

Comparison of the relations between the EU and Western Balkan states with the relations between the EU and Turkey

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Today when we talk about the enlargement strategy of the EU, we first consider on Turkey and Western Balkan States. So we want to describe the similarities and differences by making comparison of the relations between the EU and Western Balkan States with the relations between the EU and Turkey.

Firstly we need to describe briefly how the EU is established. As we all know, two powerful states – not from Europe – dominated over Europe for the first time at the end of the Second World War. A fact as USA in Western Europe and Russia in Eastern Europe to be new forces caused the European states to decide and attempt seriously about uniting in Europe and recovering when both forced states make politics for the regions at their controls to abide themselves. The European states competing among themselves in Europe and in the World until that time were anyhow controlled or come under the influence of the others or else dependent on the others.

Beside Europe to be dependent on the others, a fact as controlling Germany not to become a threat again as in the Second World War was effective for the new structure. The European states that wanted getting over and finding solutions for uniting, tried to stand by helping each other¹.

¹ Ali Arslan, **Efendi ve Uşak/AB-Türkiye İlişkileri**, İstanbul 2008, pp. 47-90.

HOW THE EU WAS DEVELOPED IN THE COLD WAR AND TURKEY WAS EXCLUDED?

How EU developed?

The European Coal and Steel Community was the basis for the permanent integration in Europe and continuity by organizing. **The European Coal And Steel Community** was founded on April 18, 1951 by signing the Paris Treaty in compliance with the aim that the production of coal and steel – two major effects caused the Second World War – would be controlled by a common community having a high authority, and thus the ECSC was established. The ECSC founded a common market for coal and steel production, common targets and common constitutions to control them. The aim of ECSC was to create a common market and to contribute to economic expansion, growth of employment and a rising standard of living for the Member States. The Community would provide stability for the employment and protect the economy of the Member States against significant and consistent problems².

While founding the ECSC, an idea as establishing a defense community was come up. France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg signed a treaty for establishing a European Defense Community on May 27, 1952. The aim of the EDC was to integrate the European armies. However France refused to ratify the establishment of the EDC because of the rearmament of Germany with the EDC.

The EDC – not to be established – caused an idea that a political unity should be provided as soon as possible. France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg started to study on creating a federal Europe in compliance with this idea. However, the organization project aiming a

² Ömer Bozkurt, "Avrupa Topluluğunun Bütünleşme Süreci ve Yapısı: Genel Bir Bakış", **Avrupa Topluluğu ve Türkiye**, Ankara 1987, p.9.

federal structure in Europe was refused by the French Assembly on August 30, 1954³.

Although France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg founded the ECSC, they couldn't establish the Federal Europe; however they continued to create a "Union Europe".

The executives of the six states founding the ECSC signed the European Atomic Energy Community and European Economic Community Treaties in Rome on March 25, 1957. These treaties entered into force on January 1, 1958.

A major development was established for the United States of Europe and the European Community (EC) was founded between 1965 and 1967 by uniting the EEC, the ECSC and the EAEC.

Which Status was given to Turkey during the foundation of EU?

Turkey was among Western Block against the threatening of USSR and has started a Military Corporation with USA since 1947. Turkey and USA signed the Common Security Treaty in 1952, and Turkey became a member of NATO at the same time⁴. The main target of USA concerning the membership of Turkey was to benefit for blocking USSR in West and South directions.

Turkey was an exceptional state in the Eurasia and "the only country that is on a strategic point for the Middle East and the Arabic World, and is a stable front in concert against Soviet Union"⁵.

Although USA was not a member of the EEC, it supported the membership of Turkey for the EEC and "encouraged for the application of Turkey"⁶.

³ Ömer Bozkurt, "Avrupa Topluluğunun Bütünleşme Süreci ve Yapısı: Genel Bir Bakış", **Avrupa Topluluğu ve Türkiye**, Ankara 1987, pp.12-13.

⁴ Mehmet Saray, **Türkiye'nin Nato'ya Girişi**, Ankara 2006.

⁵ T. Dursun-F. Tayfun, **Türkiye-ABD İlişkilerinin Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını**, İstanbul 1994, pp.30-34.

