89%, Fazilet Partisi [*Virtue Party*- FP] with

[28] Ilias Nicolacopoulas, "Elections and Voters, 1974-2004: Old Cleavages and New Issues", in Special Issues on *The Challenge of Modernisation: Politics and Policy in Greece*, West European Politics, (ed.) by Kevin Featherstone, Vol. 28 No.2, (March 2005).

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15.39%, Anavatan Partisi [*Motherland Party*-ANAP] with 13.22% and Doğru Yol Partisi [*True Path Party*-DYP] with 12.03%.[29] The coalition government is formed under the Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit was composed of DSP, MHP, and ANAP in which Devlet Bahçeli from MHP and Mesut Yılmaz from ANAP became Deputy Prime Ministers. The Ministery of Foreign Affairs was run by İsmail Cem and later for a short time by Şükrü Sina Gürel from DSP. Mesut Yılmaz also received the position as the general secretary for EU.[30] The 57th Government of Turkey remained in office until 18 November 2002, following the 3 November 2002 elections.

2.1 Party Programs and Campaign of DSP, MHP and ANAP and 57th Government Program

Before analyzing DSP's party program related to Greek-Turkish relations and foreign policy, it must be noted that its party leader Bülent Ecevit was the Prime Minister of Turkey during the 1974 Cyprus events, and he led the intervention which granted him the position as a 'hero', and that determined the stance of the party on Cyprus issue.[31] After the landing of the Turkish troops to the island (Ecevit names the operation as "peace intervention"), on 20 July 1974 Ecevit declared that "We infact go to the Island not for war but for peace, and we go to bring peace not only for the Turks but also to the Greeks as well. We were constrained to this decision after trying all the diplomatic, political ways".[32] Ecevit's speech he made at the "National Solidarity" Meeting on 12 January 2003, displays the continuity of his and his party's approach to the Cyprus issue almost after 30 years. In his speech, after giving a brief history of Cyprus, Ecevit asserted that "Cyprus is not a Greek land" and referring to 1974 intervention he declared that "the solution at Cyprus is achieved" in other words "in Cyprus,

[29] CHP Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi [Republican People's Party] and HADEP Halkın Demokrasi Partisi [People's Democracy Party] couldnot enter the Parliament due to the 10% threshold. www.secimsonucu.com

[30] http://www.byegm.gov.tr/hukumetler/57hukumet/gorev-dagilimi/gorev-dagilimi-yeni.htm

[31] After the closing of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's party Republican People's Party (CHP) after 1980 military coup, DSP also emerged as the party within CHP's cadre, so identified itself close to Kemalism, and legitimized itself as the protector of Atatürk's reforms. As a social-democratic party, DSP emphasizes the slogan for 'just order' in which everyone has the right and opportunity to live free and in peace.

[32] Bülent Ecevit, *Kıbrıs Gerçeği ve Irak Sorunu* (Cyprus Truth and Iraq Problem), Booklet, DSP General President Bülent Ecevit's Speech at the "National Solidarity Meeting" on 12 January 2003, DSP Headquarters.

Note: Ecevit made this speech after 3 November 2002 elections in which his party could not pass 10% threshold and AKP was the single-party government.

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Turks are free".[33] With regard to Turkey-EU relations and the effect of Cyprus problem on Turkey's membership path, Ecevit pointed out that "even Turkey accepted the Annan report with its all means, EU would not open its doors to Turkey", which implies that for EU membership, Cyprus issue should not be perceived as a condition.

After positioning that Democratic Left thinking showed the concrete examples of success and leadership of its "national foreign policy" in 1970s at the Aegean and Cyprus, DSP criticized ANAP's policy at late 1980s which with "Davos soul" ignored Turkey's vital national problem and encouraged Greece to use all its international support against Turkey and to aspire new gains that threatens Turkey's national rights and security at the Aegean. In its electoral manifesto, DSP does not explain Turkey's "national rights" explicitly, however it continues to remark that DSP will revive the "national rights" by a peaceful approach, and will present an effective struggle in the international area against the pressures targeting the Turks at the Western Thrace. According to the party program, positioning Atatürk's "Peace at home, peace in the world" principle as its source for inspiration and strength, and emphasizing the role of Turkish Armed Forces as the founder of the Turkish Republic who's power should be protected considering the geopolitical situation of Turkey, DSP supports to enlarge Turkey's regional-centered foreign policy through which a balance was planned to be build between Turkey's relations with Russia, European Union (EU) and United States of America (USA). DSP argues that, Turkey cannot only be contented with EU membership; this would lead Turkey be a captive of EU and 'globalization'. In terms of Cyprus conflict, DSP asserts that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is indispensable part of Turkey that TRNC's security is necessary for Turkey's security. In this framework, DSP declares that on contrary to some sayings, the strategic importance of the Northern Cyprus is increased and it should not be involved in some international games. For this issue, DSP will always show its sensitivities and continue its struggle.

In terms of Turkey-EU relations, it is seen that DSP approaches to the membership and democratization from security and protection of national sensitivities. According to the party program, DSP aims to foster the path to EU, and democratization, because if Turkey gets far away from democracy, this will weaken its relations with Western Europe which not only decrease Turkey's regional power and its influence, but also creates difficulties for it to

[33] Ibid. pp.46-47.

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solve some foreign problems such as to provide its national rights in Aegean, and to protect the rights of Turkish Cypriots. Moreover, by benefitting from Turkey's sliding towards its effecting zone, USA can force Turkey to make sacrifice on the issues such as Aegean and Cyprus conflict. In sum, DSP's foreign policy is highly associated with national security. Its support for EU membership is not because of the democratic values and reforms such as more human and minority rights the union demands or a social democratic party would seek-for, but because EU membership would bring a balance to Turkey's relations with USA and strengthen its hand on Aegean and Cyprus conflicts. Regarding the Turkey-EU relations, in the electoral manifesto, it is noted that DSP refused to treat Cyprus problem related to the European Union. DSP believes that EU's doors by itself will be opened to a democratic Turkey which is strengthening and becoming a leader in its region and without a necessity of a concession or to supplicate.

