

## **Policy Brief Series**

# **Policies and Role of Turkey on Peacebuilding**

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**Project: “Rising Powers and Innovative Approaches to  
Peacebuilding”**

**[www.RisingPowersandPeacebuilding.org](http://www.RisingPowersandPeacebuilding.org)**



## About the Project

The Rising Powers and Peacebuilding project seeks to address an important question that has not yet been thoroughly researched: **what are the new approaches that rising powers have taken to peacebuilding, how do they differ from those of traditional powers and multilateral institutions, and what lessons can be learned from these new approaches?**

The policy briefs in this series provide a baseline on the roles of rising powers and their affiliated regional organizations in peacebuilding. To this point, little research has been conducted on the substance and impact of peacebuilding activities carried out by rising powers. This project seeks to address this gap in the research by providing a structured, critical analysis of the values, content and impact of recent peacebuilding initiatives of rising powers, comparing them to one another and to approaches by Western donors and international organizations. The project also aims to offer new theoretical claims about the role of the global South in peacebuilding, rooted in insightful empirical work (on Somalia, Afghanistan and Myanmar and on specific non-Western actors), and to make key policy audiences aware of alternative approaches and their empirical records and theoretical underpinnings (which may vary among values, global/regional power aspirations, bureaucratic approaches).

The project partners will also produce case studies on the role of rising powers in peacebuilding, and include: ACCORD (an NGO based in South Africa), the Istanbul Policy Center (IPC), , the United Service Institution of India (USI), American University's School of International Service (SIS), CSIS-Jakarta, and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). The project is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, American University, and NUPI.

## **Introduction**

Turkey owes its status as an emerging actor to its steady political and economic development in the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to the weakening of the Western, rule-based liberal order. This has enabled regional actors with relative economic stability and security to assume certain responsibilities that traditionally fell to the Great Powers in the Cold War era. Like most BRICS countries and other regional leaders, Turkey has ridden the tailwind of this global opening. Turkey also shares with some other emerging powers the experience of a successful transition, in less than a decade, to democracy and economic growth and stability. As the world transitioned to a multipolar system, Turkey used its religious, ethnic and cultural ties to consolidate its soft power, both regionally and further afield. During this period, Turkey has raised its profile as a regional actor and an emerging power, especially as the Arab Spring produced opportunities, crisis and warfare on its borders. It has achieved this status by investing its resources in development cooperation and peaceful resolution of conflicts in its region.

These lessons, as well as Turkey's status as a European Union candidate and a committed NATO ally, heighten Turkey's role in the facilitation of peace in the region and reinforce its bridge status between geographical and cultural divides. As a Western-oriented, secular, predominantly Muslim country, Turkey is increasingly regarded as a pivot in effectively addressing both humanitarian and security aspects of the entrenched conflicts in Syria and the greater Levant. Turkey hosts approximately 2.2 million Syrian refugees, while at the same time giving an active support to the anti-ISIS coalition, through opening its airbases, training opposition forces, and joining airstrikes. For much of its history, however, Turkey was plagued by rampant insecurity and economic and political instability that saw four military coups, and a thirty-year armed insurgency. As such, Turkey's activities may be supported by current economic and international shifts in power, yet its conceptualization and approach to peacebuilding is very much informed by the country's experiences of insecurity.<sup>1</sup>

## **The Emergence of Turkish Peacebuilding**

Security and stability are two central issues that have guided Turkey's strategic considerations. In the wake of World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, modernization through alignment and membership of Western institutions was seen as crucial to preserving the security and stability that had been lost in preceding years. It is also in this context that some of the key aspects of Turkey's foreign policy have emerged, such as non-interference and respect for sovereignty. Turkey's domestic and foreign policies have also been significantly influenced by the founder of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. A number of his speeches, particularly the phrase "Peace at home, peace in the world" have been used to frame Turkey's international engagement, from its first foray into peacekeeping with the UN in the 1950-53 Korean War, to peacebuilding activities today. Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu has also reflected this principle, stating that Turkey has built a proactive foreign policy based on peace and stability at home.<sup>2</sup> However, this policy has come under significant strain since the Arab Spring's spread to the Levant and its transformation into a violent civil war in Syria and ethnic cleansing in Northern Iraq. These issues have directly

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Turkish Diplomat, Vienna, June 15, 2015. Telephone Interview with Foreign Ministry official, Ankara, March 26, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu (2012) Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy and. Regional Political Structuring, *Center for Strategic Research*, No. 3, April 2012.

affected Turkey's own security and stability. The suicide attacks since the June 7, 2015 general elections that hit major southern cities Diyarbakır and Urfa, and the heart of Ankara, the Turkish capital, are all traced to ISIS cells that infiltrated through porous borders in the south. This has also led to renewed clashes between Turkish security forces and the Kurdish PKK (The Kurdistan Workers' Party) insurgency in the aftermath of the last general elections, which is equally detrimental to Turkey's stability.