⁶ Nazif Kuyucuklu, **Türkiye İktisadiyatı**, İstanbul 1986, p.595

However, USA was discontent of the EEC developed economical relations with the member and neighbor states, and this development caused the conflict of interests.

On July 31, 1959, Turkey applied to access into the EEC in accordance with the article 237 of the Rome Treaty founded the EEC. In this article, it was clearly stated that the other European States that didn't signed the Rome Treaty at first, would participate into the EEC⁷.

La Libre Belgique – one of the powerful journals of Europe – stated “The membership of Turkey and Greece for the EEC is impossible for now”. The offer of La Libre Belgique was “to create a free exchange zone” and to name it as “a limited Custom Union”⁸. The offer of this journal – published in Brussels – to cooperate with Turkey at the Custom Union point featuring a free trade agreement was so interesting.

On September 28, 1959'da first meetings were made in Brussels. The target of Turkey was “to be a member of the EEC”. However Turkey wanted this membership to be in a longer term. It was stated that Turkey required a preparation term for competition with the member states of the EEC which are economically strong. The purpose of Turkey was to protract the term described in the Rome Treaty to establish the Custom Union and to set the term between 22 or 25 years for Turkey. The EEC accepted the 22 or 25-year Partnership Treaty to be divided in two parts “preparation” and “passage” term, but it was absolutely refused that Turkey to access into the EEC corporations during the Partnership Period⁹.

Before the coup on May 27, 1960, at the time of the students' conflicts increased and political tension rose in Turkey, the EEC Council observed the application for accession into the EEC of Turkey on May 11, 1960 and determined the beginning of negotiations to be resulted with the

⁷ Feridun Ergin, “Müşterek Pazar Nedir? Girmemiz iyi mi, Fena mı Olur?” **Cumhuriyet**, 12 Eylül 1959.

⁸ **Cumhuriyet**, 11 Ağustos 1959.

⁹ Şaban H. Çalış, **Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri**, Ankara 2008, pp. 79-81.

“Partnership Treaty”¹⁰. The application for accession into the EEC of Menderes Government was also officially refused. In fact, the EEC revealed that it would prefer a relationship with Turkey not as a member but in a second class status.

The National Unity Committee withdrew the application of Menders Government¹¹ and accepted the partnership offer of the EEC not as a member but in a second class status.

After İnönü Government was formed, they followed the policies of the National Unity Committee of May 27 and worked for the development of the relationship with the EEC. At last a Partnership Treaty with the EEC was set. The treaty was signed between Turkey, Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands on September 12, 1963. Actually in this treaty Turkey has not been as a European State and the Ankara Treaty was signed in accordance with the article 238 of the Rome Treaty i.e. the article concerning the relationship with non-European states. It was aimed that Turkey has not been included in the EEC corporations and but just accepted into the economical control zone of the EEC as the Custom Union.

In 1963 Turkey got dependent on the EEC economically, an important action was carried on for establishing the United States of Europe and the EC was founded between 1965 and 1967 by uniting the EEC, ECSC and EAEC; nonetheless the executives at that time didn’t care about the mentioned action. Rather they not only complied with the second class status that Europe considered for Turkey but also they weren’t involved in the political area and just looked on that Turkey to experience the period leading to the third class status.

Greece that signed a Partnership Treaty aiming a Custom Union with the EEC together with Turkey, looked for a different attempt and disclaimed the Custom Union, applied for the membership of the EC in 1976 and became a

¹⁰ Şaban H. Çalış, **Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri**, p. 84.

¹¹ Şaban H. Çalış, **Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri**, pp. 84-89.

member of the EEC in 1983. Turkey – incapable of understanding the developments in Europe at that time – realized the situations too late and applied for the membership of the EC in 1987 at the time of prime ministry of Turgut Özal. Thus, for the first time Turkey exhibited that they wanted a relationship with the EC states equally. However, the application of Turkey was refused but also was hoped for the membership of the EU in future.