Similar to DSP, MHP also supports full membership to European Union which is noted to be state policy, however emphasizing the importance of "principled" foreign policy, the party demands mutual cooperation and understanding in Turkey-EU relations. According to the party's program the essence of Turkey's foreign policy should be providing peace in the region and the world and the continuity of international cooperation. However, the perception of peace and compromising should not be seen as surrendering and national benefits must be regarded over everything. In its program, MHP does not refer directly to Greek-Turkish relations and Aegean conflict, but it asserts that the Cyprus problem can be solved through bilateral trust and compromise which will establish humanitarian and permanent peace. Therefore, compared to DSP, it should be noted that MHP mentions and seeks for a solution for Cyprus conflict; however it avoids explaining how it will be achieved. MHP evaluates the Cyprus issue in a special subheading, where the party utters that the struggle of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus –which is considered as "little/baby land" in the eyes of Turkish nation-to exist has a vital and strategic importance for Turkey. Therefore, the Cyprus issue is a national case not only for the Cypriot brothers but also for the Republic of Turkey. Moreover, MHP finds EU's approach to Greek Cypriot community as one-sided, coercive and unacceptable. MHP declares that the party embraces "full membership target" as the principle which also became the state policy. However, EU has to abandon its policy towards Turkey in Cyprus and PKK issues and change its attitude which is gradually presenting a hostile approach. As an interesting point, according to MHP, a strong and modern Turkish

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Armed Forces is an indispensible condition for an effective foreign policy, as the obligations of Turkey's geopolitical location, history and cultural heritage entail Turkey to establish and manage a strong and sufficient "national defense system" .

ANAP's party program which has not been changed since the year it is founded (1983), similar to DSP and MHP asserts that the essence of Turkey's foreign policy is to provide the continuity of peace in the region and in the world. As a liberal rightist party, ANAP points out the importance of economical power to possess strong defense power for mainly national security. On the contrary to DSP and MHP, in its party program, ANAP does not mention about Greek-Turkish relations, Cyprus and Aegean conflicts.

The 57th Government of Turkey

The Program of the 57th Government[34] did not mention any commitments concerning foreign policy, however according to the Coalition Protocol[35] the government declares that it aims Turkey to become an active party in bilateral and multilateral international relations, while protecting Turkey's rights, interests and sensitivities. Hence, it can be said that the conditions given in the Coalition Protocol reflect DSP's and MHP's foreign policy concerns. Here are the titles in the Protocol related to Greek-Turkish and Turkey-EU relations.

- The first condition for conducting relations with any foreign country or international institution: no support to the secessionist terror in Turkey.
- Turkey's full membership to EU is a natural right derived from history, geography, and agreements. Turkey's goal to be a full member with equal rights and status to other members will be sought but in return, there would be no compromises of national rights or interest.
- Continuation of policies protecting and improving the already gained rights of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.
- Preconditions for improving relations with Greece: Greece should stop supporting terror acts in Turkey; Greece should accept dialogue for the resolution of bilateral conflicts; the shadow of EU should not be put on our relations.

The Government Protocol displays that for Turkey foreign policy is highly negotiated with national security and territorial sovereignty where even for EU-membership "there would be no compromises of national rights or

[34] http://www.belgenet.com/hukumet/program/57-1.html
[35] http://www.belgenet.com/hukumet/57hprotokol.html

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interest". Here, Greece plays a significant role for these sensitive points for Turkey due to the two tensions occurred before 1999 April elections. After Greece's veto on Turkey's EU candidacy in 1997 Luxembourg Summit, and considering the secret entry in Athens of the Kurdish leader of the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) Abdullah Öcalan in February 1999[36], and his not so secret transfer to the Greek embassy in Kenya and his capture by Turkish authorities, that seriously aggravating Greek-Turkish relations, Greece had been seem as a country constructs major threat to national sovereignty and that blocking its path to EU. Referring to Greece's closing the bilateral talks on Aegean conflict and its strategy to continue the status quo, the government protocol also demands Greece to accept dialogue for the resolution of bilateral conflicts (but sure first it has to stop its support to the secessionist terror in Turkey).

However, this frustrating tension between Greece and Turkey began to change through summer 1999, when they both alerted against the Kosovo Liberation Army following the bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by NATO on May and June 1999, that Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ismail Cem send a letter to his Greek counterpart George Papandreou (who replaced Pangalos after the Öcalan scandal) in May 1999 proposing cooperation with Greece jointly combat terrorism.[37] Meanwhile, Greece continued to block any large EU steps towards Turkey at the 3-4 June 1999 Cologne European Council, so that the then 15-member bloc appealed to Turkey to continue with economic and political reforms until the Union took up Turkey's case in six months at the Helsinki Summit. Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit criticized the EU for using Greece as an excuse to block Turkey's entrance into the Union.[38]

On the other hand, after the two devastating earthquakes that hit Turkey and Greece on August and September respectively, the support that each side

[36] Turkish Daily News. Elections Over: Back to Foreign Policy Agenda. 18.4.1999. http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/oldeditions.php?dir=04_18_99&d=probe&fn=FOREIGN2.HTM

[37] Cem precautiously underlined that the cooperation proposal he had recently extented to Greece should not be seen as an indication of a retreat from Ankara's position, and that any improvement in bilateral ties depended on Greece's termination of its support fort he terrorist PKK organization. Turkish Daily News. The Week in Perspective. 6.6.1999. http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/oldeditions.php?dir=06_06_99&d=probe&fn=DOM2.HTM