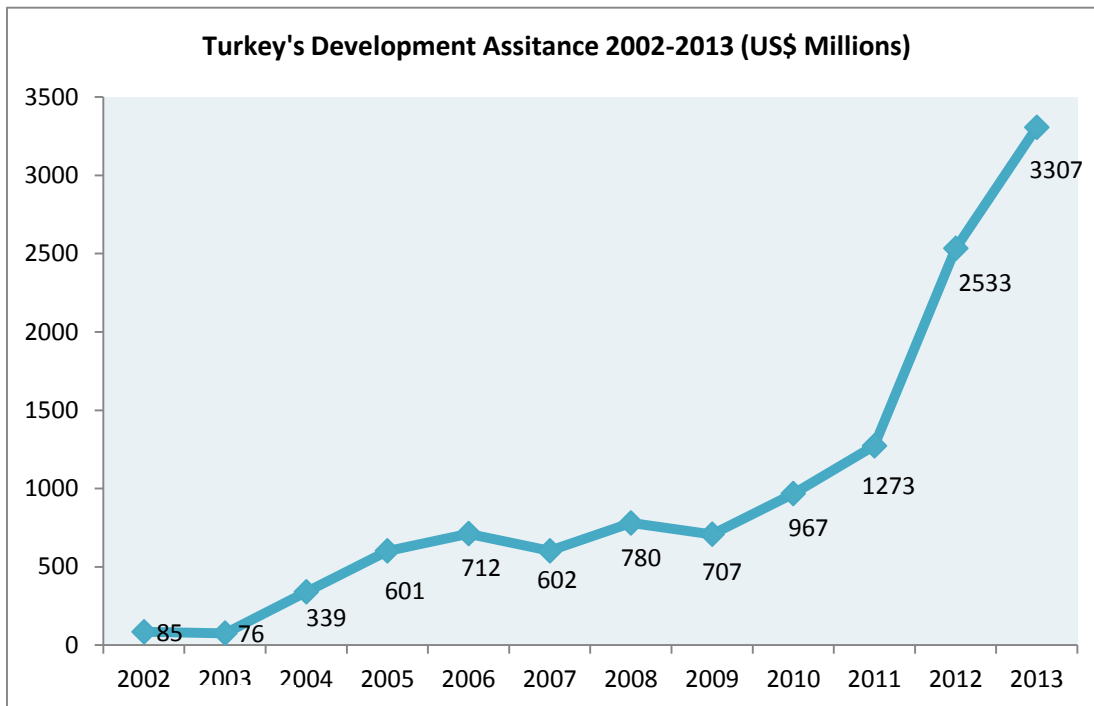
For much of its history, security and stability was conceived in military terms and in relation to territorial integrity. Turkey's first and only international intervention during the Cold War was its mediation between Iran and Iraq in the 1980s. This can be seen from a traditional security perspective, given the proximity of both countries to Turkey's eastern flank. Following the loosening of the Cold War strictures, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) was established in 1992 with the objective of extending Turkish relations with the newly independent Turkic States of Central Asia. TIKA was conceived as a mechanism of Turkish soft power through cooperation in the economic, cultural and humanitarian fields.<sup>3</sup> For much of this period, however, TIKA was left to languish as an agency due to internal instability and a focus on a more hard security driven concept of military engagement. Turkey's first foray into peacebuilding during this time was in Somalia and the Balkans in the 1990s. Turkey, for example, focused on contributing troops to multilateral peacebuilding and peace enforcement missions with the UN and NATO.

