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BREXIT AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPACT ON EU-TURKEY DEFENSE AND SECURITY RELATIONS

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Turkey has been a partner of European countries for decades in Western security structures, thanks to its geopolitical position, military capabilities, and membership of NATO. Nevertheless, there were at times tense periods between Turkey and some of the European countries due to clashes of interests. More recently, rising tensions in the Aegean Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean over the continental shelf and exclusive economic zones have challenged the development of a positive agenda for cooperation. Turkey's military capabilities and potential to act as a gatekeeper in connection with migratory waves toward Europe from the Middle East and the east in general are some of the more prominent assets in the current EU-Turkey cooperation efforts. After the UK's exit from the Union, Turkey's military capabilities are once again perceived as beneficial to strengthen the EU's security and defense policies. These characteristics of Turkey will no doubt continue to shape the relations between Turkey and Europe in the security and defense realms in the coming years.

The relations between Turkey and the UK go back to the 1580s, and the recent political rhetoric of both British and Turkish leaders signals that the cooperation and dialogue between the two countries will continue in the post-Brexit era. While the UK's exit from the EU means that Turkey has lost an ally in the Union, the possibility of a close relationship between the two countries is once again seen as an opportunity of enhancing Turkey's contribution and participation in the EU's security and defense operations and other mechanisms.

In this paper, the EU's future relationship with the UK in relation to differentiated integration models and Turkey, and the UK's and the EU's potential cooperation in security and defense in the post-Brexit era will be examined. Accordingly, it will try to respond to the following questions: How will Brexit affect European security? What are the main issues in Turkey-EU relations from a defense and security perspective? What will be the possible impact of Brexit on Turkey-EU security relations?

In order to provide responses to these questions, first the impact of Brexit on future EU-UK cooperation in security and defense will be examined. Then, the state of the art on differentiated integration models and Turkey's participation in

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European security and defense structures, as well as the potential impact of Brexit on them will be analyzed. The last part of the paper will focus on the challenges and opportunities, and whether there are any significant paradigmatic shifts in Turkey-EU relations and the risks related to these shifts.

Brexit and the Future of EU-UK Cooperation in Security and Defense

Since 2013, when the former British Prime Minister David Cameron announced his plan to hold a referendum on Britain's exit from the EU, the future of EU-UK relations has been debated in political and academic circles from various perspectives, with the future of cooperation in the security and defense field having been part of these debates. The impact of Brexit on trade, finance and economic relations in general has been the subject of heated debates since the referendum took place as planned in 2016. [1] Also, the future of the peace in Northern Ireland and the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are some of the issues still occupying the agenda.

The future of EU-UK relations in the security and defense realms have not so far been prioritized in the very busy agenda, though the impact of Brexit on the EU's security and defense contexts have been two sided in the literature. Some argued (Hall et al., 2017: 144) that the impact of Brexit on the security of the EU would be minimal due to the intergovernmental characteristics of the foreign and security policies at the EU level. However, as Great Britain was one of the so-called big three, together with France and Germany, its exit from the EU implies decreased capabilities and assets in the security and defense realms of the EU. It has been suggested that Brexit's effect on the EU's security and defense policies will be a "theoretical loss of capabilities" and a "practical loss of political power", but a gain in institutional governance since, with the UK out of the way, the rest of the EU member states could further their integration (Major and Mölling, 2017: 4).

The UK was an important contributor to EU assets and capabilities in the defense and security realms. Its contribution to the EU's security through intelligence collection as well as military support in operations, in particular, cannot be overlooked. The UK held over 50% of all combat intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance heavy unmanned aerial vehicles and about 40% of all the electronic intelligence aircraft of all the EU member states (Giegerich and Mölling, 2018). It has also been one of the biggest contributors to EU operations in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq, while its spending on research and development in the defense industry has been one of the highest in the Union along with France. Hence, it is argued that the UK's exit may increase the expectations and capabilities gaps, which could affect the credibility of the Union negatively (Martill and Sus, 2019: 15).

A further friction in relation to the defense industry is expected over the question of the UK's participation in the *Galileo* space program, in which EU and UK expertise is intertwined (Ten Brinke et. al, 2018: 3). Therefore, continued UK participation in the European Defense Agency (EDA), gateway to the Union's

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defense research and development projects, seems acceptable for both the UK and the EU in the post-Brexit era (European Commission, 2018).