[38] Turkish Daily News. The Week in Perspective. 13.6.1999. http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/oldeditions.php?dir=06_13_99&d=probe&fn=DOM2.HTM

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displayed for the adversity of the other opened up a new channel of communication. This rapprochement not only broke the intense criticism that both Ismail Cem and George Papandreou received at home from opposition parties and the media, but also gave signals of a potential change in Greek foreign policy declaring that Greece was ready to let Turkey into the 15-nation union. What Greece was seeking in Helsinki was the confirmation by her European partners that the entry of Cyprus would not, in any way, be linked to the solution of the chronic Cyprus problem. George Papandreaou declared that there could be no final rapprochement with Turkey until there was a settlement regarding Cyprus, whereas Turkish President Süleyman Demirel warned Greece that the recently improved relations could worsen again, if Greece objected to Turkey's submission for the European Union.[39]

Greece's favorable position towards Turkey at the Helsinki conference- where Turkey's candidacy for membership of the EU was decided- became subject of intense debate between Greek political parties, that many believed that Greece should have received something substantial in exchange for her support, while others thought that Turkey's candidacy would provide Greece a negotiating hand that would, in the long run, force Turkey to adapt to the standards of behavior expected from an EU member states. As a result, at the Helsinki European Council (10-11 December 1999), Greece did not object to Turkey's candidacy and Turkey was finally granted candidate status by the EU.

On the other hand, even though since 1999, a significant Greek-Turkish rapprochement was achieved, these were mostly bilateral meetings between Turkish and Greek officials that have yielded more than a dozen agreements on largely non-controversial issues related to economic and cultural ties, border security, terrorism and cross-border crime, however not on the main debated problems between the two countries. Therefore, Turkey's EU candidacy and 1999 December Helsinki Summit is very crucial considering this candidacy opened the discussions on Aegean and Cyprus issues as well.

2.2 Analysis of 57th and 58th AKP Governments[40] (3 November 2002

[39] Turkish Daily News. The Week in Perspective. 12.12.1999. http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/oldeditions.php?dir=12_12_99&d=probe&fn=DOM2.HTM

[40] Since he served four months of a 10 month jail sentence for Islamist sedition in the late 1990s, AKP's party leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was banned from the parliament and not allowed to run for 3 November 2002 elections as a parliamentary candidate. Therefore, the 58th Government of Turkey is formed under the Prime Minister Abdullah Gül until Erdoğan

elections)

Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi [*Justice and Welfare Party*- AKP] declared its remarkable electoral victory after the 3 November 2002 national elections, in which it gained 34.25% of the total votes and received 363 of 550 seats in the Parliament that enabled it to form the new government as a single party, after the instable and problematic coalition governments of 1990s. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi [*Republican People's Party*- CHP] followed AKP as the second party with its 19.39% of votes and 178 deputies in the Parliament. As mentioned above, DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition was successful in their foreign policy regarding their government protocol; however its failure in to be organized and act during the devastating 1999 August earthquake and the major February 2001 economic crisis which caused a great discontent in public became the real reasons for the punishment of these parties in the following election. Moreover, because the previous and old-established parties failed to pass the 10% threshold, for the first time, 89% of the parliamentary seats were replaced with 490 newly elected MPs pointing out the high volatility and de-alignment ratio in Turkey.[41] This signified the relationship between the electoral system and party systems in Turkey.

Between the period of the 58th and 59th Government of Turkey (23 Kasım 2002- 19 Mart 2003) major international and domestic factors occurred to affect Turkey's foreign policy. First, after the announcement of the 58th Government formed under the Prime Minister Abdullah Gül, Turkey-EU relations entered a new phase with the "Copenhagen European Council" decisions of 12 December 2002 confirming that "The European Union encourages Turkey to pursue energetically its reform process. If the European Council in December 2004, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the Commission, decides that Turkey fulfills the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay". This decision made Prime Minister Abdullah Gül and the then unofficial leader of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to emerge from Copenhagen disenchanted and with the domestic support it created the result encouraged them to apply the reform package. As an important and related international factor to shape Turkey's foreign policy, the EU Summit in Copenhagen (13 December 2002) also decided that Cyprus should become a

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could enter the Parliament through the 9 March 2003 Parliamentary Renewal elections of Siirt, a small city in Southeastern Turkey. After this election, Abdullah Gül resigned and left his Prime Minister seat for Erdoğan, who established the 59th Government of Turkey.

[41] www.secimsonucu.com.

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member, together with nine other candidate countries.

Before 2002 elections, foreign policy encompasses an important part in party's program and it is presented under the same title with national security. Within this framework, CHP first asserts on political violence and terrorism that became a vital obstacle on Turkey and its democracy, and points out the necessity of powerful internal and external security through the institutions such as police and Turkish Armed Forces (which contributes to world peace and defends national liberty and security). After criticizing the passive and reactive Turkish foreign policy during Cold War, and its failure in targeting independent and permanent influence in international political processes, CHP asserts that only exception in this period was the party's Cyprus policy during 1970s. Regarding to its role on Cyprus events, CHP declares that the only solution for Cyprus issue is the protection of the granted rights of Northern Cyprus public and of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the transformation of the bilateral relations of the two communities to friendship, solidarity and permanent peace through the above understanding. CHP asserted that Turkey which would reach to the "modern civilization level" by applying EU's criteria, would gain an important prestige both in the West and in the East and would accomplish its historical mission of being a bridge of culture and accordance between the two civilizations. Turkey is a part of Europe with its history and geography.

