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# US Policy Toward Turkey and its Regional Dimensions

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**Abstract:** This study is to analyze the US policy towards Turkey and its regional dimensions in the last five years through the perspective of pivotal state theory. As well as the role of Turkey in the new middle East. According to pivotal state theory or hot spot, Turkey is the classic example of a pivotal state with important geographical location, large population, significance economic and soft power influence in addition to its ability to affect regional and international stability. The study seeks to answer three questions: Why Turkey is pivotal to US policy? To what extend the tensions in the relationship affect the Turkey's role in the region? What is the future of Turkish role in the new order of middle East? We argue that despite the deteriorated relations between Washington and Ankara in the previous five years but it will follow the trend toward improvement in the future. On the other hand the regional role of Turkey will follow the trend toward decline.

**Key words:** US policy, regional dimensions, new middle east, pivotal state theory, international stability

## INTRODUCTION

Turkey is the classic example of a pivotal state according to pivotal state theory or hot spot, with important geographical location, large population, significance economic and soft power influence as well as its ability to affect regional and international stability. (Chase *et al*., 1996).

The fundamental transformation occurred in the system of government in Turkey 2002 where the Turkish elections produced the islamic justice and development party (AKP), led to essential implications domestically and regionally. Consequently, these shifts affected the relations between Turkey and the United States. The (AKP) presented different visions of Turkish role in the region politically, economically and militarily. This vision characterized by momentum in the Turkish foreign policy towards the West and the East. Orientation towards the Arab region and its issues was a new matter in this vision inspired by the legacy of the historic ottoman empire and dependent on the Turkish cultural and economic invasion in order to support the weight of the country in the region but without a drop to open up to the West.

Turkey has been an important North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally for the united states since 1952. They share in many values and interests. Since, 2009, US policy trend was to evolve this relationship but domestic and regional issues affected the bilateral relations between both countries. Key questions for this analysis: why Turkey is pivotal to US policy? To what extend the tensions in the relationship affect the Turkey's role in the region? What is the future of the Turkish role in the new order of the Middle East? We argue that in spite of the deteriorated relations in the previous years between the two allies but it will follow the trend toward improvement in the future. On the other hand the regional role of Turkey will follow the trend toward decline.

**Why Turkey is so pivotal?:** Turkey is among the first group of countries that gained the attention of US official, when it comes to issues related to foreign policy. In addition, Turkey is being a US ally rather than NATO. During the last decade, Turkey was able to strengthen its position-after years of isolation-as one of the most important emerging powers in the region. It becomes a key figure in many complicated issues in the Middle East. Turkey has a unique set of factors allowed it to occupy this position such as geostrategic location, economic and demographical significance and inspiring political model of governance.

**Geostrategic location:** Turkey's location represents a cornerstone in the contemporary Turkish foreign policy and in highlighting Turkey as influential power which has economic, cultural, ethnic and strategic extensions. At a multifaceted crossroads between East and West, North and south, Christendom and Islam (Chase *et al*., 1996) Turkey is the bridge that links all these contents and raises its geostrategic value. This geo-strategic location has international and regional dimensions as.

It is a defensive strategic tool or rather it was the most important card for Turkey in return for the European

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and American security umbrella. It was a natural barrier against the extension of the Soviet Union to the warm seas and the Middle East. Turkey was keen to, after the Cold War, exploit its geopolitical location to enhance its value, to participate as an influential factor in international events and to obtain political gains in the shadow of the absence of the communist threat. The emersion of independent states in the caucasus and central Asia was a unique opportunity which has been exploited by (AKP) in order to crystallize an effective regional policy as a pivotal regional power. Turkey's location granted it common cultural, geopolitical and ethnic extensions with the adjacent states whether the post-Soviet Union countries or the Arab countries while it maintained the distinctive relationship with the West.