The shift from such hard security-based peacebuilding to more civilian participation and technical assistance was facilitated by a change in domestic dynamics. Over the last decade, the Turkish Armed Forces has been losing its influence in foreign policy matters, which are now primarily determined by civilians in government. This was accompanied by expanded civilian and police participation in peace operations, increased engagement in multilateral organizations and a revival of TIKA activities. Facilitated by a period of relative political and economic stability and internal reforms that eased restrictions in political, religious and social spheres, Turkey began to expand its official development aid (see graph 1). Although retaining a strong military was a necessity due to the instability of the surrounding region, under the Justice and Development Party (AKP), civic and economic power was promoted as a more sustainable method of foreign engagement.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Teri Murphy & Onur Sazak (2012) Turkey's Civilian Capacity in Post-Conflict Reconstruction, *Istanbul: Istanbul Policy Center*

<sup>4</sup> Teri Murphy & Aueven Woods (2014) Turkey's International Development Framework Case Study: Somalia, *Istanbul: Istanbul Policy Center*.



Graph 1 Turkey's Development Assistance

## The Tools of Turkish Peacebuilding

Domestic changes were accompanied by a restructuring of Turkish foreign policy priorities and goals under the AKP. This has served to both promote the prestige of a more internationally active Turkey and to reinforce the success of the country's leadership.<sup>5</sup> Guided by Ahmet Davutoğlu (key adviser and then foreign minister from 2009-14), a multilateral foreign policy emerged that sought a balance between proactive engagement and crisis management. Turkish leaders have increasingly emphasized the need for preventive diplomacy that should be intricately linked to any conflict management strategies, whether it is peacekeeping or peacebuilding activities. Identifying mediation and dialogue as essential tools in this preventative diplomacy, officials have stated that "peace mediation and facilitation efforts are the most cost-effective and efficient way of preventing and resolving conflicts".<sup>6</sup> Reflecting this commitment, Turkey has headed a number of initiatives. In 2005 the Alliance of Civilizations, which promotes interreligious and intercultural dialogue, was launched by the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey.<sup>7</sup> In 2010, Turkey and Finland created a "Group of Friends of Mediation" that supports efforts by the UN, regional organizations and over 40 countries.<sup>8</sup> These are cross-cultural examples that Turkish officials have identified as reflecting the country's conceptualization of peacebuilding.<sup>9</sup> Through these initiatives Turkey has sought to promote flexibility, trust and cooperation as the basis of successful mediation.<sup>10</sup> In parallel to these efforts, Turkey launched a process on peacebuilding during its time on the

<sup>5</sup> Kathryn Achilles, Onur Sazak, Thomas Wheeler and Auveen Elizabeth Woods. (2015, March). *Turkish Aid Agencies in Somalia; Risks and Opportunities for Building Peace*, Safeworld and Istanbul Policy Center, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> S/PV.6472.

<sup>7</sup> Alliance of Civilizations, <http://www.unaoc.org/>

<sup>8</sup> Group of Friends of Mediation (Group of Friends of Mediation), <http://peacemaker.un.org/friendsofmediation>

<sup>9</sup> "Speech Delivered by H.E. Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu at the Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, 28 May 2014, Algeria". *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved from [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-delivered-by-h\\_e\\_-mr\\_-ahmet-davuto%C4%9Flu-at-the-ministerial-conference-of-the-non\\_aligned-movement\\_-28-may-2014\\_-algeria.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-delivered-by-h_e_-mr_-ahmet-davuto%C4%9Flu-at-the-ministerial-conference-of-the-non_aligned-movement_-28-may-2014_-algeria.en.mfa)

<sup>10</sup> "Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation" (n.d). *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/resolution-of-conflicts-and-mediation.en.mfa>

Security Council from 2009-2010, which included these initiatives and brought together the Council for thematic meetings in Istanbul from 2010 to 2013.<sup>11</sup>

Issues around “hard security” are still a strategic priority for Turkey’s foreign policy, but it is no longer the determining consideration, with Davutoğlu stating that “stability cannot be built on the basis of force alone”.<sup>12</sup> Referencing the decade of reforms inside Turkey, Davutoğlu has argued that there must be a balance between freedom and security to achieve stability. Over the years the concept of “security” has become more multidimensional, focusing on human needs through good governance and economic stability. This is evident in Turkey’s rhetorical embrace of “humanitarian diplomacy,” a developing concept that Turkish officials have increasingly used to frame its re-positioning and activities in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Humanitarian diplomacy claims to reject state-centric *realpolitik* and external interference in domestic affairs. Highlighting the importance of acknowledging “local values”<sup>13</sup> and local ownership, it instead emphasizes the need to put human dignity and human security at the forefront of policy considerations.<sup>14</sup>

