

International System and Foreign Policy: Turkey Closer Ties with the Middle East in 2007

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Abstract: In 2007, Turkey has been becoming a state that received much attention because its alteration in foreign policy. Turkey was first known as a country that was really close to United States and European Union due to the intention to follow these two modern states. Their relations motivate Turkey to following the values of United States and European Union. However since 2007 Turkey under Recep Erdogan has been shifting its foreign policy and decided to attempt getting closer to Middle East. This decision is aiming to build a strong relation with Middle East countries, whose energy resources are needed by Turkey. Erdogan also states that Turkey's desire to become a mediator in the conflictual regional is another factor that encourages Turkey to get closer to Middle East countries. As now Turkey is rising as middle power, Turkey is able to make decision itself and play an active role in the international sphere. In order to have deeper understanding about Turkey's foreign policy, the writer choose international system as level of analysis. In this paper, the alteration of Turkey's foreign policy is analyzed with distribution of power, major power, and presence of supranational organizations.

1 INTRODUCTION

The return of Turkey's identity to Islamism in 2007 was surprising. Under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey began to pay much attention and intensify its relationship with the Middle East countries. After the dynamics of secular revolution under the rule of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, these symbols of Western civilization began to be abandoned. In fact, Turkey had abolished the religious symbols of Islam which later replaced with the symbols of European civilization which is considered as a progress or modernity (Zurcher 20014, 242). In fact, this massive Turkish revolution has won praise from the president of the United States, George Bush, as an Islamic state that can embrace democracy and rule of law (Fulford 2015). Many people assume that this policy change is based on Erdogan and his party, AKP. In fact, in the first election of 2002, Erdogan declared that something that the new Turkish government should prioritize was economic stability, EU membership, and the exclusion of religious-related social issues (Rabasa and Larrabee 2008, 51). The first five years, the AKP and Erdogan can run a stable and balanced government, and Turkey can balance between relations with Middle Eastern countries as well as

relations with European countries considered as modernity. Entering 2007 the PPA gained a greater vote than in 2002. The reason behind AKP's success is the high level of legitimacy of the pro-ethnic communities of the Middle East. This success has had an impact on Turkey again. In contrast to its original vision, the AKP and Erdogan no longer aimed towards Europe, but expanded and deepened Turkish ties with the Middle East (Rabasa and Larrabee 2008, 75).

Changes in Turkey's policy direction in 2007 can be seen with the emergence of Erdogan's intention to return Turkey to Islamism which is the identity of the Middle East. This can be seen in the changes in various aspects, one of which is the return of Arabic usage and Arabic spelling on school books and history books (Fulford 2015). Under the leadership of Erdogan, the intensification of relations between Turkey and the countries of the Middle East is increasingly visible. One of them is when Turkey has sent a thousand troops to participate in security efforts in Lebanon at the end of 2006. Turkey is also known to have re-established relations with Iran and Syria (Rabasa and Larrabee 2008, 87). In fact, Turkey has sent its military troops to help settle the conflict in Syria and try to become a mediator between Syria and Israel. This is clearly seen as a policy shift, since

previously Turkey had the same tendencies as the United States and European countries, isolating itself from Iran and Syria. Together with Iraq, Turkey also decided to intensify trade cooperation, where before the Erdogan administration, Turkey tended to be indifferent to the economic cooperation relations in the region which is considered no more profitable than cooperation with European countries. It is also done by Turkey with Saudi Arabia, which is now known that the leaders of Turkey and Saudi Arabia often hold meetings to discuss efforts to strengthen the cooperation between the two countries.

One of the reasons raised by Erdogan regarding this change in policy direction is Erdogan's desire to return Turkey to welfare in the era of the Ottoman Empire with the era of Middle Eastern identity as the home country of Islam. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee (2008, 88-9) also stated that Turkey's decision was driven by Turkey's energy needs against Middle Eastern countries such as Arab Sauda and Iran which are true suppliers of natural gas and petroleum. Each year, Turkey needs 500,000 barrels of oil all imported from Iran and continues to increase year by year, so Turkey begins to think about its relationship with Iran since 2007, so that Iran can still meet the energy needs of Turkey (Middle East Institute t.t). Turkey is also known to want to observe Iran's nuclear development more clearly, which desire will only be achieved if Turkey has a close relationship with Iran. Volker Perthes (2010, 2-3) adds to other reasons behind Turkey's policy that Turkey wants to direct its foreign policy to better understand the problems in the region and to contribute to resolving conflicts in its neighbors. Related to this, Turkey has two main objectives, the first is to provide solutions related to problems in Syria, Iraq and Iran, as well as to build good relations with these three countries which is actually considered conflictual and was once avoided by Turkey. The second objective is that Turkey plans to be a mediator among the problematic actors around it, such as Israel, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and its backers, Hamas, Fatah, and the United States.