Turkey's critical location near several global hotspots makes it valuable for the United States and NATO as a starting point, station and transport of arms, cargo and personnel especially in times of crisis (Zanotti, 2014, 2016) Turkey's geostrategic value for the United States is symbolized by The "Incirlik" air base near the city of Adana with nearly 1500 US personnel. The base is the reported home of vaults holding about 60-70 US tactical, aircraft-deliverable B61 nuclear gravity bombs under the auspices of NATO (Jim Zanotti). The base has been used to support US and NATO operation in Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan and recently in the international coalition against ISIS 2015.

Turkey's geographical location made it as a major international transportation hub for energy to set up a southern passage for natural gas from various sources. At the end of 2011, both Azerbaijan and Turkey reached an agreement whereby the natural gas transportation to and from Turkey is done via Trans-Anatolia Pipeline (TNAP) which is scheduled to start pumping in 2018. Such agreement is characterized that the exporting gas to Europe is not from Russia or Iran (Zanotti, 2013).

## DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE

Turkey has a very important demographic and economic weight where it has a population of about 79.5 million, 99.8% of Sunni Muslims, according to the statistics of 2015 (CIA, 2009). As for the economic weight, Turkey provides a unique model of economic growth. Its economic experience is one of the key figures in returning to the Middle East. Therefore, its experience in this area is considered pioneer, attractive and inspiring to such state that was suffering from a severe crisis by 2002. Turkish economy listed among seven rising economic powers in the world along with China, Brazil india, Mexico and Russia. It occupies the 17th place economically in the world (Raymond, 2012). In less than a decade, according the World Bank statistics, per capita income in the country has nearly tripled and exceeded $10,500 (The World Bnk, 2016). Thanks to AKP's economic policy that adopted financial and fiscal reforms by granted facilities to attract capitals, protect the private sector, improving the services sector and upholds transparency in the economy. In 2015, the Turkish economy achieved development which exceeded all economic expectations despite economic set of variables globally and regionally which led to a sort of slowdown in the global economy. It is the most emerging economic powers globally open in foreign investment restrictions, much more either Brazil or the united states (Raymond).

**Turkey: The inspiring political model. Still inspiring??** Since 2002, Turkey broke the isolation barrier due to the distinct strategic vision adopted by justice and development Party (AKP). After few years, Turkey was able to achieve a remarkable success on democracy and economic development level and declared the policy of zero problems with its regional environment. This led to a kind of admiration with the Turkish ruling model. The controversy began to rise about the suitability of the application of this model to the Arab world. Particularly, the Turkish rising during the first decade of the second millennium coincided with a severe Arab decline in the national policies and the Palestinian issue. This resulted in what could be called "a regional power vacuum" which led to the outbreak of successive Arab uprising in 2011 and then the fall of these Arab regimes. These uprisings accompanied by a prominent rise of islamic movements such as muslim brotherhood movement in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. The Turkish model enjoys the American and Western blessing and also international openness in all directions, unlike the Iranian radical model. However, since 2013, the admiration for the Turkish model largely retreated on the Arab and Western level. The Turkish policies have been criticized internally and externally. The political Philosophy adopted by AKP in its beginning was a matter of time in order to reassure the regional neighbors. The internal democracy proved to be formalities after the suppression of unrest in Taksim Square in 2013. Also, the internal policies adopted by the government to transform Turkey into a presidential state led to the multiplication of president power. As a result of this, a failed military coup occurred in 2016 which was followed by large violations in human rights and repressive policies affected different segments of society. However, the posed question: is this model will success in the application? Will it fit for reproduction and inspiration? If yes, it leads us to ask a question: Why the

Turkish model specifically? In other words what are the sources of its appeal? If No, it calls for the question about the reasons for the failure of this model in reaching other countries in the region.