After the Brexit decision, the UK government prepared a future partnership paper, setting out key issues on which the EU and the UK can work together with the aim of building special relationships. The paper, which was prepared in connection with future relations in foreign, security and development policies, highlights shared values such as peace, democracy, freedom and the rule of law, as well as the capabilities and assets that the UK has offered to the EU, i.e., the UK having the largest defense budget in Europe and the second largest in NATO and being the only European country that meets both the NATO target of spending 2% of its GDP (Gross Domestic Product) on defense and the UN target of spending 0.7% of its GNI (Gross National Income) on international development (HM Government, 2017: 6).

It is clear that because of Brexit, it will be necessary to build a partnership framework to ensure the UK's participation in the EU's foreign and security policies, including cross border cooperation mechanisms, and combatting organized crime and antiterrorist operations. Although the security and defense policy realm has been an intergovernmental one, each state's assets have been invaluable for the totality of EU security and defense policies. In addition to its military and logistics assets, the UK's diplomatic contributions, not only in the EU's neighborhood or in the regions where the operations have been ongoing, but also across the Atlantic have been essential. The special relationship

between the UK and the US has benefitted the EU in situations where a balancing actor needed to step in.

The UK's position in the Middle East and the (Eastern) Mediterranean has also balanced and shaped the policies, together with France and Germany. It has been argued that the UK would like to continue its closer connections with the EU in hotspots such as the Middle East, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Eastern Europe, as well as to cooperate with the US on sanctions, intelligence sharing, and fighting terrorism and organized crime (Balfour, 2020).

It can be argued that there is a mutual benefit in cooperation for the UK and the EU. Hence, the cooperation proposals of France (i.e., Council for Internal Security in 2019 and Lancaster House Treaties in 2010). The latter committed France and the UK to the establishment of a Joint Expeditionary Force and an increase in the interoperability of their militaries (Martill and Sus, 2018: 858). The Franco-British cooperation in the security and defense realm has been the backbone of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), especially since the St Malo decisions of 1998. French President Emmanuel Macron's proposal in September 2017, to establish a European Intervention Initiative (E2I), bringing together NATO and the EU states outside the EU and NATO structures, particularly seeks enhanced interaction on intelligence sharing, scenario planning, support operations and doctrine. This attempt is perceived as an opportunity and sign of willingness on France's part to continue cooperation with the UK. The E2I aims to rely on a minimum and flexible

comitology, coordinated by a permanent secretariat implemented by France with the liaison officers of the participating countries (Directorate General for International Relations and Strategy, 2020). This type of flexible relationship appeals to the UK as well, since it has been an advocate of less supranationalism and more intergovernmentalism in not only the security and defense domains but in all areas of cooperation in Europe. This desire by the UK was also evident during the Brexit campaign, as the slogans used emphasized the desire to take back control, i.e., "We want our country back!"

Furthermore, the other 27 member states of the Union are not eager to devolve their sovereign rights in this particular sphere of security and defense to the EU institutions and thus *ad hoc* coalitions outside the formal framework of the EU and NATO, with the limited participation of willing actors have become more visible than before. In these *ad hoc* coalitions, the use of NATO assets is critical for the operations to be successful. As a result of Brexit, whether the Northwood Headquarters, which hosts the UK's Strategic Command, Permanent Joint Headquarters, and the Commander of the Allied Maritime Command (one of NATO's 3 major Commanders) and the Royal Navy's Maritime Operations Centre, will be available for future European operations, has become a matter of concern. In the debates revolving around the strategic autonomy of Europe, the usage of national or NATO headquarters without the involvement of all NATO members has been a matter of debate. The future scenarios of cooperation have focused on this matter and both France and Germany have made references to setting up operational military headquarters as well as keeping NATO as a guarantor of European defense (Csornai, 2017: 10).