1.1 International System in Foreign Policy Analysis

One level of analysis that can be used to analyze a foreign policy is the international system. In essence, the international environment can provide an influence as well as a guide for policy makers to determine what policy options need to be formulated and undertaken (Breuning 2007, 141). The circumstances in the international environment have uncertain circumstances, making it difficult for policy

makers to identify what opportunities are being utilized in the policy-making process. However, this international situation is not something that a country can avoid. In this regard, the formulation of foreign policy made with adjustments to the international system requires the ability to see the world and its specific situation and the constraints and contradictions between domestic affairs and international affairs. In the lecture "International Policy Analysis: International System" by Radityo Dharmaputra (2016) mentioned that the level of analysis of this international system has six attributes, which include the number of actors, power distribution, the amount of major power, the degree of obedience, the presence or absence of supranational organizational strength, and the number of contestation issues.

Marijke Breuning (2007, 142) writes that one of the most important factors to be considered in the level of analysis of the international system is the capability of each country, because each country has different capabilities that influence the different responses of each phenomenon in the international sphere. These capabilities include calculated state power and assets, such as the country's geography size, country's populations, state-owned resources, and levels of economic and military capabilities. State capability becomes important, because it can not be denied that the distribution of capabilities in each country is always different and trigger the discovery of interdependence and asymmetric relationships between one country and another. Related to these differences, Breuning (2007, 149) classifies the country based on its capabilities by introducing the terms great power, middle power, and small states. Great power is defined as a country with strong political, economic, and military capabilities, so that it can have an impact on the global constellation. Slightly down, middle power is a newly upgraded country and has the ability to influence, but not with the military aspect and level of influence of great power. Of these two forces, small states are present as a state that can only accept the influence of great power and middle power. This is in line with the power distribution attributes as described by Radityo Dharmaputra (2016).

With regard to the attributes of the number of major power and the strength of supranational organizations, the view of the realists would be opposed to the influence of these two attributes, as it holds the principle that the international world is anarchy, so that each state will defend its own sovereignty and no central force can regulate attitudes, actions, and regulations of each country.

Marijke Breuning (2007, 158) states that although the international system can be said to be anarchy, it can not be denied that in fact, every country will inevitably have limited freedom, because it has approved international cooperation in the organization which must consider the decisions and ideas -ide from other member countries and follow the values and norms agreed upon in international organizations. So also with the existence of great power, where middle power state and small states will still receive influence from great power. This is because even though middle power and small states still have their own full sovereignty over their country, they both need a great power role that can give a lot of influence in the global constellation. In addition, great power with great capability, can usually take advantage of middle power and small states to help realize the national great power by giving rewards that favor small states as well, so basically middle power and small states can not really stand alone without there is influence or even intervention from great power.

Of the various attributes that are written, the actual distribution of power becomes crucial. This is because the power distribution can provide many implications. Differences in power distribution or country capability in the international sphere produce some patterns of foreign policy (Breuning 2007, 152). The first foreign policy pattern is consensus oriented that illustrates a situation where there is a gap between a stronger and weaker state which makes the weak states tend to voluntarily follow the direction of a stronger state. The second pattern is compliant foreign policy, ie a stronger state tends to press a weaker country, so inevitably a weaker country will comply with it. This pattern is a common pattern, because weaker countries usually have no other options and do not have the strength to face a stronger state. The third foreign policy pattern is a counterdependent that can be understood as a situation where weaker states respond to the pressures of powerful states by violating or deliberately deviating from what the powerful states advocate. The last country policy pattern is compensation which is a greater counter-dependent resistance, a situation where a weak leader of a country emerges and opposes a stronger state and then gets the attention of its domestic community. Nevertheless, Breuning (2007, 155) also writes that there is still an important variable in the international system, the national role conception, which means that each country is actually aware of its ability to be what and what role in the international environment.