There is no concept paper that explicitly describes Turkey’s definition of peacebuilding. It can, however, be understood through bilateral and regional initiatives, norms and discussions, such as those already mentioned, that have emerged among the country’s representatives over the last decade. From a Turkish perspective, peacebuilding is a twofold process, encompassing both statebuilding and peacemaking within society. Reflecting a structural approach to peacebuilding, Turkish officials emphasize the centrality of good governance, strong responsive institutions and the rule of law for building an effective state and therefore a stable and peaceful society.<sup>15</sup> Activities related to these goals by officials include infrastructure projects, technical assistance and capacity building programs for state institutions and personnel. This kind of structural peacebuilding must also be accompanied by an inclusive peacemaking process at all levels. Turkish officials feel that this is only possible through national ownership of goals and culturally-sensitive engagement with all stakeholders, including civil society, professional associations and women. This is particularly important with regard to responsive political institutions and inclusive economic recovery that Turkish officials believe is essential for a peaceful society. Activities associated with societal peacebuilding include education programs, religious support and inclusive economic development.

Economic interests are intricately linked to both Turkey’s foreign policy and peacebuilding activities. This has not only led to economic dividends for Turkey, but also promoted peace in some cases. Notably, the historically tumultuous relations between Turkey and its Kurdish citizens and neighbors in Iraq, have eased greatly following the expansion of economic and diplomatic relations with Iraqi Kurdistan.<sup>16</sup> In 2013, exports to Iraq reached \$12 billion,

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<sup>11</sup> “Candidacy of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations Security Council for the period 2015-2016”, (n.d). *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/candidacy-of-the-republic-of-turkey-to-the-united-nations-security-council-for-the-period-2015-2016.en.mfa>

<sup>12</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu (2012), p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Ahmet Davutoglu (2013) Turkey's humanitarian diplomacy: objectives, challenges and prospects, *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 41:6, p. 865-870, DOI:10.1080/00905992.2013.857299

<sup>14</sup> Fuat Keyman & Onur Sazak, ‘Turkey as a Humanitarian State’, *POMEAS*, Paper No 2.

<http://pomeas.org/Home/index.php/publications/pomeas-papers/419-turkey-as-a-humanitarian-state>

<sup>15</sup> Telephone Interview Foreign Ministry official, Ankara, March 26, 2015

<sup>16</sup> Selcan Hacaoglu, “Turkey Embracing Iraq’s Kurds as Trade Erodes Old Enmity,” *Bloomberg Business*, July 11, 2014. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-07-10/turkey-s-embrace-of-iraqi-kurds-shows-trade-eroding-old-enmity>

making it second only to Germany as Turkey's largest market.<sup>17</sup> There are also some links between Turkey's economic interests and its aid practices in general. Egypt, for example was one of the top 5 recipients of Turkish aid for 2013<sup>18</sup> and the 14th largest destination for Turkish exports in 2015.<sup>19</sup> In Afghanistan, Turkish companies' rank 5th among foreign investors, with 140 registered in the country.<sup>20</sup> Officials have also been frank about their interest in expanding economic relations with Somalia.<sup>21</sup> While not a specific policy, a pattern has emerged in which the establishment of a diplomatic presence in a new country is often soon followed by investment from Turkish companies and new flight links through Turkish airlines. Turkish diplomats are candid about their conviction that trade is better than aid for development.<sup>22</sup> Most Turkish officials regard economic development through the participation of the entire society as an essential component of peacebuilding, with one diplomat stating “{W}e don't think that peacebuilding could achieve its goals if there is no economic recovery and participation of the whole part of the society in the program; that includes women”.<sup>23</sup> They believe it provides alternative financial opportunities to criminality and extremist narratives, and supports national ownership of development.

Many of Turkey's peacebuilding activities are funneled through Turkish development aid. In 2013, Turkey's Official Development Assistance (ODA) was among the highest of the emerging powers, at US \$3,307 billion.<sup>24</sup> This represents a tenfold increase from 2002 to 2010, and nearly a 30 percent increase between 2010 and 2013 (see graph 1). Despite Turkey's participation in a number of multilateral initiatives, US\$3.2 billion of this ODA was provided in bilateral assistance,<sup>25</sup> illustrating the country's preference for this mode of engagement. Turkey has expanded its activities to some of the world's most entrenched conflicts. In both 2012 and 2013, Syria, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Somalia, and Afghanistan were the largest recipients of ODA. Some of the best examples of both the structural and social peacebuilding approaches of Turkey are evident in Afghanistan, Somalia and Balkan countries such as Bosnia–Herzegovina and Kosovo.