The EU starting to work for the Single Europe in 1985 and aiming an internal market for the member states, signed the European Union Treaty in 1992 and got down to create the United States of Europe. Turkey waiting for the membership of the EU till 1992 wasn't acceded even as a candidate for the membership of the EU. The EU claimed to establish the Custom Union in compliance with the Ankara Partnership in 1963. This claim was accepted by Turkey with the work programme signed by Erdal İnönü – the Deputy Prime Minister and the Coalition Partner – during the Prime Ministry of Süleyman Demirel. So Turkey accepted to be under control of the EU politically and economically instead of being in unequal status with the EU States. The transitional period to the Custom Union entered into force in 1996.

Nonetheless Turkey was accepted as a candidate state in 1999 and it was decided to begin the open-ended negotiation in 2004¹².

HOW USA AND THE EU TREATED WESTERN BALKAN STATES AFTER THE COLD WAR?

Tito, the Head of Yugoslavia, followed a socialist politics different than Stalin. At the Czechoslovakian act in 1968 they opposed to Russia. They built up trade with the Western States and so the Western States treated Yugoslavia different than the other Eastern Block states. Tito rescued the Non-Aligned countries – also known as Third World – from the Soviet Russia control in 1979.

¹² Ali Arslan, Efendi ve Uşak/AB-Türkiye İlişkileri, İstanbul 2008, pp. 95-237.

The economical and political crisis in 1989 caused the relationship between Croatia and Slovenia get worse. At the same year the innovation movements in Eastern Block were reflected in Yugoslavia and it was changed to the multiparty system.

As a result of civil war among republics in 1991, Slovenia (June 25), Croatia, Macedonia at the end of the same year and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992 declared their independence. The battles in Bosnia-Herzegovina through Serbian attacks ended in 1995. USA followed all the events in Western Balkans carefully.

7 new candidate member states, which were socialists before, accessed in NATO with the head of USA and one of them was Slovenia (the others were Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia).

USA still cares about this region and also Albania and Croatia are granted to be a member of NATO in 2009. The other state to which USA gives importance is Macedonia but it was refused because of Greece's veto.

A fact that Germany – the head state of the EU – recognized the independence of Slovenia where is at western part of Yugoslavia and in a strategic point for Adriatic and Central Europe, speeded up the disintegration period of Yugoslavia. Slovenia having supported by the other EU states was accepted in EU in a very short period as May 1, 2004 (other states accepted at the same year were the Czech Republic, Estonia, Southern Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia)

Following the membership of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, the zones described by the enlargement notion in EU were in fact Western Balkan States and Turkey. Today there are three candidate states waiting for the accession in the EU: two Western Balkan States as Croatia and Macedonia, and Turkey.

The potential members of the EU will be wholly from Western Balkan States as Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. Also it will be same for Kosovo declared their independence on February 17, 2008 although Serbia didn't recognize.

It is revealed that Western Balkan States getting down to integration with Europe from 1992 are adopted quicker than Turkey.

HOW THE EU TREATED WESTERN BALKAN STATES AND TURKEY FOLLOWING THE COLD WAR?

The politics of the EU following the Cold War may be summarized as Turkey is involved in political and economical control of the EU but not accessed in EU. A fact as offering a privileged partnership to Turkey even during the Accession Negotiations for the EU and the negotiations to progress hardly reveals that this politics still continues¹³.

In this context, while creating the enlargement strategies of the EU after 1992, Turkey is always in the last rank. Turkey waiting since 1987 was not on the agenda of the EU, on the other hand at meetings organized between April 28 and March 2, 1994 in Brussels it was decided that Austria, Sweden and Finland will be member of the EU since January 1, 1995. By the way, Jacques Delors, the President of the EU Commission, stated the enlargement strategy of the EU at the beginning of June 1994 as: "... The borders of the Great Europe are next to former USSR borders. In other words Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Cyprus and Malta could access in Europe. And the three Baltic States shouldn't be forgotten. Moreover when it is pacified former Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Croatia and Macedonia could also access."¹⁴.

Turkey is not in the enlargement strategies of the EU and besides it is announced that Western Balkan States which didn't applied at that time, could be the member of the EU.

¹³ Ali Arslan, Efendi ve Uşak/AB-Türkiye İlişkileri, İstanbul 2008, pp. 315-325.