1.2 Turkey Closer Ties with the Middle East

The shift of Turkey's foreign policy from the pro-Westerns back to its original identity, the Middle East, was indeed surprising and sparked the emergence of questions from Western countries. Previously, Turkey has intensively linked cooperation with the United States and the European Union, which makes Turkey ruled out its regional region. Turkey's proximity to Western countries is one of the factors behind Turkey's far-reaching Middle Eastern countries. However, Turkey's shift of foreign policy under Recep Tayyip Erdogan's leadership is incomprehensible to the polarity between Eastern and Western countries, requiring an in-depth analysis to find out how this shift in Turkish foreign policy and its underlying factors through an analytical rating. To analyze this shift in Turkish foreign policy, I will try to analyze by using the international system analysis rankings to prove whether the dynamics of the international system contributes to the shift of Turkish foreign policy. The author initiated this analysis with power distribution variables and by presenting a table containing Turkish capabilities. The following is a table of Turkish capability calculations that can be used as a benchmark in analyzing Turkish policy shifts in terms of power distribution.

Table 1: Material Power (in terms of population, GDP (in bil USD), military expenditure, CINC, and Growth Competitive Index)

| Turkey, the BRICS & traditional middle powers (Australia, Canada, South Korea) | | | | | | Turkey and the BRICS | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Country | Population | GDP (bil USD) | Military expenditure (bil USD) | CINC | Growth Competitive Index | Country | Population | GDP (bil USD) | Military expenditure (bil USD) | CINC | Growth Competitive Index |
| Turkey | 81,619,392 | 788,863 | 19,085 | 0,014317 | 4,45 | Turkey | 81,619,392 | 788,863 | 19,085 | 0,014317 | 4,45 |
| Brazil | 202,596,788 | 2,248,780 | 15,456 | 0,021992 | 4,33 | Brazil | 202,596,788 | 2,248,780 | 15,456 | 0,021992 | 4,33 |
| Russia | 142,470,272 | 2,017,470 | 87,837 | 0,039279 | 4,25 | Russia | 142,470,272 | 2,017,470 | 87,837 | 0,039279 | 4,25 |
| India | 1,236,344,631 | 1,858,744 | 47,398 | 0,0734437 | 4,28 | India | 1,236,344,631 | 1,858,744 | 47,398 | 0,0734437 | 4,28 |
| China | 1,355,692,576 | 8,229,690 | 188,660 | 0,198378 | 4,84 | China | 1,355,692,576 | 8,229,690 | 188,660 | 0,198378 | 4,84 |
| South Africa | 48,375,645 | 382,337 | 4,108 | 0,0063162 | 4,37 | South Africa | 48,375,645 | 382,337 | 4,108 | 0,0063162 | 4,37 |
| Canada | 34,834,841 | 1,821,445 | 18,660 | 0,010883 | 5,20 | | | | | | |
| Australia | 22,567,617 | 1,534,425 | 23,963 | 0,007113 | 4,09 | | | | | | |
| South Korea | 49,639,986 | 1,222,807 | 33,937 | 0,023878 | 5,01 | | | | | | |

Source: ** Total population, CIA Worldfactbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/spaces.html>)
 *** 2012 current prices. Source: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/view/representative/representative.html>
 **** Military expenditure by country, 2013 current prices. Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, 2013
 ***** Composite Index of National Capability (CINC), and 2007. Source: National Material Capabilities, Correlates of War Database, v3.02. See also <http://www.correlateswar.org/CORWAR/Data/Capabilities/cinc.html>.
 The Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) is a statistical measure of national power created by J. David Singer for the Correlates of War project in 1963. It uses an average of percentages of world totals in six different components. The components represent demographic, economic, and military strength. More recent studies tend to use the CINC2 score, which focuses on measures that are more salient in the perception of one state over another (CINC2).
 ***** Growth Competitiveness Index: World Economic Forum (2013), http://www.weforum.org/pdf/WEF_GrowthCompetitivenessReport_2013-14.pdf The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) attempts to quantify the impact of a number of factors which contribute to create the conditions for competitiveness, with particular focus on the macroeconomic environment, the quality of the country's institutions, and the state of the country's technology and supporting infrastructure. The data used in research GCI are administrative data (publicly available data), such as enrollment rates, government debt, budget deficit, and life expectancy, which are obtained from internationally recognized agencies, mostly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the IMF and the World Health Organization (WHO). Furthermore, it uses data from the World Economic Forum annual Executive Opinion Survey (Survey). Its products are World Economic Forum with Columbia University Table 1.

Figure 1.

From the table above, it can be seen that Turkey is a middle power country. In view of realism as summarized by Kohei Imai (2013), the level of military capability and Turkish gross domestic income can be proof that Turkey is one of the rising middle power. In line with Kohei Imai, Emel Parlar (2014, 108) also argues that with the present capability, Turkey can be regarded as rising middle power which begins to determine its own movement. Not only that, rising middle power is also a country

that can begin to actively participate in the course of the global constellation with its own initiative and decisions, although not yet able to give much influence to be able to suppress other weaker countries such as great power. However, not all rising middle power begins to try to participate actively in the global constellation. Since 2002, there has been some evidence of Turkish activeness in the global constellation. In February 2002, Turkey hosted a discussion forum of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation-European Union in Istanbul. In July 2015, Turkey was elected representatives of the Alliance of Civilizations which is a new UN institution (Imai 2013). This shows that as a middle power, Turkey has gained recognition in the international sphere.