In terms of Greek-Turkish relations, CHP aimed to continue sensible dialogue with Greece in order to solve the bilateral problems. Moreover, repeating its claim in their party program, CHP did not mention about a solution to Cyprus problem but pointed out its policy on protecting the granted rights of Northern Cypriots and providing a permanent peace between the two communities.

AKP constructs the liberal and more moderate wing of the pro-Islamist RP *Refah Partisi* [Welfare Party] which was forced to resign from the power in 28 February 1997 when National Security Council gave a "civil note" to the DYP-RP coalition government by accusing RP for involving radical religious actions in political life. Therefore, realizing the threat of military against its power, since it is founded, AKP has followed the discourse for democratization, freedom to speech and liberties by asserting statements like "the fundamental human rights and freedoms are acquisitions obtained by humanity after struggles lasting for centuries. Freedoms constitute the foundation of democracy". Through these discourses, it can be claimed that AKP perceived the European Union as the institution that can minimize the

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role of military in Turkish politics and be a quarantor to its survival. Moreover, it should be noted that the party program and the electoral manifesto had been prepared before Cyprus had been granted EU membership, thus they also represent Turkey's and AKP's concerns about Cyprus issue which constitutes a big obstacle on Turkey's path to EU membership. Similar to other parties AKP also positions the continuation of the relations with European nations at the top of the list in Turkey's foreign policy agenda, and again with the same discourse of the other political parties given above declares "Turkey has been in close relation with Europe both geographically and historically".

Related to Greek-Turkish relations, AKP asserts that relations with Turkey's neighbor Greece based on mutual economic interests shall be maintained increasingly and thanks to the environment of security provided by these relations, the ground will be prepared for the solution of more complex political problems. For Cyprus conflict, it is obviously seen that AKP is following an active and solution-prefered approach compared to the previous parties as it says that "it believes that the solution in Cyprus must be based on an agreement between the two States present on the island and that admission of the Greek Cypriot Section into the European Union before the solution of this problem will make this problem more complex". However, considering the public pressure on such a sensitive issues, AKP also adds that "it is of the view that in the solution of the Cyprus issue, the presence of the Turkish population on the island, its identity and its right for self-determination cannot be ignored" and cannot avoid to stress on the similar statement of the other parties that were examined in this thesis.

In its electoral campaign, AKP criticizes the groups which are opponent to Turkey's integration with Europe and defer the application of Copenhagen Criteria due to their ideological approaches on the issues of national sovereignty, national security, national interest, and national and local culture. In other words, in its electoral manifesto, AKP signals that it will not pursue the bureaucratic statist governance and aims necessary chances in the foreign policy especially for the EU membership.

As an interesting point, compared to the program of 57th Government of Turkey and the period before Greek-Turkish rapprochement, it is observed that the political parties do not perceive Greece as a country supporting terrorism in Turkey and an indirect threat to its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Here, related to Greek-Turkish relations, AKP asserts the significance of the continuation of relations with Turkey's neighbor Greece based on mutual economic interests, and by creating a security environment through these

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relations, building ground for the resolution of more complicated political conflicts.

Comparing the electoral manifesto of the effective political parties raced in 1999 and 2002 national elections, it can be said that AKP is the first party stating that it believes in the necessity for finding a solution to the Cyprus conflict absolutely. AKP continues that in this solution, it is certain that the existence, identity and right for self-determination of the Turkish community in the island will not be ignored. Very interestingly, again first time AKP explains the way for the solution, by saying "it is in the advantage of the both sides to establish a state governance composed of both sovereign communities as it is in Belgium". According to AKP, Cyprus membership to EU before the Cyprus conflict is solved will make the issue more complicated.

As the 58th AKP Government was formed after the Sept. 11th attacks, the program of the government mentions about its support to international cooperation against terrorism, and signifies Turkey's historical accumulation that based on cultural pluralism and dialogue through which the government will make active efforts for decreasing the tensions between religious and cultures that escalated by the attacks. Moreover, it is observed that after 1999 Helsinki summit that granted EU candidacy to Turkey, the relations with European countries, EU and fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria were highlighted intensively in the program.

Generally it is seen that the program of the 58th Government of Turkey highly overlaps with the party's electoral manifesto on foreign policy, except here regarding the Cyprus issue, AKP avoids to make a reference to the Belgium model and instead declares that Turkey welcomes the peace initiative made (on 11 November 2002) by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.[42] However, regarding Turkey's relations with Greece, the bilateral agreements continued however no process was succeeded for the Aegean issue.

USA's intervention to Iraq in 2003, changed AKP's and Turkey's foreign policy direction from EU to the Middle-East. Hence, AKP Government mentioned that Turkey will take more initiatives in nearby crisis areas and attempt to contribute to the resolution of these crises in a more concrete way, where the approach developed by the first AKP Government concerning the

[42] The plan for the solution of the Cyprus issue that Annan submitted on 11 November 2002, aimed to obliging the leaders of both communities to reach a solution to allow the two parts of the island to become members of the EU. The main points of reference were the single sovereignty of the new state and the powers of its two constituent entities, the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots.

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crisis in Iraq succeeded to be a serious model for the world and appreciated. With regard to the war in Iraq, after declaring that the party supports US' war against global terrorism, the government emphasized its concern about the confusion and methodological mistakes arising regarding the issue, such that the AKP government is in favor of ending uncertainty in Iraq, hopes that the conflict in Iraq will be resolved under UN framework and attributes special importance to the preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity and political unity.