Long before Brexit, the EU took a step in Lisbon in 2009 to enable the member states' cooperation in the security and defense realms through Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). It is a framework and process to deepen defense cooperation between those EU Member States which are capable and willing to do so and it is open to the participation of third countries (PESCO, n.d.). The Lisbon Treaty stated that PESCO would be open to all member states to:

> "(a) proceed more intensively to develop its defence capacities through the development of its national contributions and participation, where appropriate, in multinational forces, in the main European equipment programs, and in the activity of the Agency in the field of defense capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments (European Defense Agency), and

> (b) have the capacity to supply by 2010 at the latest, either at the national level or as a component of multinational force groups, targeted combat units for the missions planned, structured at a tactical level as a battle group, with support elements including transport and logistics, capable of carrying out the tasks referred to in Article 43 of the Treaty on European Union, within a period of 5 to 30 days, in particular in response to requests from the United Nations Organization, and which can be sustained for an initial period of 30 days and be extended up to at least 120 days." (Protocol on Permanent Structured Cooperation, 2016).

In November 2020, the EU established the criteria for third country participation in PESCO. It has been decided that the third

countries should "share the values on which the EU is founded, must not contravene the security and defense interests of the EU and its member states, and must have an agreement to exchange classified information with the EU, among others" (European Council, 2020). These criteria demonstrate that there is a wide-open door for the UK to participate in the projects conducted under PESCO. Prime Minister Theresa May, in the letter triggering the procedure for the UK to leave the Union, stated that the UK was unconditionally committed to maintaining European security (Cameron, 2017: 2). It is believed that PESCO will be instrumental in linking NATO, EU member states and third countries in the security and defense realms of Europe.

The UK's capabilities such as airborne early warning and control aircraft, heavy transport aircraft, electronic intelligence aircraft, the armed forces' strengths in the high-end war fighting and ability to provide scarce enablers to international operations (Giegerich and Mölling, 2018) make the UK an indispensable part of European security. Thus, the UK's participation in PESCO has been a part of the future scenarios on the UK-EU cooperation mechanisms. The Clingendael Report in 2016 is one of the studies in which different scenarios were laid out in the case of Brexit and its impact on European security and defense. According to this report, three scenarios are highlighted: i) Civilian Power Europe Redux, ii) PESCO Plus UK and iii) Unleashed Continental Europe (van Ham, 2016). Among the three scenarios, the most ambitious one seems to be the last one, foreseeing the advancement towards a federal EU, a stronger European Defense Agency and the development of a European army.

Another suggestion for the future relationship between the UK and the EU has been the *Framework Participation Agreement* including criteria designed to unlock UK contributions for the most demanding EU missions (Giegerich and Mölling, 2018). In addition to these, *ad hoc* agreements to permit the participation of third countries in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations have been suggested in the literature (European Commission, 2018). The UK indicated its willingness to participate in EU operations, such as those in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and the Balkans[2] since the UK's trade, security and exposure to immigration will be directly affected by the success of these operations (Farmer and McCann, 2016).

The worsening of relations between the EU-27 and the UK has been the least wanted option in relation to security policies for both sides. Another scenario is that the divide between the EU as a security player and NATO as a defense actor might become more marked (Major and Mölling, 2017: 1). Both the EU Global Strategy and PESCO emphasize the importance of NATO and cooperation between the two entities. Besides, the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review (2015) of the UK refers to the EU's capabilities in the security and defense realms as complementary to those of NATO (HM Government, 2017: 53). Thus, it has been argued that EU-British cooperation may take place through NATO, which would broaden the Alliance's role on the European continent (Martill and Sus, 2018). However, in this scenario, the role of the other non-EU NATO members would become a hot topic for discussion.

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[2] Operation Poseidon, Operation Triton, EU Naval Force Mediterranean Operation Sophia, Operation Althea, Operation Atalanta

Similar to these future options, Whitman also identifies three possible scenarios: i) the UK as an integrated player which provides a special status to the UK to ensure its involvement in the battlegroups, CSDP operations and participation in the Foreign Affairs Council for relevant matters, ii) the UK as an associate partner in which the UK participates in a dialogue with the EU on relevant issues, and iii) the UK as a detached observer, in which the UK would participate only in civilian missions on a case by case basis (Whitman, 2017: 48).

At the time of writing, the future relationship structure between the EU and the UK is still unknown and uncertainty is shaping the future of cooperation mechanisms. However, despite these uncertainties, there is one common point in almost all the future scenarios discussed in the literature. They are all, one way or another, proposing a differentiated integration model. It has been argued that the formal disintegration of 'Europe' – i.e., Brexit – also seems to have enabled innovative practices of differentiated integration at the EU level (Svendsen, 2019), which could be utilized for other non-EU NATO countries in their relations with the EU in the defense and security sectors.

