

Peace Keeping Operations and Perspectives for Cooperation
Between Turkey and the African Union in the Field of
Security

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Before examining the issue of peacekeeping and security in Africa, I think there is a necessity to take a look at the underlying reasons of problems and conflicts in Africa. Within this context, it would be possible to analyze peacekeeping operations and evaluate them. It would then be appropriate to consider Turkey's endeavours as well as perspectives of Turkey's cooperation with African countries in the field of security.

Indeed, there are various causes of conflicts in Africa. First of all, it can be said that there is, to a large extent, an impact of problems created by colonialism on African continent. Colonial powers had drawn border lines between African countries taking into account their own economic, political, commercial and strategic interests. To observe this, there is no need to mention the names of countries, it is sufficient, however, to take a look at a map of African continent.

Due to the delimitation of the borders by colonial powers, in an arbitrary manner, various African nations, ethnic groups and tribes were divided between different countries. For example, among others, it is possible to mention Hausas and Yorubas within this context. Individuals belonging to the same tribe or ethnic group remain divided between English or French speaking countries and their contacts were weakened.

In some cases, border lines did not take into account potentials of economic or political sustainability of individual countries.

Existence of many ethnic groups or communities in majority of African countries is at the origin of emergence of various conflicts.

In many cases, colonial powers themselves, faithful to the policy of divide and rule (divide et impera) rather than pursuing a policy favoring integration, they created conflict situations or deepened ,all the more, existing divisions.

Africa's problems did not end with the accession to independence of all African nations within the context of the process of decolonisation. As we know, former colonial powers, are still the main source as far as a host of problems are concerned, in order to share among themselves Africa's natural richesses or to exploit the situation for their own interests.

When we take a glance at the recent African History,we can observe how Katanga and Biafra questions were exploited by certain countries.

It is also possible to observe that serious problems leading to genocide were created and even eyes were closed to ongoing genocide as a result of this state of affairs.

Nevertheless, it is not possible to say that all problems in Africa are caused by external factors.

Difficulties faced by the newly independent countries in their efforts to create nation-states in the aftermath of the decolonisation process, inexperience in the field of governance, social issues, corruption, bad governance, inefficiencies in democratic life and the necessity for democracy to pass through a long process are among the main causes of problems.

On the other hand, we must also acknowledge the fact that apartheid policy had also deep impact in Africa.

As we touched upon earlier, to some extent, natural richness of nations, inability to use this richness in favor of the peoples as well as bad governance are causing social unrest, instability and conflicts. Mismanagement of Nigerian oil production by international firms and the compulsory resort by the military administration to the use of force in the face of social problems can be cited as examples how natural resources may create security problems.

Within this context, we can not forget destruction in Sierra Leone caused by international diamond trade in West Africa and arms trade linked to it.

As we know, conflict emerged in one country leads to intensified migratory movements towards neighboring countries as well as refugee issues, thus this state of affairs creates regional instability and security questions. Many African countries experienced these problems. We also know that Democratic Republic of Congo had recently such an experience.

Existence of all these issues influenced the question of security in African continent.

Within the existing international system, remedies were searched in the face of serious emerging conflicts and in the first stage, efforts were made to ensure stability with the involvement of UN peacekeeping forces sent to the area. An important experience was Katanga conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo.

In following stages, we see that regional African organizations begun to play an influential role in order to end emerging hostilities , to search solutions to problems and to restore peace . Among various examples we can mention peacekeeping force created by ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) due to the situation in Sierra Leone as well as its efforts to find a solution to the problem.

We also observe from time to time that former colonial powers assume similar rôles . As a matter of fact, France played such a rôle in Chad and in Côte d'Ivoire as well.

New Partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD), created in 2001 in order to find comprehensive and realistic solutions to the problems of Africa has the objective to ensure economic and social development for radical solutions to security and instability in Africa.

Another significant recent development has been the

creation of African Union in 2001 following initiatives taken in 1999. With this development African Union has become an international organization to assume rôles also in the field of security issues in the continent.