## ELEMENTS OF ATTRACTION

The Turkish model attraction comes from three elements:

**First, harmonization between islam and modernity:** One of the factors of growing mutual relations between the United States and the Turkish state in the era of barack Obama is to support the Turkish model as a potential political model in the Middle East in countries beyond the Arab revolutions. The Turkish model linked with Islamic ideology belief and associated with modernity, therefore, it is a model presented itself as a convenient project in today's world and occupying a middle area between retro and modernity with its democracy and compromise concepts that strike a sympathetic chord to many Arabian intellectuals. Turkish experience provided a practical response refutes the contradiction between islam and modernity.

**Second: The will to export the Turkish model:** The talk about the Turkish model is talk about the AKP experience in governance since 2002. The AKP is proud of his vision and sees it fits for export and application in the regional context. The party which describes itself as "a conservative and democratic party... has now been fully established and become a political attraction. It is a source of inspiration for regional countries (AK parti)

The AKP exploited the complete absence of Arab leadership charisma, the spread of corruption and repression in the Arabic regimes, the silence of Arabic leaders towards what happened in palestinian issue especially the blockade and the Israeli wars on Gaza 2008 and 2012, the charisma of Recep Tayyib Erdogan, to coincide with the huge spread of the Turkish cultural soft power and T.V series which highlights the Ottoman empire era and its Sultans. It described them as a universal just leaders. Erdogan became the 21th century image of The Turkish Sultan in many arab fiction.

**Third: the historical legacy:** The Neo Ottoman is an expression referring to the legacy of the ottoman empire that controlled the region for four hundred years. The leaders of AKP tried to distance themselves from this concept but later but on November 23, 2009 Ahmet Davutoglo said: "Yes, we are the new Ottomans". Relying on historic legacy as one of the sources of the Turkish model attraction is questionable. Although, Arabs lived under the governance of the Ottoman Empire for four centuries, there was a huge gap between the Arabs and the Turks, most of the Arabs believed that era was bleak Turkish colonialism.

**Why did the Turkish model lose its glamour?:** The emergence of the Turkish model as applicable regime came in a definitive moment in the region. This moment has been exceeded and the glamour of this model has been retailed as a result of internal reasons related to the Turkish domestic level and external circumstances pertained to the regional level and the turmoil of transitional phase of the "Arab spring" . What is worth mentioning is that the emergence of this form of model was a result of social, economic and political development that occurred inside Turkey to reach AKP to power in 2002. The roots of AKP attributes to Islamists. However, it developed moderate political program in elections of 2002 in order to win voters and to convince the population that it is not a religious party. The successive success of the party helped it to add an additional support for its power. This made the party immoderate and prejudiced since 2013. The Islamic parties may adopt a moderate situation to gain access to power but they often back to the far right as soon as its popularity is enhanced. On the other hand, development occurred at the level of Arab political thought will be rigidity in the movement which was to the emergence of different Islamic visions resulted in organizations and movements of the so-called "political Islam" which considered the Turkish model as applicable model to the Arab regimes. In general, the most reasons for the decline of the Turkish model are:

**First: The loss of causes of attraction:** Talking about the Turkish model cannot be achieved until the political Islam movements are escalated and the effectiveness of Turkey's foreign policy under the AKP towards the Middle East is to be effective. The historical heritage is not fit to be a cause to inspire a regime model. In addition, the desire to export the Turkish experiment cannot resonate without a broad popular base receiving this desire. In the light of the Islamic movement's Failure, the popular impetus to the Turkish model retreated. Furthermore, the American supporting for Turkey proved a limited impact in the Arab world and what happened in Egypt is the biggest proof of that as well as the endless of the syrian crisis.