In March 2003, Cyprus peace talks collapsed after an inconclusive meeting in the Hague between Greek and Turkish Cypriots when 10 March, Denktaş simply refused any referendum on the plan while newly elected president of the Southern Cyprus Tassos Papadopoulos, who was distinctly less enthusiastic about the Annan Plan than previous president Glafkos Clerides, adopted a more moderate attitude by accepting the referendum. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced the end of efforts to reunite Greek and Turkish Cypriots before the island signed an accession treaty to the European Union. European Commission warned Turkey that its bid to join the EU could suffer after the failure of UN-brokered talks to reunite Cyprus. Signing the treaty boosted the status of the Southern Cyprus and created the conditions for a resumption of the efforts to solve the Cyprus issue on the basis of the Annan Plan, while Turkish Cypriot leader Denktaş commented that the signing of an EU accession treaty by the Greek Cypriots sealed Cyprus's partition and reunification was only possible with Turkey's entry into the bloc.[43] In the following time, in December 2003 elections, Turkish Cypriots voted for the Mehmet Ali Talat's pro-EU Republican Turkish Party (CTP), which formed a coalition with Serdar Denktaş's Democratic Party (DP).

With the referendum of 24 April 2004, the Greek Cypriots rejected the Annan Plan by a majority of 76%, while the Turkish Cypriots voted in favor by 65%. The accession of Cyprus to the EU on 1 May 2004 offered the Cypriot government a serious advantage, while the Turkish Cypriots continued to be deprived of an internationally recognized state entity. However, the notion that the Greek Cypriots favor seeing the Cyprus problems solved while the Turkish Cypriots are opposed to any proposal for a solution, has since been reversed. Turkish Cypriots leadership started to advocate in US and EU capitals an end to the isolation of Northern Cyprus based on their strong 'yes' in the referendum.

2007 electoral campaign and AKP's party program signifies a sharp

[43] Turkish Daily News. The week in perspective. 20.4.2003
http:/www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/oldeditions.php?dir=04_20_03&fn=dom2.htm

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change in AKP's foreign policy regarding Turkish-Greek and EU relations. First, despite efforts and taken risk at Cyprus issue for a solution, facing with disappointments at the international affairs began to make a change in AKP's foreign policy approach; because when the party chose solution-preferred perspective rather than status-quo, it became more open to criticizations by the domestic actors for 'selling the national interests and case'. The second AKP government ended with the decision for earlier elections when on 27 April 2007, TSK declared that it gave a "civil note" to AKP for dragging the country into tension in the period of presidential selection.

3. Back to the Status-quo: 60th AKP Government (22 July 2007 elections)

In the 22 July 2007 national elections, AKP became the first party by gaining 46,58% of the votes, and again came to power as the single party with 341 seats under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's leadership. AKP was followed by CHP with its 20,88% of votes and 112 deputies in the Parliament, and became the main opponent party. MHP with 14,7% voter share became the second opponent party. Lastly, 26 independent candidates were elected as deputies, and 21 of them are gathered under the pro-Kurdish Demokratik Toplum Partisi [*Democratic Society Party*- DTP]. The former Ministery of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül was elected as the President of Turkey, and his place was taken by the former Ministery of Economy, Ali Babacan.

In general, compared to the electoral campaigns run in the previous elections, for the 22 July 2007 elections, it is observed that foreign policy encompasses more significant place in parties' electoral manifesto. While AKP tries to defense its foreign policy during the 58th and 59th Government of Turkey, the other parties try to display the mistakes in these policies that perceived to threaten Turkey's national interests and they criticize AKP's attitudes mainly in Cyprus issue and Turkey's bid to join to EU.

In its manifesto, CHP depicts a pessimistic air for Turkey, where the Republic is at the most difficult and dangerous period of its history due to terrorism that targeted national integrity. According to CHP, previous AKP government is responsible for this by signing the agreement that deters Turkish troops from entering the Northern Iraq, by presenting a surrendered foreign policy and by bringing the 1 March memorandum to the Parliament that can drag Turkey into the war in Iraq. Generally, CHP accuses AKP for giving away Turkey's fundamental interests in order to gain foreign support in domestic politics. According to CHP, by approving open accession

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negotiations with the EU, Turkey gave the impression that it can accept a status another than full-membership. Moreover, related to Cyprus issue, CHP asserts that the government could not resist the foreign pressures and signed the additional protocol that ensures the legitimization and recognition of the South Cyprus Greek Governance, as a result the government could not avoid Turkey's negotiation process with EU to be bond to Cyprus. Meanwhile, EU granted membership to the Greek Cypriots that rejected Kofi Annan's plan, however continued its embargo to the Northern Cyprus Turkish Governance by pursuing its policy to punish the Turkish Cypriots who accepted the Plan. According to CHP, the government's attempts regarding the applied embargo were ineffective, and although AKP made a unilateral sacrifice by accepting the Greek Cypriot ships and planes to enter to Turkish ports, due to CHP's reaction it could not present the protocol to the Parliament for the approval. CHP declares that the party will try to solve the problems with Greece, by establishing dialogue and by guarding a balance of mutual interests. The party asserts, it will pursue active politics especially for the protection of the rights and interests of Turkey's cognates living in the Western Thrace based on Lausanne Agreement and other international agreements.

Compared to CHP's electoral manifesto, it is seen that the Nationalist Movement Party depicts a more pessimistic and dark condition for Turkey, however it does not accuse the previous AKP government for the "bankrupt of the foreign policy and for the dark picture" as much as CHP does. Referring to the previous AKP governance, MHP remarks that inconsistency, instability and disorganization dominated the last five years of the foreign policy. Such that, Turkey's national interests are treated as a bargaining subject, its national cases are seen as a burden, and they are sacrificed to give-and-break away mentality.