At this point, I would like to dwell on Turkey's relations with Africa countries in the field of security. As it is known, Turkey supported the process of decolonization whereby all African countries acceded to independence and wished that they could realize as soon as possible their economic and social development through the solution of pertinent problems in peace and stability.

Turkey wishing to develop her relations with African countries in all fields, attached particular importance too develop also her relations in the field of security.

There is no doubt, Turkey could help African countries in the field of security in many respects. For example, Turkish-African cooperation in the field of military training and formation of African students in war colleges and academies (which provide quality education) could be possible. On the other hand, some short term military courses or exchange of information could also be considered.

Turkey, agreed cooperation with several African countries for the training of gendarmerie personnel. Well experienced in this field, Turkey's cooperation with other countries proved to be very useful.

Another field for cooperation coming into mind in this connection is the defense industry. As a matter of fact, Turkey made significant progress during recent years in defense industry.

Turkish defense industry is a sector with high international standards, since Turkish defense industry developed entirely according to NATO standards . It means the existence of world's highest defense industry standards also in Turkey.

It is possible to observe this in international defense industry fairs (IDEF) organized in Turkey every two years. A number of defense officials from African countries were also invited to International Defense Fair (IDEF) organized this year.

Mutual visits of defense or defense industry officials between Turkey and African countries will certainly be useful. Visitors of IDEF admit that Turkish defense industry may offer cheaper but good quality products.

In order to realize cooperation in the field of training and defense industry, separate individual framework agreements between Turkey and African countries should be concluded.

Turkey has also greatly contributed, in international plan, to various peacekeeping operations. Indeed, Turkey has a vast

experience in this field. In particular in Korea, in the Middle East, in Lebanon, in Africa, in Caucasus and in Balkans, Turkey contributed a lot to peacekeeping efforts of the international community.

The first Turkish experience ever occurred was her participation in the UN peacekeeping force in Korea during the Korean War between 1950-1953. Turkey sent a brigade to join UN forces.

In 1997 Turkish Armed Forces took part, with a marine detachment (779 troops) in the multilateral force created to assist Albania under UN Security Council Resolution.

There was also a Turkish regiment in UN peacekeeping force (UNPROFOR) in 1993-1995 in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Later Turkey joined IFOR with a brigade. In the following stage, Turkish contingent was relegated to the level of detachment and put at the disposal of SFOR.

Turkish Navy participated in Adriatic Sea between 1992 and 1996 “ in Sharp Guard” operation with two frigates and various ships. Turkish Air Forces also carried out monitoring mission.

During 1999 Kosovo crisis Turkish Air Forces provided support to NATO operation with 10 F-16 aircrafts.

Turkey carried out military monitoring/observation missions in 5 sensitive areas from Bosnia-Herzegovina to East Timor including monitoring of the implementation of Georgia-Abkhazia cease-fire agreement .

In this context I would like to provide brief information on Turkey's contributions to operations undertaken by the European Union (EU). Turkey took part in 2003-2006 in EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia-Herzegovina, realized within the framework of European Union's Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). It was the first civilian crisis management mission within the ESDP.

Turkey also participated in the EU Concordia operation in Macedonia (31 March- 15 December 2003) as well as Proxima Police Mission in Macedonia (15 December 2003-2005).

Turkey took part in 2 December 2004 in Bosnia-Herzegovina EU/NATO ALTHEA operation with a detachment. Turkey was also present in EU Police Mission (EUPM-II) in Bosnia-Herzegovina as of 1 January 2006.

Turkey joined with 4 police officers, as decided in 2007 by the EU, the civilian mission in Afghanistan. Works continue for the civilian mission in Kosovo.

Turkey also took part in NATO International Security and Assistance operation in Afghanistan with 1100 military troops.

The number of Turkey's troops in Kosovo NATO/KFOR operation is 723.

After this information on Turkey's contributions to international peacekeeping operations, I would like to take a look at Turkish contributions to peacekeeping efforts and activities in Africa.