Turkey once acknowledged the superiority of the Western countries and made the Western countries a benchmark of modernity and progress to be achieved by Turkey. This has prompted Turkey to implement preferences and suggestions from Western countries, especially the United States. The United States which is a great power has a pretty good track record of cooperation with Turkey. Turkey and the United States are known to have cooperated in the economy and efforts to eradicate terrorism. Import and export activities as well as investment between Turkey and the United States recorded the benefits of both countries. From this cooperation with the United States, it can not be denied that Turkey has ever complied with what the United States guides as great power, one of which has also isolated itself from Iran before 2006 (Turkish Coalition of America t.t). This is because Turkey can not deny that the United States as great power can give and teach Turkey a lot of things, so Turkey does not mind to follow directions from the United States. But along with the development of his country, Turkey began to emerge as a middle power that dared to determine its own position. Looking at Turkey's foreign policy under Erdogan's re-concentration on Turkey's position in its own region, it can be seen that Turkey is a rising middle power with high initiative to bridge or neutralize relations between Western countries and Middle Eastern countries which tend to be conflictual (Parlar 2014, 110-1). Turkish policy is driven by the interests and strategic values that have been dared to issue by Turkey. Turkey considers that the regional area is a house, which contains the countries that Turkey needs and requires Turkey that has actually learned a great deal from the more advanced Western countries of the Middle East countries. Turkey needs Middle Eastern countries to meet its high energy needs and keep increasing each year. With this

interest, Turkey certainly can not continue to leave the Middle Eastern countries, so that its neighbors can continue to supply Turkey's energy needs. On the contrary, with the relatively higher economy and military power of other Middle Eastern countries, Turkey is beginning to be seen as a mediator and initiator for the realization of regional Middle East peace and prosperity.

When associated with the influence of major power in the international system, Turkey does have a close relationship with the United States as great power that can give a big influence for each country in the world. This suggests that it is actually possible that Turkey is influenced by the United States in designing its foreign policy. Since 1989, the United States and Iran, which is a Middle Eastern country, are known to have had a bad relationship. This is because of the suspicion of the United States against Iran's nuclear development that is considered to threaten the emergence of World War III. The relationship between the two is heating up, when the events of 9/11 in the United States. In fact, the United States once initiated economic punishment aimed at Iran and managed to gain a lot of support from various countries, not least the developed countries which actually also have great power to reject the policy of the United States (McCutcheon 2016). Related to this, the United States also had time to take advantage of Turkey which is a partner, to become an enemy of Iran. Until 2006, Turkey became a country willing to comply with suggestions from the United States. With a pro-Western position, Turkey follows directives from the United States, as well as away from the Middle East countries. But after 2006, Turkey twisted its policies into a pro-Middle East and began to intensify its cooperative relations with Iran. The contradiction between US and Turkish policy can be seen again in the United States's reluctance to help resolve the conflict in Syria. Despite restricting distance to Syria as the United States, Erdogan moves by itself to confront the conflict in Syria in 2016, even daring to say that the United States is actually supporting terrorist groups in Syria, thereby extending time to help resolve the conflict there (Flynn and Birchall 2016). Turkey is still continuing its cooperation and maintaining good relations with the United States, but Turkey is more courageous in taking action in accordance with its own judgment. From this, it can be seen that the presence of major power in the international sphere has given much influence to Turkey, but it is no longer able to encourage Turkey to become a country that continues to adhere to great powers in the international sphere, but to make Turkey a country that dares to lay off its

obedience to the major power such as the United States.

Turning to the attributes of supranational organizational strength, the EU became an organization that influenced much of Turkey. Since 1963, Turkey has volunteered to become a member of European regional cooperation which at that time was still a European Economic Community. For Turkey, the EU is a venue for strong and modern economic and political cooperation. Turkey also considers that it has the right to be part of the European Union, given its geographical location coinciding with the continent of Europe, even the capital of Turkey itself is divided into two regions, namely Istanbul Asia and Istanbul Europe. However, until now, Turkey can not yet become a member country of the European Union. Turkey's acceptance process in the EU is quite long, with Turkey having won the status of the European Union candidate in 1999. Basically, Turkey and the EU countries have different characteristics and identities. Turkey, which is a predominantly Muslim country, must adapt its policies with the EU to join as a member country. Democratization and institutionalization became Turkey's main agenda to adapt to the values and norms of the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015. The EU is a regional region that is against Muslims and Middle Eastern countries, which further proves a contradiction between the EU and Turkey. Almost all EU member states assume that the Middle East is a source of terrorism that needs to be shunned or even resisted. This has subsequently encouraged EU countries to agree to alliance with the United States in order to support Israel to attack the Palestinians (Selim, 22-3). EU countries such as France, Germany, Britain, began to send military attacks from 2006 to 2010 to Palestine.