Although, MHP was one of the coalition parties of the 57th Government of Turkey that initiated Turkey-EU relations by approving the various political reform packages[44] in order to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria that resulted in deepening Turkey's Europeanization process, in its 2007 electoral campaign, the party announces that Turkey is not doomed to, dependent to and convicted to be dragged along the EU's orbit. Furthermore, after defining the Turkey-EU relations as a morbid body which can lead to gangrene in the future, MHP demands from the EU to be clear on its conditions regarding Turkey's national

[44] These reforms can be summarized under the broader headings of increased legal protection of social, cultural and political rights of all Turkish citizens irrespective of religious and ethnic origin, the role of military in Turkish politics, and freedom of expression in Turkey. Baç, "Turkey's Political Reforms", pp.22-23.

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integrity and solidarity, on terrorism, on Cyprus, Greece and Armenia issues.

For the 22 July 2007 electoral campaign, AKP tries to explain and defend its foreign policy approach during its governance since 2002. AKP asserts that when it came to power, it was said there were no possibility to produce an alternative policy on foreign policy area especially on EU, Iraq and Cyprus issues. In AKP's electoral manifesto, foreign policy regarding Turkey's relation with Greece is not given, only the party mentions about the mutual visit and communications between Turkish and Greek General Staff that became regular as an example for AKP's "zero problems with the neighbor countries" principle that forms the backbone of the party's policy towards the neighbor countries. AKP asserts that in its previous governance, the party abandoned the reactive attitudes for Cyprus and developed new initiatives, while it grounded its research on EU membership process to a realistic program. The manifesto continues by uttering on the other hand, with the active diplomacy exhibited at Cyprus, which is Turkey's national case that lasting more than half century, an advantage has been granted and eventually at the 17 December 2004 Summit the beginning of the accession negotiations with the EU is decided. AKP defines Turkey's two main strategic targets in its Cyprus policy as the improvement of the international activity of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) for ensuring the security and welfare of the Turkish Cypriots and the protection of balance and stability at Eastern Mediterranean.

In contrast to CHP's and MHP's statements that accuse AKP's policy on Cyprus as a concession from the national interests, here AKP declares that with its dynamic policy while Turkey gained a big psychological advantage, it also improved TRNC's international legitimacy and activity. According to AKP, in respect of 2002, through this dynamic policy, without giving any compromise from its national interests, without withdrawing soldiers, and without giving a square-meter territory, Turkey eluded from the international pressure. As a result, the pressing policy of the Greek lobby which has the power to effect the Turkey-USA relations by reasoning Cyprus, totally lost its effectiveness. Moreover, a significant increase is observed in TRNC's international communications, such that while before the President could only contacts with UN authorities, first time he visited Pakistan as the official guest of the President of Pakistan, and made official meetings with EU Commission President, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of USA, UK, Russia, Germany, France and Holland.

For the first year of its governance, AKP government is occupied with

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domestic events more than the international developments. The secular-religious cleavage which leaded to early elections due to AKP's suggestion to appoint Abdullah Gül as the President of Turkish Republic, became more apparent when AKP again got the majority of the votes in 22 July 2007 elections and nominated Gül as the President again. With the support of DTP and MHP, the votes approving Gül's Presidency exceeded 367 votes in the Parliament and Gül is appointed as the President.

In March 2008, Turkish politics is paralyzed with the indictment of the court that accused the governing party of trying to turn Turkey, a secular democracy, into an Islamic state, and the case had moved Turkey to a final confrontation between religious and secular Turks about who would govern. In July, the Constitutional Court fell just one vote short of closing down the AKP, but cut the party's state funding by half in response to charges that it had threatened the secular regime during its six years in power.

For the Greek-Turkish Relations, a small-scale tension which is not related to Aegean or Cyprus conflict emerged when in the Bucharest NATO Summit (3 April 2008)[45], an invitation to Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) for the alliance is not granted and extended as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue with Greece has been reached, while Turkey announced that it recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name. Interestingly, despite the declaration of independence of Kosovo, South Oseatia and Ahbazia in 2008, and Greek Cypriots' membership to the EU, still not a division but a reunification was emphasized by both Greece, Turkey and also by the Greek and Turkish Cypriots as well.

4. Greece as the Energy Route Securing Neighbor? 61st- 66 AKP Governments (2011-2018)

In November 2007, Turkey-Greece Natural Gas Pipeline which started in 2005 was completed. The Turkey–Greece pipeline is a 296 kilometres (184 mi) natural gas pipeline, which connects Turkish and Greek gas grids. The pipeline begins in Karacabey in Turkey and runs to Komotini in Greece. The Interconnector Turkey–Greece–Italy (ITGI) is a natural gas transportation project proposed in the framework of the Southern Gas Corridor. It was proposed for the transportation of natural gas from Azerbaijan's Shah Deniz

[45] Article 20, Bucharest Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008, http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html.

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gas field Phase II to markets in Europe via Greece and Italy. Although, the Turkey–Greece pipeline was completed in 2007, the future of the Greece–Italy pipeline project is unclear due to the competing Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP). Since it will enhance energy security and diversify gas supplies for several European markets, the TAP project is supported by the European institutions and seen as a "Project of Common Interest" and a part of the Southern Gas Corridor. Southern Gas Corridor will contribute to Economic Growth in Transit Countries, boost the countries' roles as energy hubs in the region, directly contribute to GDP through taxes, direct and indirect employment during construction and operation, procurement of goods and services via eligible local suppliers, social and environmental investments (community investment programs), spillover effects: news skills and expertise for companies and workers. Compared to whole South Caucasus Corridor Project, TAP consists a very short part of the transaction and it is expected to benefit Albania more than Turkey.