**Second: The loss of American support for the model:** One of the reasons for the growth of bilateral relations

between the united states and the Turkish state in the era of president Barack Obama is to support the introducing of the Turkish model as applicable model to the Middle East region in the post-Arab revolutions, especially the Islamic movements introduced itself as the best organized political movements and they can be substitute for the previous regimes. However, since 2013, the accelerated changes, whether in Turkey's inside or in the arab countries revolution occurred, led to the decline of the american interest in the Turkish model and even the less of this model's brightness. This was due to the tension relations occurred between two countries resulting from differing in priorities in applying strategies in the Arab revolution countries, especially Syria. Second, the implications of recep tayyip erdogan's policy inside Turkey aimed to concentrate more power in the hands of president. This power emerged in the suppression of freedoms, covering up corruption cases and repressive policies. Third, the Arab revolution countries rejected the rule of the Islamic parties, most notably Egypt which carried out the revolution of July 2013 and even if the American initial position was hostile to the revolution, it would not be able to ignore the popular crowd which demanded the departure of these types of regimes.

**US policy towards Turkey and its regional repercussions:** The previous eight years was a milestone not only in the history of the Middle East but also at the level of Turkish-American relations. President Barack Obama's first overseas trip was Turkey on April 6, 2009. Signaling the importance and priority of US-Turkish relations, such start was very significant and unveils the direction of the american administration to strengthen the common relations between the two countries and evolve the partnership to reach the "model partnership" as he said in his speech before the Turkish parliament The White House, Office of the press secretary, Remarks By President Obama To The Turkish Parliament". It had been relied on the evolution of the relationship between President Obama and his counterpart president Erdogan in the development of relations between the two countries. President Obama saw his Turkish counterpart as a leader of a moderate Islamist approach that could have a role to narrow the gap between the East and the West. All indicators was going in the way of increasing reliance on Turkey as a regional power as a substitute for the other traditional powers. However, the evaluation of US-Turkish relations at the end of Obama's era is mixed. Questions was raised inside the Congress and US think tanks about the compatibility of interests, values and strategic priorities for both Ankara and Washington, following the Turkish rhetoric about the Iranian nuclear file, the characterization of Israel and the Turkish relations with "Hamas" in Gaza which is designated as a terrorist group by Israel and the united states.

Nevertheless, the years 2011-2012 witnessed a high level of coordination between both allies, especially in the issue of transformation in the Arab countries. Washington and Ankara shared the view of the new Middle East which is to support the Turkish model in the countries faced political changes as Egypt. From the American point of view, the cumulative experience of the American reports about the interior situations in the Arab countries gave the American administration an inspiration that the most organized and popular alternative to the dictatorial regime is the "Muslim Brotherhood" movement. Therefore, US strategy was to support this movement in order to contain the Islamic movements and test its intentions, on the other hand enforcement a new American strategy in the region to back the muslim brotherhood which is outlined in a secret directive called Presidential Study Directive-11 or PSD-11. The directive was produced in 2011 and outlines administration support for political reform in the Middle East and North Africa. (Bill, 2015)

From the Turkish point of view this transformational will enhance the position of Turkey as a leading regional power. But since the year 2013, a mutual apathy and coldness have surfaced the relationship between the two countries due to many domestic and regional files include the course of conflict in Syria, the differences in priorities, the interior situation in Turkey and the turkish handling of democracy, civil rights and corruption.

**The failed coup and implications on US policy:** On July 15-16, 2016, elements within the turkish military tried to seize political power from president recep tayyip erdogan but the coup attempt has failed. This coup resulted in increasing tensions between ankara and washington. It overshadowed on US Turkish relations to reach the worst grades of tension for the following reasons.

First, the American initial reaction towards the coup was quiet and cool. Statements characterized by Shyness and intense diplomacy and in the context of the importance of maintaining the stability of the country. The white house declared that the President supports the elected government and democracy and calls for self-restraint and to avoid bloodshed. After the failure of the coup, Obama spoke to Erdogan by telephone, condemning it and declaring his support for the democratic process. It was clear that the relationship is moving toward greater complexity between the two allies. In his first speech after the failure coup, Erdogan accused the West of backing the coup, saying that the text of it

was wrote abroad Ece Toksabay and Nick Tattersall, "Erdogan says Turkey's coup script was written abroad", (Reuters, 2016).