Potential impact of Brexit on Turkey's participation in European security and defense

This section of the paper will focus on a potential future structured relationship between Turkey and the EU in security and defense matters, based on the structured relationship that will be shaped

between the UK and the EU. Such a potential relationship is unlikely to be realized in the short term, given the EU's growing criticism of the Turkish government's poor human rights record, especially after the failed coup of 2016, as well as given recent geopolitical divergences in the Eastern Mediterranean between Turkey on the one hand and EU member states such as Greece and France on the other. Unless this changes, new developments in the relationship between Turkey and the EU in security and defense issues are likely to be merely transactional, as was the case with the migration deal of March 2016.

Differentiated integration, a process by which member states integrate into the Union with different objectives and/or at different speeds, is not a new phenomenon for the EU. However, the discussion on the future scenarios for UK-EU cooperation in the security and defense realms have re-heated the debate, not only because they would shape UK-EU relations but also because they would shed light onto other third-country partnerships in terms of European security and defense policies in different shapes and at different speeds.

The EU already has differentiated relationships with its neighbors, EEA countries, EFTA members and countries like Turkey and Andorra, through the Customs Union and bilateral agreements. There are several studies in the literature focusing on differentiated integration models. For example, Stubb (1996) categorizes differentiated integration under the main concepts of multi-speed, variable geometry, and *à la carte*. A multi-speed EU foresees a core group of member states willing and able to commit to further cooperation, and the other

member states following them. "Variable geometry" allows a permanent separation among the member states, based on the level of integration they can attain; while in the *à la carte* model, each member state can pick and choose in which policy area they would participate, while maintaining minimum common objectives.

Florenz argues that an avantgarde Europe imagines a union that is formed by member states, some of which represent the 'avant-garde' (Holzinger & Schimmelfennig, 2012: 294). Schauble and Lamers discuss a Europe of Concentric Circles, constituted of a core federal political union formed by some member states, while other member states constitute a second circle, and non-member states which are willing to join in on some policy areas constitute a third (Holzinger & Schimmelfennig, 2012: 298). Holzinger's multi-level model proposes the inclusion of not only member states, but also subnational jurisdictions of member states and even non-member states. Fabbrini argues that there are several different European Unions (Leruth & Lord, 2015: 755), while Leruth categorizes the policy areas in which differentiated integration took place in the EU as EEA membership, EU membership, participation in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice, participation in the CFSP, and participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union (Leruth, 2015: 821).

The debate on differentiated integration intensified after the economic crisis of 2008, since some EU member states furthered the integration of their fiscal policies. Thus, it has been suggested that the Union may need to rearrange its institutional structure to cope with the

opt-outs and opt-ins (Ciceo, 2012). In 2015, it was calculated that approximately 40% of EU law was subject to differentiated integration principles in the common market, the area of freedom, security and justice (AFSJ), and the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), as well as to a lesser extent in the CSDP and the Charter of Fundamental Rights (Grosse, 2015).

Today, differentiated integration may be considered as a form of European integration, since the increased use of qualitative majority voting, the introduction of flexibility as a principle of governance, and clarifications on the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties, and the emphasis on enhanced cooperation and the mechanism of permanent structured cooperation in the Lisbon Treaty, all suggest that differentiated integration has become a part of the integration process. In the light of these arguments, Turkey's participation in the European defense and security policies, through a mechanism that the UK and the EU would formulate for the former's participation in defense projects in the post-Brexit era may be possible (Kaya, 2019).

Turkey has already participated in EU operations and missions and has shown an interest in further cooperation in security and defense policies. It especially took part in the EU-led operations in the Balkans, and continues actively to participate in military crisis management operations under the CSDP, notably EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although the Turkish participation in the Ukraine and Kosovo missions was suspended after Turkish seconded staff were withdrawn following the attempted coup of 2016, Turkey expressed its interest in continuing to

contribute to these missions (European Commission, 2019: 101). Some other operations Turkey has contributed to include CONCORDIA and EUPOL Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Historically, Turkey has been a part of European security structures, and had an associate membership status in the Western European Union (WEU) before it was dismantled. Under the WEU, Turkey was able to join the process of decision making but not to block a decision or participate in the implementation of WEU military operations. When the EU incorporated WEU, the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) was established to carry out the Petersberg Tasks. As the EU started to be more active in the security and defense fields, a need to regulate relations with NATO emerged. Hence the 2001 Berlin Plus arrangements included clauses on NATO's right of first refusal to conduct crisis management operations, and approval of the use of assets has to be unanimous among NATO states. (Gardiner and McNamara, 2008) Further steps were taken to strengthen the security and defense policies of the EU in 2009, when ESDP included Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) to enable willing states to advance their cooperation in this specific policy area. PESCO was activated in 2017 and initially 25 member states agreed to be part of these projects.