Much of Turkey's structural peacebuilding activities consist of technical capacity programs, infrastructure projects, and the provision of basic services. This understanding of constructive development, which is common to both Turkish state agencies and non-state actors, has strong historical roots. Since the Ottoman Empire, privately funded philanthropic development projects have focused on the construction of buildings and infrastructure as well as the funding of services such as schools, hospitals and mosques.<sup>26</sup> In 2013, US \$225 million was

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* An estimated 1,300 Turkish companies' work in Iraq.

<sup>18</sup> TİKA, “TİKA Annual Report 2013”, (2014),

<sup>19</sup> “Foreign Trade Statistics, January 2015” (2015, February 27). *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Customs and Trade*: Turkish statistical Institute Press Release. Retrieve from <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=18576>

<sup>20</sup> Selçuk Çolakoğlu and Mehmet Yegin. “The Future of Afghanistan and Turkey's Contributions”, *International Strategic Research Organization (USAK)*, (2014, September): 34

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Foreign Ministry Officials Istanbul, August 25, 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Turkish Diplomat, Istanbul, February 25, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Telephone Interview Foreign Ministry Official, Ankara, June 10 2015.

<sup>24</sup> Füsün Gür, Nurdan Çakır, Şevki Mert Barış *et al.*, “Turkish Development Assistance 2013, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, (2014), 3. See also “Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2013,” (Development Initiative, 2013), 25. Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2013 ranks Turkey as the fourth largest government donor of humanitarian assistance.

<sup>25</sup> Füsün Gür, Nurdan Çakır, Şevki Mert Barış *et al.*, “Turkish Development Assistance 2013, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, (2014), 9.

<sup>26</sup> Filiz Bikmen. (2008). The rich history of philanthropy in Turkey: a paradox of tradition and modernity. In MacDonald, N., & Tayart de Borms, L (eds). *Philanthropy in Europe A rich past, a promising future*. London:

provided in bilateral technical assistance.<sup>27</sup> This included training programs for judges and prosecutors from Kosovo and medical training programs, for example with the Somali Ministry of Health.<sup>28</sup> Infrastructure projects, such as renovating state buildings or building schools and roads, are common across all the countries Turkey engages with<sup>29</sup>. Such infrastructure and technical cooperation programs appear to focus on improving the provision of basic services such as medical and judicial standards. Turkish officials have said that they feel such programs directly support statebuilding by legitimizing the state's authority and making services more effective, though they are quick to emphasize that their support must be apolitical in nature, stating ““We can only offer them certain technical expertise without any strict recipe. It is after all the requirements of the host country to determine how they will proceed””.<sup>30</sup>

Technical assistance and capacity building programs are also a characteristic of Turkey's social peacebuilding. Most of these programs include training and technical assistance to support economic empowerment and appear to be focused at the local level through municipalities and communities. For example, technical equipment assistance was provided to the Governorship of Sar-e Pol for vocational training programs for women and the Agricultural Development Project in East Bosnia was established to support the return of families from the 1992-1995 war.<sup>31</sup> These are just some of the local projects aimed at economically empowering communities. Technical assistance is also a part of other social peacebuilding activities in the education field, such as providing technical equipment for high schools and universities.

Education has been one of the more widely known areas of Turkey's peacebuilding activities due to its extensive scholarship programs in Somalia. These were provided by, among others, the Education Ministry and Diyanet (the Ministry of Religious Affairs). With the exception of Somalia, however, most scholarship and education programs have been run by third sector organizations<sup>32</sup> such as the Hizmet or Gülen linked schools. The Turkish state tends to run smaller education programs, such as providing school materials and equipment, funding and renovating buildings and promoting Turkish language and cultural courses. Education initiatives such as these are not only a method of expanding Turkish soft power, but also contribute to social peacemaking through intercultural dialogue. As one NGO official stated, “for conflict resolution we think that education has a primary effect”.<sup>33</sup> Both officials and third state actors believe that education is a key peacebuilding tool that can counter the narrative of extremism and provide opportunities for the future.<sup>34</sup>

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Alliance Publishing Trust, p. 223-234.