Second, Turkey requested from the united states the delivery of Abdullah Gullen, the main accused in planning the bloody coup according to the Turkish allegations. The United States, for its part asked for evidences and proofs that prove the involvement of Gullen in the coup attempt and the American procedures in this respect related to treaties protected by well-established and organized laws, where the decision is not political but it is the jurisdiction of the ministry of justice which has faced condemnation from Turkish authorities, led by Erdogan, wondering "What kind of strategic partners we are. You host a man as I asked you to hand him over? (Ece and Tattersall, 2016).

Third, a general sense of the conspiracy of the West prevailed the Turkish street with all its segments, especially the American support messages were late and after the certainty of the ailure of coup. This matter reinforced a national sense that Turkey has been betrayed from its allies and even prevailed accusations by Turkish officials that the American intelligence agencies had information about the attempt of coup but Obama and his Secretary of State, John Kerry, dismissed this matter. Kerry said: "It is wrong information beyond a reasonable doubt (Whops, 2016ab). In addition, any American official or a Western one has not visited Turkey until Joe Biden's bvisit come on August 24, 2016 in an attempt to heal the rift between the two countries and soften the atmosphere again. In contrast, there was an absolute Russian support for Erdogan and his government and even there was information that the Russians have warned the Turks against the coup attempt before hours it occurs. Russia was the first foreign station of Erdogan after the coup in an attempt to look for other options of his foreign policy away from the West.

**Regional issues led to the deterioration in the relationship:** There are two main regional issues affected the US policy towards Turkey: The Turkish relations with Israel and the Syrian crisis and its effects on the Kurdish issue.

**Turkey-israel relations:** Israel and Turkey share a long history and have had strong strategic, economic and military ties since Turkey's recognition of the state of Israel in 1949 as it is the first muslim country to do so. Turkish-Israeli relationship was a landmark of Turkish foreign policy in the 20th century according to several factors;

The existence of a highly influential Jewish minority in Turkey. It enjoyed under the auspices of the ruling Turkish elite care because it affects the Jewish lobby in Congress. The present size of Jewish minority is estimated at around 18500, the vast majority live in Istanbul according to the statistics of 2016 (AICE, 2015). In addition, the existence of a Jewish community of Turkish origin who immigrated to Israel in the sixties and seventies of the last century that is to say that their Turkish entity has significance to them and they are strong supporters for close ties between Israel and Turkey. The Turkish government realized that its relationship with Israel is a key figure in its relation with United States. For example after the Turkish intervention in Cyprus 1974, Congress imposed an embargo on military assistance and arms sales to Turkey from 1975-1978. Turkey realized the important role played by the greek and Armenian lobbies in Congress and due to the lack of Turkish lobby, it tended to consolidate its relation with the Jewish lobby and succeeded to get its support .

The similarities that the two countries share and differ from their regional surrounding ,such as being democratic non-Arab countries and the most important both have strategic alliance with US and European countries.

Since, 2008, Turkish-Israeli relations have worsened due to the declining power of the Turkish generals and the greater empowerment of AKP leaders especially president Erdogan. The AKP in his regional strategic vision, tried to win the turkish and Arab public opinion by criticizing Israeli policies towards Palestinians, especially in Gaza which is governed by the Islamic party, "Hamas", a branch of the brotherhood movement which took over Gaza since 2006 . The relations between the two countries sharply deteriorated in 2010 due to Gaza flotilla incident in which nine Turkish citizens were killed. Turkey downgraded diplomatic relations with Israel to the second secretary.