After the initiation of PESCO, scenarios on Turkey's participation in security and defense projects as a third country generated excitement in the literature on Turkey-EU relations. For example, Aydın-Düzgit and Marrone (2018) suggest that the third counties' involvement in PESCO can be achieved by granting consultation rights to a NATO member third country in deciding on PESCO's policy direction, and full participatory rights in PESCO's capability and operational projects in which they can participate. Bağcı and Gaudino (2019: 18) also argue that taking Turkey on board would bring additional value to PESCO, since there are common goals in the shared neighborhood. However, the conditions established for third countries to participate in PESCO are likely to be a big obstacle in furthering relations on this front.

Turkey's proximity to the Middle East, the Caucasus and the Mediterranean has been both an asset and a curse in its relations with the EU. At the end of the 1990s, when Turkey's status was elevated to candidacy, its possible contribution to foreign and security policies was presented as an asset. In 2012, the steps to regenerate the relations between the EU and Turkey made reference to Turkey's role in its region and its potential in the security and defense fields were highlighted as part of a "Positive Agenda". In 2020, Merkel emphasized Turkey's membership of NATO and the partnership between the EU and Turkey in the migration crisis, in explaining the reasons behind the necessity to have a constructive relationship with Ankara (Politico Blog, 2020). On the negative side, however, Turkey's role as a buffer zone – a catch phrase of the Cold War years – started to be mentioned once again in the face of current security threats. Turkey being defined as a buffer zone similar to the role it held in the Cold War years is risky. First, Turkey being perceived as an actor to keep the threat away from EU borders means that Turkey's future relations with the EU will not be shaped by the prospect of membership. If this prospect is lost, the conditionality principle would be void, which would further negatively affect the

respect for rule of law and protection of human rights . Thus, the EU would not be considered as a normative actor but a strategic partner and with relations taking the form of the transactional, would be only based on interests rather then norms and values.

Turkey's trade with the EU in the security and defense sectors also provides evidence for potential cooperation mechanisms. The EU is Turkey's second largest client after the United States with 25.4% of its defense and aerospace exports (Kaya, 2019: 7). Turkish and European defense firms are partners in several projects such as the cooperation between Airbus Helicopters (formerly Eurocopter) and Turkish Aerospace in the MK1 Cougar Program.

The various proposals of privileged partnership for Turkey over the years also imply cooperation in the framework of security and defense policies, such as its participation in institutions or in the setting up of battle groups. Some of the suggested institutional frameworks included trilateral meetings of the Presidents of Turkey, the Commission and the Council, concrete structures within the CFSP in which Turkey could be included such as PESCO or the European Defence Agency (EDA), (Szymanski, 2020), as well as a seat at the table of the Military and Political Committees. (Müftüler-Baç, 2018).

In the light of the scenarios regarding the UK's future cooperation in the security and defense realms with the EU, the possibility of Turkey establishing a cooperation framework similar to the one that the EU and UK would establish has emerged. Ülgen argues that there is a need for a more intense cooperation

between the UK and Turkey to improve their negotiating position regarding the improvement of the modalities of participation of third countries in the CSDP. Cooperation between the British and Turkish defense industries is also argued to be valuable enough for the EU to allow it to bypass the political difficulties of associating Turkey and the UK formally through the EDA (Ülgen, 2017: 16).

Turkey's possible cooperation with the UK would also help Turkey not to feel isolated and marginalized in its relations with the EU. When the privileged partnership proposals were made, Turkey objected to them strongly. However, as the years passed and the differentiated integration model has become more popular and even, to a certain extent, accepted as a new model of integration within the EU, Brexit, as Müftüler-Baç (2018) argues, created the possibility of seeing alternative forms of integration as acceptable and indicated the prospect of acting together only in limited selected areas, i.e. security and defense.