<sup>27</sup> Füsün Gür, Nurdan Çakır, Şevki Mert Barış *et al.*, “Turkish Development Assistance 2013, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, (2014), 22-23.

<sup>28</sup> TIKA, (2014), p. 51; 164

<sup>29</sup> TIKA, “TIKA Annual Report 2012”, (2013), and “TIKA Annual Report 2013” (2014).

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Turkish Diplomat, Vienna, June 15, 2015

<sup>31</sup> TIKA, (2014), p. 203; 37-38.

<sup>32</sup> There are a wide range of other non-governmental bodies in Turkey administering development programs. This includes nonprofit groups, foundations, faith-based organizations, schools, and professional associations such as businessmen and doctors. These groups vary in their ideologies, their orientation, and their relationship with and autonomy from the state. As such, the term “third sector” is a suitably broad term to categorize the various groups of non-state actors that are engaged in peacebuilding activities. Korel Göymen, “The Evolving State – Third Sector Relations In Turkey” in *The Third Sector in Europe: Prospects and Challenges*, ed. Stephen P. Osborne (Routledge, London and New York, 2008), 211-229

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Kimse Yok Mu official, Istanbul, March 2015.

<sup>34</sup> Interview Istanbul with Yeryüzü Doktorları staff, March 2015. Telephone interview with Foreign Ministry Official, March 26 2015.



Finally, Turkey's social peacebuilding activities are also characterized by an emphasis on mediation and culturally and religiously sensitive programs. The programs range from providing Qurans, sponsoring intercultural activities to circumcision ceremonies for boys in countries such as Afghanistan and Niger.<sup>35</sup> Given the scope of these programs globally, cultural sensitivity is clearly an important aspect of Turkey's activities. Such programs are not only pragmatic, but they also add legitimacy to Turkish activities in the eyes of locals. In Afghanistan, Turkish projects were more acceptable to communities than others because of their perceived sensitivity to Afghan culture.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the building of Mosques and distribution of meats and gifts at Muslim religious festivals has been welcomed by locals from Mogadishu to Sarajevo. Related to these efforts is mediation. Officials have stated the centrality of mediation, not only at an inter-state level but also at the local level through everyday activities. This may range from consulting with communities to discussions with political authorities on bilateral projects. Turkish officials feel that mediation and consultation are mechanisms that support the principles of national ownership that they espouse.

### **Impact and Conclusions**

Over the last decade, Turkey's approach to peacebuilding has transformed from the strategic state-centric security engagement of the 1990s to a more multifaceted conceptualization that encompasses both statebuilding and social peacemaking. This has been facilitated by a change in civil-military power dynamics since 2000, and a broader understanding of security that considers the issue of human needs. Peacebuilding activities today range from technical assistance for state services to culturally sensitive education and religious programs. This has been developed in parallel with new foreign policy activities that emphasize both mediation and enhanced economic ties as potential peacebuilding strategies that are of mutual benefit to both Turkey and recipient states.

In spite of Turkey's good intentions to promote peace and stability in its region and the rest of the world, Ankara's capacity to execute this vision has some shortcomings. An estimated 2.2 million Syrian refugees, the resurgence of PKK terrorism, ISIS' penetration deep into the country's urban centers, the continuing political uncertainty in the aftermath of the last general elections, and a receding economy constitute serious obstacles to the sustainability of Turkey's peacebuilding operations.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, for the last several years Turkey's ambitious foreign policy goals and determination to project its soft power have alienated various supporters. Counting on African support to win another term on the UN Security Council in 2016, Turkey only received the votes of 60 countries out of 193.<sup>38</sup> Losing the African countries' support is due to a number of reasons, but the most visible one is the fight between the Turkish government and the Islamist philanthropist Fethullah Gülen, whose charity organization has allegedly orchestrated a coup against the AKP government.<sup>39</sup> Ironically, the Gülenist charity organizations have been the most visible and committed NGOs

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<sup>35</sup> TIKA, (2014), p. 35; 200; 229.

<sup>36</sup> Murphy & Sazak, (2012).

<sup>37</sup> David Shinn, "Turkey's Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa: Shifting Alliances and Strategic Diversification," London: Chatham House, September 2015, 17.