Turkey traditionally contributes , albeit modest, to all UN budgets for peacekeeping activities. Nevertheless, parallel to Turkey's contributions to UN peace keeping activities in various parts of the world, Turkish participation in UN peacekeeping force in Somalia with a sizable number of troops (300) and the conduct of UN Forces under a Turkish commander (General Çevik Bir) for a given period of time were significant events. As is known, Somalia was a region in the Ottoman Province of Abyssinia. There is close relationship between Turkish and Somalian peoples. For these reasons, Turkey's presence in the UN forces was requested.

Hostilities in Somalia among various tribes brought the country into disaster and up to early 1990's 300 000 peoples were killed and millions of somalians took refuge in neighboring countries.As a result, this state of affairs, necessitated UN's intervention for the purpose of humanitarian assistance. The First UN Peacekeeping Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM-I) was carried out in 1992. Later, it continued between December 1992 and May 1993 as joint UN-USA operation (UNITAF). It was conducted between May 1993 and March 1995 as UN operation under the name of UNOSOM-II. As mentioned earlier, importance

for Turkey of the UN's operation in Somalia is arisen from the fact that there was a Turkish participation in this operation with a military contingent and UN forces (UNUSOM-II operation) have been under the command of a Turkish general for a certain period of operation.

General Çevik Bir was the commander of UN forces between February 1993-January 1994. In his memoirs published on UN operation in Somalia, he underlines that Turkey gained a lot of experience on peacekeeping operations thanks to the operation in Somalia.

On the other hand operations to which Turkey, at the present, contributed in Africa are as follows:

Turkey contributed to the EUPOL Kinshasa Police mission a gendarmerie personnel (31 March-13 October 2005) .

Turkey participated in the EUFOR RD CONGO (EU/UN) MISSION on 12 January-30 November 2006 with 17 personnel and one C-130 aircraft.

On the other hand, Turkey contributes to the UN Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) 25 police officials. One of the four Turkish army officers functioning in UNMIS has been presently allocated to the UNAMID (African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur). As is known, the UN Security Council by virtue of its resolution on 31 July 2007 decided to deploy a peacekeeping force in the Darfur region together with the African Union .

In addition to that, EU is planning to execute one-year-long operation in Chad and Central African Republic. Main tasks of the operation have been defined as to contribute to the protection of UN Personnel as well as refugees fled to these countries due to the mêlée in Darfur and to facilitate the flow of humanitarian assistance . As regards conditions of Turkish participation, Turkey could contribute to the operation, if it is guaranteed that provisions contained in the Nice Implementation Document will be entirely taken into consideration in practice. In case Turkish participation in operations within the context of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) of the EU is proposed according to the document mentioned above, Turkey evaluates in principle positively her participation in this operation. Here, I will not enter into the details of the problem regarding ESDP.

After all this information on security issues in Africa, its causes, peacekeeping operations and Turkey's relations with Africa in the field of security and Turkish contributions to peacekeeping operations in African continent, now, I intend to touch upon the new concept of security in international forums. As a matter of fact, nowadays, the concept of security is considered in a different manner and a new definition is made.

Recently, security as a concept is taken into consideration in a comprehensive manner beyond its classical definition. Security is also perceived as economic security , security of

environment , social security, cultural security. Security is understood as a must for the development. For this, in general terms, democracy and human rights are evaluated as essential elements ensuring security.

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted on 10 December 1948 stipulates in its Article 3 the following:

“ Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person “

This article was copied from the Human Rights Declaration of 1789 French Revolution. In other words both documents evaluated security as a human right.

The assessment of security as human right establishes a link with the idea of democracy. As a matter of fact, democracy and human rights are linked one to another. Undemocratic totalitarian regimes forget the fact that security is a human right. Economic development, political stability, democracy and human rights will guarantee, as a result, the genuine security of the peoples. Such a situation will help create , in international plan, an environment based on stability and security.

In the light of all these, it is possible to say that security problems of Africa can not be resolved through military means.

In the final analysis, distancing from bad governance, corruption and totalitarian regimes based on oppression , establishment of a political life on the basis of human rights and democracy as well as economic development will help create a genuine security.

All these in mind, I must emphasize that it is particularly important to develop relations between Turkey and Africa in all fields.