Such deterioration of Israeli-Turkish relations were reflected in US policy towards Turkey and especially the Congress where the Turks lost Israeli Lobby support inside the Congress as Turkish diplomat stated that: " we used to get hit by the Greek and Armenian Lobbies and protected by the Jewish Lobby, now, the Jewish lobby is coming after us as well" (Zanotti, 2013, 2014). The repercussions of the deterioration in the Israeli -Turkish relationship appeared quickly in 2010, the foreign relations committee in Congress has described the killing of Armenians by turks in the First world war as a mass genocide. Meanwhile, the American administration saw that the conflicting opinions of its allies could potentially pose a threat to the security in the Middle East thereby affecting the regional system and U.S interests in other areas of the region. Consequently, president Obama tried to intervene to create harmony between both countries

and encouraged Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to apologize to the Turkish President on 22 March 2013 by a phone call. What notably is despite the incompatible rhetoric between both countries, the Turkish Israeli commercial relation continued to grow steadily. Turkey has used Haifa port in Israel as a point of transit for exports to various Arab countries after the deterioration of the situation in Syria. Also, the statistics showed that the trade between the two countries has doubled during the years of diplomatic rift of up to $ 5.6 billion in the late 2014, according to the Israeli foreign Ministry spokesman (Linda, 2015) and the number of Israeli tourists to Turkey increased from 83.740 in 2012 to 188.608 in 2014. According to the Israeli Aviation authority statistics, Turkey became in 2015 the first destination to Israelis (Danny, 2015).

On June 2016, a finally agreement was approved after delay between the two sides. It is expected that the relations between two countries will witness an upward acceleration with regard to energy, security and information exchange. There are many pragmatic factors lead to make the relation back to its extreme.

**From the Israeli point of view:** Turkey represents an ally should not be lost due to the changes in the Middle East and the balance of power. Despite the differences of both interests in some cases, they remain the most similarity in the region. Turkey is strongly candidate to be a broker in Israel's relations with Hamas in Gaza, according to its ties with the Muslim Brotherhood movement, especially with the aggravation of the Egyptian mediator's relations with the movement. Turkey can be a guarantor of calm between the two sides due to the growing influence inside Gaza in the previous years. Finally and the most important is the economic and energy security advantages that could be provided by each country to the other. Turkey tried to reduce the number of loosing friends and closed opening fronts as a result of multi-problems not zero-problem policy with neighbors.

**Second, the Syrian crisis and the Kurdish issue:** Syria is considered to be the most important neighboring Arab country to Turkey due to the deep ties imposed by geographic and historic dimensions and related controversial issues between the two countries, such as water disputes, Kurds and "Hatay" province. Since, the Turkish orientation of strategic depth, rapprochement between the two countries began during the last decade to the point the characterization of the ties has been a strategic choice and a model of relation between countries. Therefore, Turkey's reaction to the Syrian Crisis which broke out March 2011 was a surprise. As it topped the countries that demanded the Assad regime to step down after failing in convince Al-Assad to undertake serious reforms. Ever since, Turkey has been taking a firm stand against the Crisis and addressing it as it is an internal Turkish concern, not simply a matter of international affairs (Zanotti, 2012).

The course of the Syrian crisis is one of the most important issues that affected the relations between Turkey and US Despite their unified political stance toward the Syrian crisis and Al-Assad regime, the early years of the crisis witnessed a close coordination between Washington, Ankara and NATO and some Arab countries like Qatar and Saudi Arabia to support the Syrian opposition both financially and politically. However, after turning Syria into an arena for competing at the regional and international level, the escalating of the sectarian dispute between the rival militias and the expansion of the Islamic State (ISIS), Russian intervention and the flow of Syrian refugees and the Kurdish issue, no agreement between Turkey and the united states about details and priorities of the longstanding conflict. The main areas of contentions between Washington and Ankara are:

Turkey initially refused to participate in the international coalition to fight the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and to use its territory as a starting point of coalition countrie's air strikes led by the United States. However in July 2015, Turkey approved the launch of the air strikes from its territory where Turkey wanted to coordinate with the United States to gain a geopolitical, strategic and ethnic influence on the land of the Syrian conflict.

Turkey asked support from the United States to establish a safe zone inside the Syrian territories and the American forces and its allies take charge its protection which was opposed by the Obama administration.