Lately, some of the most controversial security related issues occupying Turkey-EU relations were mainly related to the EU-Turkey Statement (the 'deal') of March 2016, the developments in the Eastern Mediterranean and Libya. The 'deal' on migration in March 2016 has shaped Turkey-EU relations since and "transactionalism" has become one of the buzzwords used to define the relationship. As Dalay (2016) argues, the reinvigoration of Turkey's relations with Europe was driven by shared interests and geopolitical imperatives rather than common values. When the interests of the two actors do not coincide and their positions and interests diverge, conflicting rhetoric

takes place. As the positions and interests of Turkey and the EU started to diverge, the EU moved to criticize Turkey's actions as incompatible with EU standards and Federica Mogherini states that Turkey "continues to move further away from the EU". (Atılgan, 2019) Thus, the transactional relations based on mutual interests, rather than Turkey's full membership seems to be the model for EU-Turkey relations.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, the Strategic Partnership Document between the UK and Turkey states (2010), that "they are in favor of a bicommunal and bizonal federal solution based on political equality" (Örmeci, 2016: 125). In the last 10 years, Turkey's position has changed towards a solution to the Cyprus issue. Turkish President Erdoğan, in his latest statement said that "if there are to be new talks on Cyprus, these should no longer be between the two communities, but between the two states." (Hürriyet Daily, May 22, 2021) There were rumors that the UK would support a confederal solution loosely based on the Belgian model for Cyprus (T-Vine, February 24, 2021) but Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, in his speech in February 2021, emphasized the importance of a reunited Cyprus and referred to the UN 5+1 Meeting in April 2021 for a solution on the island. At the end of the UN 5+1 Meeting in April 2021, the Secretary General stated that they "have not yet found enough common grounds to allow for the resumption of formal negotiations in relation to the settlement of the Cyprus problem," since Turkish Cypriots believe that possibilities of "the bi-zonal, bi-communal federation have been exhausted." While the Greek Cypriot delegation expressed the opinion that "a settlement based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality" should be aimed at. (UN Secretary General, April 29, 2021).

In general, regarding the Mediterranean and the Middle East, regional stability and peace, defense, global security, the struggle against illegal immigration and energy security have always been among the issues that the countries included in their cooperation rhetoric. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), UK describes "security cooperation between the UK and Turkey as being central to the relationship." (Parliament UK, 2017) The FCO stated its views on cooperation with Turkey as:

> "Foreign and security policy collaboration between the UK and Turkey is vital to the stability of Europe and the Middle East. A solution in Syria is of paramount importance to both countries. Turkey has an important role to play in moving towards a settlement on Cyprus; responding to the major challenges faced by the NATO alliance; and European energy security. Turkey's role in tackling the migration crisis has been extraordinarily important, with continued engagement with the UK and European partners vital." (Parliament. n.d)

Although the UK will not be in the Union as an ally, Turkey-UK bilateral relations outside the EU have been strong and are expected to continue to be strong. Diplomatic relations between the Ottoman and the British Empires started as early as the 1580s. Although the French and Italians had already established diplomatic and trade relations with the Ottomans, the English secured Capitulations in 1580. In the 17th century, although there were "naval wars against the Ottoman autonomous regencies of Tripoli (1674-6) and Algiers (1677-83)", the only direct conflict between Britain and the Ottomans was during 1807-09. (Talbot, n.d)

In the First World War, as the Ottomans entered the War alongside the Germans, "not only the British and the Ottoman armies but also economic and political interests of the two sides began to clash openly." (Ediz, 2016, p. 110) After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the relations recovered. In the 1930s, relations developed, as the UK supported Turkey's participation in the League of Nations. At the time, as the footsteps of the Second World War were getting closer, the protection of the status quo in the Mediterranean was one of the main concerns of Turkey and an Italian–British agreement promising to respect the status quo was perceived as a positive development. (Gönlübol and Sar, 2013 p.130) After the Second World War, Turkey, refusing to be part of the proposed security organization in the Middle East (Oğuzlu, 2013), and becoming a member of NATO put Turkey and the UK into the same political and military alliance. Turkey's geopolitical and geostrategic position has been praised since then, even though there are critical issues preventing further cooperation, i.e. Cyprus.