<sup>38</sup> Harut Sassounian, "Why the UN Rejected Turkey's Bid for a Security Council Seat," The Huffington Post, October 28 2014, accessed October 26, 2015, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harut-sassounian/why-the-un-rejected-turke\\_b\\_6036878.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harut-sassounian/why-the-un-rejected-turke_b_6036878.html)

<sup>39</sup> Shinn, 16-17.

in providing humanitarian assistance to sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>40</sup> Viewed in light of Turkey's false predictions about the longevity of the Assad regime in Syria,<sup>41</sup> Ankara's recognition of the depth of the crises that it is trying to help resolve around the globe, and its influence over the parties, appear to be waning. In other words, the rhetoric-capacity mismatch in Turkish foreign policy risks moving Turkey farther away from "zero problems with neighbors" towards the dangerous territory of "zero neighbors without problems."<sup>42</sup>

A number of organizational challenges hinder the ability of the Turkish state from realizing its potential to increase the quality and range of its peacebuilding initiatives. The most persistent of these impediments is coordination problems. First identified in a 2012 report,<sup>43</sup> a lack of effective interagency cooperation was the most visible problem in Turkish peacebuilding activities. The most vital ministries and the government agencies that are involved in peacebuilding operations, such as the Foreign Ministry, Health Ministry, Development Ministry, and TİKA, were not informed about each other's activities both at the higher echelons of decision making or in the field. Recent research indicates that very little progress has been made at both the state and third sector level.<sup>44</sup> One representative of an international organization based in Ankara volunteered that most TİKA bureaucrats in charge of coordination are not even familiar with the basic UN procedures and terms.<sup>45</sup> The lack of institutional training and knowledge of procedures within organizations like TİKA also complicates communication and coordination between the field offices and Ankara. In such situations, the quality and effectiveness of the programs often depends on the individual in the field office: If the person assigned to a country office is in fact interested in the mission, TİKA operations in that particular country often provide more substantive results for the beneficiaries.<sup>46</sup>

This lack of communication and coordination also affects the development and monitoring of programs. While TİKA publically provides data on the number of participants or equipment involved in technical assistance programs, greater analysis on how these programs are determined or their impact is not made available. There have been reports in the past of peacebuilding programs such as infrastructure projects or trainings being implemented without consultation with local authorities or research on other aid groups working in the area.<sup>47</sup> These problems appeared to have occurred in countries that TİKA had become newly active in, such as Somalia<sup>48</sup> or Senegal.<sup>49</sup> This also indicates an important vacuum in the pre-deployment analyses and monitoring activities for state operating in the field. Such patterns can however, exacerbate overcrowding, duplication and waste.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> "Premier vows to pray in Damascus mosque 'soon,'" *Hürriyet Daily News*, September 6, 2012, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/premier-vows-to-pray-in-damascus-mosque-soon.aspx?pageID=238&nID=29505&NewsCatID=338>.

<sup>42</sup> Sassounian, "Why the UN Rejected Turkey's Bid for a Security Council Seat," [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harut-sassounian/why-the-un-rejected-turke\\_b\\_6036878.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harut-sassounian/why-the-un-rejected-turke_b_6036878.html)

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Achilles, Sazak, Wheeler, and Woods, 2015.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with UNDP-TİKA coordinator, Istanbul, March 13, 2015.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Interviews with the representatives of Turkish NGOs operating in Africa, as well as Kızılay officials, and presentations by Paul Larson on "Logistics of Health Aids," Stephen Gloyd, "Sustainability of Health Aids," and Maryam Deloffre, "International NGO Behavior and Interactions with States" at the joint IPC-TİKA workshop on "International Humanitarian NGOs and Health Aid" on March 27, 2015, Istanbul.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Turkish Diplomat, February 27, 2014.

<sup>49</sup> Telephone Interview with UNDP-TİKA coordinator, Ankara, March, 13, 2015

<sup>50</sup> Interviews with the representatives of Turkish NGOs operating in Africa, as well as Kızılay officials, and

In addition to these problems is the equally detrimental financing challenge of international operations. The influx of Syrian refugees, for instance, has cost the state an estimated \$7 billion and led to nearly \$2 billion worth of resources being rechanneled from foreign operations. This diverted significant resources from fragile states such as Somalia.<sup>51</sup> In addition, the volatility of the Turkish lira against hard currencies, as well as the current political uncertainty as the government struggles to form a coalition after the 2015 general elections, is taking a toll on the economic stability that is necessary to sustain the funds for some of these peacebuilding initiatives.

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<sup>51</sup> Achilles, Sazak, Wheeler, and Woods, 2015.