The Kurdish issue directs the turkish policy toward the crisis in Syria. The US support for the role of Kurdish militia, the Democratic Union party (PYD) and its military wing, the People's Protection Unit (YPG) irritates the turkish regime. While PYD and YPG proved that they are the most effective forces against ISIS and considered by US as legal organizations and primary allies on the ground, Turks insist on link them with the turkish Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) that is designed as a terrorist group.

In August 24, 2016, the Turkish authorities began a military operation in Syrian focused on these goals: the first goal is to support the Syrian opposition factions in its quest to expel "ISIS" from Northern Syria, starting from Jarablos city located in the middle between the two cities of Kobani and Afrin on the Western bank of the

Euphrates River and adjacent to the Turkish borders. The second goal, the most important for Turks is to change the political reality on the ground concerning preventing Syria's democratic forces (YPG) from taking over Jarablos and annexed to Manbej city that have seized it before and then expansion to connect the regions of its control in the East and the West, meaning linkage between the two banks of the Euphrates. This matter represents a strategic challenge for Turkey which has forced them to retreat to the East of the Euphrates river. The third goal is to the quest of Turkey to establish a safe zone on the borders between Syria and Turkey which was a requirement always to the Turkish authorities in order to prevent the flow of refugees.

It could be argued that the Turkish fears of the American-Kurdish coordination resolves around two points: the first is that the external support for the Turkish units fighting in Syria could support in turn, anti-feelings and actions for Turkey's Kurds against Ankara and that raises the ceiling of their ambitions to establish their independent state. This matter will change the geopolitical reality on the ground, especially after the victories of those forces and its control over the Northern borders of Syria. The second point stems from post-Syrian crisis fears concerning deals can be concluded between the Syrian Kurds and the United States. The Iraqi Kurds have been supported before that by the United States to establish an independent territory. If the same deal with the Syrian Kurds was concluded, Turkey would face two independent Kurdish territories on its southern borders.

## CONCLUSION

The escalation of Turkish role's curve in the Middle East characterized by high speed in order to restore the historical Ottoman role in the region after the existence of regional power vacuum and the absence of Egypt from the regional leadership. With American support and policy based on strategic depth, the Turkish elite believed that these indicators could pave the way for the historical return of the Ottoman. However, at the end of President Obama era and we are at the gates of the formation of a new order in the Middle East, the results seem disappointing for the Turkish leadership's hopes. After it followed zero-problems policy with neighbors which paved the way for a prominent role in the region, the result is zero-friends. As for relations with the United States, although the image today looks tangled and mixed due to a number of factors that contributed to the formation of the dynamics of the relationship between the two countries up and down but there are principles and determinants from which the American-Turkish relationship stems.

The two countries seek to maintain, one way or another, the relationship between them. This was due to the long relations between them as two strategic allies that share many strategic and security interests. Turkey is a key in several issues in the Middle East by virtue of its relations with the Muslim Brotherhood movements, whether in Sudan, Palestine, Egypt or North Africa

Turkey as an ally with the United States, form an importance to push the American interests where the United States may become more dependent on Turkey in the region, especially after the American withdrawal from Iraq and perhaps the reduction of its presence in the Middle East. Turkey, for its part, needs the United States to defend its borders, to promote stability in the region and to protect it from the potential threats, whether from countries or individuals.

As for the Turkish role in the Middle East region, it is characterized by a severe decline and retreating in the curve of influence. This was due to the false reading of the limits of this role and the limits of the other forces in the region. Therefore, Turkey may return to its isolationism, maintain its economic gains in the Middle East, prevent dangers from its borders resulting from the developments of the Syrian scene, the Kurdish problem and following prejudice policy instead of neutrality one which led to the loss of the valuable allies such as Egypt. Turkey must in the new Middle East rearrange its alliances and priorities in light of division and dysfunction in the map of power in the region. The return to neutrality and mediator policy between region countries will enhance its influence and effect again as a regional power in the Middle East.

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