Therefore although Turkish-Greek pipeline is crucial to base these two countries relations to an internationally important energy relation, it is interesting to reduce Turkish-Greek relations mainly on two energy route and trade interactions. As both Greece and EU countries had deep economic crisis during 2008, the party program and electoral campaign of AKP in 2011 compares economic indicators of them with Turkey. Meanwhile, political, economic and cultural cooperation with neighbors (including Greece) was highlighted. Similarly in the 2015 electoral campaign party declares that "Turkey began to export gas to Greece"; signed agreements to start project TransAnatolia Natural Gas Project (TANAP) and planning Trans Adriatic Project (TAP) which will carry the gas to Italy via Greece and Albania, which emphasizes that "Turkey became a transmission hub".

When we came to 2018 national elections, AKP which had initiated the peace talks at Cyprus during the early 2000s, mentions only with some sentences about its policy for the island under the title 'things we had done and will make in' saying they will continue to support Turkish people's rights for a permanent and fair peace in Cyprus.

Due to 2015 abortive coup, intensive bomb attacks in Turkey and planned regime change from parliamentary system to presidential system during 2015-2016 period, it is clear that AKP focused more on the domestic politics rather than foreign policy. Moreover, not Europe nor Greece, but Middle East, crisis in Syria and terrorist threats (ISIS-FETÖ-YPG) were at its

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agenda.[46] Interestingly, although Greece granted asylum to 8 commandos accused to be involved in 2016 coup attempt, it has not pictured as a country supporting terrorism or instability in Turkey by any parties.

From 2011 to 2018, while electoral campaigns of the opposition parties also focused highly on domestic concerns and especially EU became less important, CHP began to have a more active and solution-preferred discourse regarding Cyprus and Aegean problems. The party states a similar diplomacy that achieved with Greece can be conducted with Armenia in order to moderate relations. In its 2015 campaigns stressed to improve relations with Greece based on good neighborhood and friendship, where it is believed "Aegean sea will not divide but unite our people". Moreover, Greek side's approach is adopted by saying "if mutual agreement is sustained, we can take the frozen conflicts to international court". However, this active discourse left its place to silence in 2018 elections, where the campaign did not mention Greece nor Cyprus.

Within all this term, whether it is an opposition to AKP or an electoral ally, MHP has not changed and continued its rigid foreign policy statements regarding EU, Cyprus and Aegean issues. In its 2011 party campaign, MHP declares it will support continuation of negotiation process with the EU on condition that its approach to terrorism, separatism, Cyprus, Greece and Armenia issues will not harm our interests on Turkey's unity and solidarity. Regarding Cyprus issue which is mentioned as the most important national case of Turkey, MHP states "we will not let extermination of Turkishness under the name of political resolution" and our party believes the only realist resolution is a common structure with two regions, two nations and two states. It is electoral campaign in 2015, MHP displays similar expressions but also highlights 'the occupation of new Aegean islands by Greece» as new threat. However when it comes to 2018, although similar statements are given for Cyprus and the EU, the electoral manifesto does include no words on Greece and its occupation of islands.

Pro-Kurdish parties which are also adopted leftist ideology, namely DTP-BDP-HDP line, perceive foreign and domestic politics not at state-level but on people-level as 'exploited or suppressed vs. exploiters or imperialist". Although the party is pro-EU for its principals such as human rights, local democracy, separation of powers, rule of law, it is also critical to international organizations for their neo-liberal and 'imperialist' activities during Greece's

[46] In the ehe electoral campaigns Gülenist organization 'FETÖ' took place for 20 times.

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economic crisis and Syrian migration problem. As electoral promise, HDP mentions a similar diplomacy made by Greece will be initiated with Armenia and embargo will be lifted. The party declares that "we will continue to support solution proposals and attempts made by Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities to end division of the Island" which signifies that the pro-Kurdish party finds solution to regional problems on democratic unification but not in division.

Question is can we reduce Greek-Turkish relations mainly on energy route and trade interactions as the incumbent party AKP does in its electoral campaigns since 2007? In terms of trade volume and economic interactions between two countries, until 2011 since the announcement of Turkey's candidacy to the EU, foreign direct investment flew was significant to create rapid growth in the country. Based on the good neighborhood, Greece became the third investing country (after US and Holland) in Turkey until 2007 economic crisis. Between the period 2002-2008, trade volume increased more than 6 billion dollars, however it remained at 5,6 billion dollars in 2015. Foreign trade volume between them during the period 2000-2008 multiplied 10 times and reached to 2.315 millon euros, and again due to the global crisis in 2008, deduced 18%. However, still it should be noted that Greece is not among the first 15 countries that Turkey exports or imports. Hence although improving since Greek-Turkish rapprochement started on early 2000s, these numbers are insignificant compared to Turkish-German trade volume.

5. Findings and Conclusion

This paper tried to examine, discuss and answer the six crucial and related questions which in general declares that the role of the political parties present in the governments of Turkey is significant to determine Turkey's foreign policy regarding Greek-Turkish relations, and as a crucial regional factor, EU-membership opportunity initiated the good relations with Greece, and the alternation of the governments' attitude towards more sensitive policy areas. Although Aegean conflict is more crucial for Turkey's sovereignty rights and national interests, it is not mentioned in the electoral campaigns as much as Cyprus issue.

While foreign policy remains as a secondary or indifferent factor in the manifesto of the parties unless the party played a more active role in the previous ruling term, it is linked to national security issues, and parties intended to follow the status quo as the opponent parties can use any clear decision as a threat against them. Since 2011 AKP's foreign policy converted

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from active role to status-quo in Turkey's relation with Greece and EU.