¹⁴ **Milliyet**, 6.06.1994.

WHAT ARE THE EXCUSES¹⁵ THAT AVOIDING TURKEY TO ACCESS IN THE EU AND ARE THEY VALID FOR WESTERN BALKAN STATES?

First Excuse: Turkey is not from Europe.

Actually it is not logical to accept Cyprus at south of Turkey and Georgia at east of Turkey as European states, and at the same time not to accept Turkey as a European state. This excuse is not valid for Western Balkan States just because it is arisen from historical, religious and psychological reasons. Because Bulgaria and Greece at eastern direction are the member of the EU.

Second Excuse: Different religion and culture.

It is not stated by Europe till 1980s that Turkey in Western Block is a Muslim country. Nonetheless when Turkey applied for accession in the EU, the Islam became an excuse for Turkey. The Islam issue is invalid for Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia but may be valid for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo.

Third Excuse: Turkey is next to the problematic regions as Middle East and the Caucasus.

This excuse for Turkey is absurd just because the threat perceptions are not identified with the borders. However this excuse for Turkey is not valid for Western Balkan States.

Fourth Excuse: Turkey has a large population

This excuse is illogical as the EU accepted beyond Turkey's population during the enlargement process. However such an argument is absolutely not valid for Western Balkan States.

¹⁵ Look at EU's excuses for avoiding Turkey to Access in EU: Ali Arslan, Efendi ve Uşak/AB-Türkiye İlişkileri, İstanbul 2008, pp. 238-250.

Fifth Excuse: Level of income is lower

The EU is the one making this excuse – put forward for Turkey in 1980s – invalid. For the reason is the EU accepted former East Block states whose levels of income are lower than Turkey. However this excuse could be considered for the most of Western Balkan States.

Sixth Excuse: Human rights violation and corruptions

This excuse may be common in each country and stated frequently at the time Turkey applied for accession is also valid for Western Balkan States. It is very easy to talk about the human rights violation in Western Balkan States having many ethnic groups and populations believing in different religions. And to talk about the corruptions lasting with the effect of former closed regime term also is valid for Western Balkan States.

Seventh Excuse: Civil Wars or Disagreement with the neighbors

The terrorist organization PKK and unreal Armenian claims in Turkey are put forward for Turkey as an excuse. In this context Western Balkan States could be opposed to this excuse much more than Turkey. Most important ones of these issues are: the problem of Bosnia-Herzegovina with Serbia and the Republic of Serbia; the problem of Serbia with Kosovo and so with Kosovo in the future. The attitude of Greece not accepting the name of Macedonia and the politics of Bulgaria supporting Macedonia will be an excuse for Macedonia, too.

CONCLUSION

Turkey was not accepted by the EU in spite of the first application for the EEC in 1959, the partnership signed in 1963 and application for accession in 1987. On the other hand, Slovenia – one of the Western Balkan States within the East Block – became the member of the EU. Although Croatia announced as a candidate member together with Turkey in 2004 completed half of the negotiations, Turkey completed just the two titles of negotiations.

Although the membership negotiations started for Turkey, it is still discussed the European side of Turkey and it is offered a privileged partnership by the most effective states of the EU. For that reason, it is obvious that the membership for the EU of Western Balkan States not applied for accession will be easier than Turkey.

The membership for the EU of Croatia and Montenegro supported by many states especially by Germany will be easier. It is seen that the membership of Macedonia and Albania may be contravened because of the attitude of Greece. It is understood that the support of Italy for Albania is not as effective as the support of Germany and Austria for Croatia.

The relationships between Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and the EU will not be easy because of the excuses as cultural differences, civil war and conflicts with neighbors as the ones put forward for Turkey. And the memberships of Albania and Macedonia to be affected from these issues will be delayed. And the attitude of Greece will also make it more difficult.

Because of the problems mentioned here above, it could be offered a second class status instead of the membership for the EU of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, and even for Serbia.

In spite of all these issues, development of the relations between Western Balkan States and the EU will be quicker than Turkey. And the reason is the EU follows a kind of politics excluding Turkey but including Western Balkan States.