Cameron emphasizes Turkey's role as an ally in NATO in the fight against terrorism and its "unique position at the meeting point of East and West" (Koronova and Kornilov, 2013: 44). Theresa May was the first European leader who visited Turkey after the 2016 failed coup attempt and stated that Turkey "is an important NATO ally" (Parker and Srivastava, 2017). During her visit, Turkey and the UK signed a defense deal (between BAE Systems and Turkish Aerospace Industries) for the Turkish Fighter Program. Osman Okayay, the chairman of the Turkey-UK Business Council and also the vice-chairman of Kale group, a partner in the multinational

fighter jet program (TF-X), states that Brexit is not expected to affect the defense cooperation (Yinanç, 2020). The current Prime Minister, then Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, after the Brexit referendum, in an interview in Hürriyet Daily News, said that "Turkey will continue to be an indispensable partner for the UK. You are on the frontline of some of the most serious challenges we face" (Demirtaş, 2017). Although his rhetoric was decisively "anti-Turkish" during the "Leave Campaign", after the referendum his rhetoric resembled more that of the other British leaders.

In lieu of Conclusion: Opportunities and Challenges

In the light of recent developments and given the historical relations between the UK, Turkey and the EU, it is safe to say that security has been one of the most crucial aspects of the relations and will continue to shape these after Brexit. After the 1997 Luxembourg Summit, steps were taken to strengthen the foreign and security policies of the Union, and the need to cooperate with NATO and retain access to NATO assets were moved up to the top of the EU security and defense agenda. The agreements between NATO and the EU, i.e., the Berlin Plus arrangements (2001), the NATO-EU Strategic Partnership and arrangements to involve non-EU European allies in the ESDP were all aimed at avoiding duplication, discrimination and decoupling in European security.[3]

During the debates on Brexit and its impact on security and defense, NATO-EU relations, access to NATO assets, and the contributions of non-EU NATO members

to European security were once again at the top of the agenda. At the end of the 1990s, the UK was both an EU and a NATO member. The fact that its status has now changed into a non-EU NATO country, and considering its weight in the European security and defense realm, the issue of participation of non-EU NATO countries in European security and defense structures has gained urgency. However, one should be also aware of some major differences between the present and when the first steps of cooperation between the NATO and the EU were discussed in the 1990s.

First, the membership structure of the EU changed after 2004, with its biggest enlargement ever and Cyprus becoming a member of the EU. In the 1990s, similar to the situation today, the relations between Greece and Turkey were tense and the Cyprus dispute was ongoing, but Cyprus was not a part of the Union, and the veto powers of Turkey and Cyprus were not creating a formal interinstitutional deadlock at the time. However, after Cyprus' entry into the Union, Turkey refused to allow Cyprus to have access to NATO intelligence and resources in the security and defense institutional structures, and Cyprus vetoed the association of Turkey with the EDA. This issue has had a negative impact on the sharing of intelligence, communication, command, and control in operations in general.

Secondly, the rapid improvement in relations between the EU and Turkey in the early years of Mr. Erdogan's premiership, when he undertook major steps toward adopting EU standards on the rule of law and human rights, has been undone more recently. The EU is increasingly critical of Turkey's human rights record, especially since the failed coup of 2016.

Nonetheless, potentially a more structured relationship between the EU and Turkey on security and defense would benefit both sides. Since Turkey's full membership of the EU is unlikely at the moment, some alternative must be sought. In the past, especially in the 1990s, differentiated integration was not such a widely debated topic and it was rather perceived as an exclusionary tactic of the EU. However today, the voluntary exit of one of the major powers of Europe from the EU has transformed differentiated integration into a new and more acceptable form of cooperation and even an integration model for other countries. As the Union enlarged and steps towards deepening were taken, it became more and more difficult for all the members to follow the exact same policies with similar enthusiasm. For example, after the 2008 economic crisis, the proposals toward more unified financial mechanisms and a banking union were not welcomed by all member states and opt-outs were observed, one being by the UK. Migration and policies to respond to migration also created heated debates in the Union, while it is still a challenge for EU member states to find consensus regarding immigration quotas. There are already several opt-outs in the Schengen area, CSDP, the area of freedom, security and justice as well as over legal guarantees. As the literature suggests, different levels of integration are a more welcomed idea today than before. In this regard, the participation of Turkey in the EU security and defense mechanisms, possibly in cooperation with the UK, is not a taboo and is being debated widely.