The paper stated that compared to Turkey's other neighbors and partners energy and trade relations, the volume with Greece are more limited. The bilateral agreements and cooperation on soft areas continued however no process was succeeded for the Aegean issue. Yet, the soldier crisis occurred since 2016 abortive coup indicated that both parties prefer to solve tensions in diplomatic ways, and deter to lose the good-neighborhood bridge they launched since the early 2000s. Hence, for bilateral relations 'elites' framing' is very crucial to influence foreign policy and public opinion. In the electoral campaigns after 2007, more than Greece and the EU, the new threats are given as USA and Middle East problems- especially related to YPG. During the 1990s Ankara used rely on the American Jewish community will help ease the problems it encounters in the U.S. congress from pro-Greek, pro-Armenian, pro-Kurdish, and human rights lobbies. EU had taken the place for the American Jewish community in order to balance Turkey's relations with the big powers. This power is seem to be lost during the AKP government's Islamist foreign policy.

Conclusion

In the comparison of DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition government and 2 electoral terms of AKP government, several important facts regarding Turkish political parties and their role on foreign policy structuring Greek-Turkish relations has been situated. It can be said that, beside these parties' orientation to foreign policy, the party's leadership dynamics or their incentives in shaping their approach to Greek-Turkish relations, main regional developments had also played an important role in Turkey's foreign policy change.

Greek-Turkish relations started to go on a positive path during the DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition government period, and it continued to improve during AKP's governance, whereas no settlement had been achieved on most debated Aegean issue. Again the positive impact on Turkey-EU relations achieved through the coalition government term with the 1999 Helsinki Summit, reached to a more welcoming level during AKP's governance with 2002 Copenhagen Summit. Lastly, while due to its leader, Bülent Ecevit, DSP has a negative stance on the Cyprus conflict; AKP governance established a positive impact on this issue.

On the other hand, despite its positive impact on Cyprus issue and Turkey-EU relations, during its governance years of AKP, the long-standing Cyprus and Aegean issues between Greece and Turkey had not been solved. As

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Veremis noted, on the Aegean problem, Greece has been the part preferring to continue the "status quo" policy, therefore a comparative work studying on the Greek political parties and their attitudes towards Greek-Turkish relations is necessary to draw a more comprehensive picture to observe the foreign policy change cycle that Hagan and Rosati mentioned.

Regarding the Cyprus conflict, through 2007-2008 with the alternation of the leaders in both Turkish and Greek side of Cyprus (Mehmet Ali Talat in 2005 and Dimitrios Christofias in 2008) a new phase of negotiations for a solution in Cyprus started. However considering that Turkish and Greek Cypriots perceive the Cyprus problem very differently and they even ground the beginning of the issue on different dates[47], a consistent and stable peaceful settlement does not look easy in short-run period.

CHRONOLOGY of EVENTS

- **12-13 December 1997** *Luxembourg Summit*: EC decided not to include Turkey among the list of candidate countries
- **16 February 1999**: Capture of Abdullah Öcalan by the Turkish authorities at the Greek embassy in Kenya
- **18 April 1999** *National Elections in Turkey*: 57th Government of Turkey (DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition government) is formed.
- **May- June 1999**: Bombing of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by NATO.
- **May 1999**: Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ismail Cem sent a letter to his Greek counterpart George Papandreou proposing cooperation with Greece jointly combat terrorism.
- **17 August 1999:** Earthquake happened in the Marmara region of Turkey with 7.4 magnitudes.
- **7 September 1999**: Earthquake hit Athens, Greece with 5.9 magnitudes.
- **10-11 December 1999** *Helsinki Summit*: Greece did not object to Turkey's candidacy and Turkey granted EU candidate status.

[47] For the Turkish side the Cyprus problem dates back to 1963 when Greek Cypriots started their attacks in the island. For the Greek Cypriots, the problem started in 1974 when Turkey "invaded" the island. This contradiction on the ground of the problem makes it more difficult to achieve a solution that satisfies both parties.

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- **3 November 2002** National Elections in Turkey: 58th Government of Turkey (AKP single-party government) is formed.
- **11 November 2002**: UN Secretary General Kofi Annan announced the Peace Plan.
- **23 November 2002**: AKP welcomed the peace initiative made by Kofi Annan.
- **12-13 December 2002** *Copenhagen Summit*: The European Council announced that in December 2004, if Turkey fulfills the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay.
- **25 February 2003**: The "1 March memorandum" that secures American bases and airports and agrees to a Turkish military presence in Iraq is rejected.
- **9 March 2003** Parliamentary Renewal elections of Siirt: 59th Government of Turkey (AKP single-Party government) is formed under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's leadership.
- **March 2003**: Cyprus peace talks collapsed.
- **16 April 2003**: The EU summit signed the treaty of accession with Greek Cypriots.
- **24 April 2004** *Referendum for Annan Plan*: The Greek Cypriots rejected the Annan Plan by a majority of 76%, while the Turkish Cypriots voted in favor by 65%.
- **1 May 2004**: The accession of Cyprus to the EU.
- **16-17 December 2004** *Brussels European Council*: Turkey and the EU sealed an agreement to open membership talks on 3 October 2005.
- **1 May 2005**: Mehmet Ali Talat became the new President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
- **27 April 2007**: The note given by the Turkish Armed Forces on to the pro-Islamist incumbent party AKP.
- **22 July 2007** *National Elections in Turkey*: AKP came to power again as single-party government
- **17 February 2008**: Kosovo declared its independence.
- **24 February 2008**: Pro-reunification leader Dimitrios Christofias became the new President of Cyprus (Greek).
- **December 2008:** Economic crisis and upheavals in Greece

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- **2010-2013:** Syrian Refugee Flux to Greece from Turkey
- **15 July 2016:** Abortive Coup attempt made by the Gulenist fraction within the Turkish Army. 8 commondos flight to Greece and seek for asylum.
- **March 2018 – August 2018:** Turkey arrested two Greek soldiers on illegally entry and released them on August.

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