Therefore, it can be argued that EU-Turkey relations should go through a paradigmatic shift concerning the shape of future integration models and rhetoric on full membership. The future of the institutional structure of the Union will certainly affect the course of relations between Turkey and the EU. Interrelatedly, the debate on third countries' participation in the security and defense structures of the Union will impact Turkey's potential role. In the post-Brexit era, both the UK's and Turkey's assets in the security and defense realms would not only contribute to the EU's military power in the Middle East and Black Sea regions, but would also act as a diplomatic gateway to hotspots in its neighborhood.

In the light of the scenarios debated as a result of Brexit and the future cooperation of the UK and the EU in the security and defense fields, an opportunity for Turkey to contribute to the European security structure may be the European Intervention Initiative (EI2), in which the cooperation of non-EU NATO countries and EU states is foreseen outside the EU and NATO structures. Here, intelligence sharing and support operations may open a new window on cooperation. Also, as long as NATO is kept as the guarantor of European defense, Turkey, as a NATO member, will continue to be a part of European security and defense policies. While the conditions introduced for third country participation in PESCO constitute an obstacle for Turkey's participation, the participation of Turkish research centers and companies through a possible UK-Turkey cooperation on projects could be brought onto the agenda in the future. Yet, in all these possible future scenarios, the EU's role as a normative actor, emphasizing the importance of norms and

values, should be protected. Turning Turkey-EU relations into a simple interest-based transactional relationship may hinder this role of the Union.

The Statement of the Members of the European Council on 25 March 2021 clearly stated that the Union has a strategic interest in a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the development of a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Turkey and, in this regard, the de-escalation of tensions in the region is welcomed. Hence, the EU opened the door on the modernization of the Customs Union with Turkey, high level dialogues between the EU and Turkey, and the strengthening of cooperation with Turkey on people to people contacts and mobility (European Council, 2021). Moreover, after the meeting between the US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and High Representative for Foreign Affairs Joseph Borell on 24 March 2021, it was stated that the US and the EU "will work hand in hand for sustainable de-escalation based on our interest in a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Turkey" (US Department of State, 2021). This statement from the transatlantic partners of Turkey demonstrates that there is a mutual understanding on Turkey's geostrategic importance and the will to focus on mutual interests, which may have the potential to develop into a more structured relationship in the future, including further cooperation in the security and defense sectors.

In the midst of all these debates and arguments putting forward the mutual interests and the transactional character. that relations are taking on, there is a potential danger of neglecting the normative aspect of the relations.

This danger is not only a danger for Turkey's economic, social and political development, but also for the EU and its future as a supporter of norms and values that it has cherished since its inception. One of the most crucial features of the EU has been its conditionality principle to spread the norms and values for the protection of human rights and the rule of law not only in the Union but also in other countries, especially in those in its neighborhood. The restructuring of relations among the member states and non-member states in a differentiated integration mechanism bears the danger that security interests in the face of threats supersede these norms and values. In addition to security and defense policies, some of the other main policy areas highlighted in the differentiated integration models are energy, transport, economic and social development, migration and the customs union. The migration deal in 2016 has set a bad example on transactional relations and their negative impact on the normative aspect of the EU.

Thus, as one can see from the paradigmatic shift in EU-Turkey relations, it is crucial for the EU to hold onto its values and norms such as respect for human rights and the rule of law in restructuring its future relations with Turkey, even if a differentiated integration model is pursued, emphasizing the security and defense cooperation along the adopted Brexit model. Turkey's role as a security actor at the gates of Europe in relation to migration has been extensively debated in the literature. It is not unimaginable to think that this may become more prevalent in the post-Brexit era in relation to UK-Turkey and EU-Turkey relations. However, one must be extra careful about projecting and

advocating the norms and values in a post-Brexit era in which differentiated integration models and transactional interest-based cooperation mechanisms are becoming more popular. This is not only important as a means to defend democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights in and around the Union, but also to retain the normative aspect and credibility of the EU.

To realize the mutually beneficial potential improvement in the relationship of the EU and Turkey towards a more structured arrangement on security and defense, the EU should use its economic clout and moral authority to help Turkey return to the path of the early Erdogan premiership toward a better functioning democracy, more application of the rule of law and respect for human rights. This would make more likely a deeper relationship beyond merely transactional ad hoc agreements, and would place Turkey firmly in the European family of shared liberal values to the benefit of both sides.

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