The values and norms of the EU can not all be realized by Turkey. Democratization and institutionalization are no longer a problem for Turkey, as Turkey has succeeded in showing its adaptive change which can be seen with political freedom in Turkey and its bilateral economic cooperation relations with each EU country which strengthens from year to year (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015). Related to the sensitivism of EU countries against Middle Eastern countries, Turkey itself initially tended to ignore the Middle East countries and seemed to be leaning towards the European Union. However, over time, Turkey feels being mocked by the European Union. This is because Turkey has long waited for the certainty of accession negotiations that have not paid off. From every accession negotiation, it is always

met by EU countries that do not approve of Turkish entry. Of the 30 chapters of the accession agreement to be ratified, only 14 chapters were successfully ratified within a period of 10 years (2003-November 2013) (Chislett 2015). Recep Erdogan then considered that Turkey should be able to release the EU, meaning that Turkey is no longer prioritizing the EU entry effort as its foreign policy, although there is still a desire to be part of the EU, given the EU can benefit Turkey's economy. Thus, Turkey chose to balance its position by shifting the direction of its foreign policy to regional cooperation in the Middle East. Turkey has also become more selective towards the values and norms that exist in the EU. The hatred of EU countries towards the Middle East can no longer be a role model for Turkey.

In connection with the distribution of power in the international realm proving that Turkey stands as a middle power, it can be said that the international system has an impact on Turkey in its foreign policy formulation. His position as a middle power makes Turkey a country that can start to determine its own foreign policy and can play an active role in the international system. As a result of the rise in Turkey power, the role of the United States as a great power long enough to stand as a world leader and give a big influence on almost all countries, slowly also began to dare to be ruled out by Turkey. In reality, the United States has a good relationship with Turkey and has had a lot of influence on Turkey. However, Turkey along with Erdogan gradually began to think of the position of Turkey in need of the Middle East rather than having to stay away from the Middle East as it is influenced by the United States, so Turkey chose to keep working with the United States, but away from the directions of the United States and begin to approach to its own regional region. Before deciding to re-establish itself with the Middle East, Turkey has also been eager to become a member of the European Union which means increasingly leaving the Middle East region. It can not be prevented that Turkey is taking part in adopting the values and norms of the EU. Once again, Turkey is confronted with other actors (EU countries) who do not like the Middle East countries. The principle of EU countries is increasingly difficult for Turkey to enter the European Union. From here, Turkey is increasingly committed to rebuilding close ties with Middle Eastern countries that can not encourage Turkey to change its own interests or even dictate Turkey. Turkey's stance is also encouraged on the consideration of the importance of regional stability, which will certainly encourage international stability as well. In this regard, it is understood that the

international system contributes to Turkey's foreign policy changes. All direction and pressure from major power and international organizations make Turkey realize that Turkey should be able to determine its own decisions that can bring benefits to its country and provide an initiative for the sustainability of the international system.

2 CONCLUSION

The reasons behind the shift or change in a country's foreign policy have always been an interesting subject. Each country requires appropriate and appropriate foreign policy changes to address a major phenomenon that is occurring, so that the state can ensure its security position in the dynamic international sphere. Turkey is a country with quite a lot of foreign policy changes. Turkey's much-discussed foreign policy changes today are re-bonding Turkish relations with Middle Eastern countries under the leadership of Recep Erdogan. After serving as first-term president, in 2002, Erdogan made major changes to Turkey's foreign policy in 2007. During Erdogan's rule Turkey was known to be a pro-country against Western countries, particularly the United States and the EU supranational organizations. However, 2007 became a turning point in Turkey's foreign policy changes that want to strengthen ties with Middle Eastern countries that were previously ignored by Turkey. Having sided with the United States and Europe, Turkey has gained much influence from this great power and supranational organization that pushed Turkey to stay away from the Middle East and even further strengthen the secularism and democracy it sees as an indicator of the modernity and progress of the country. Turkey's foreign policy to return to the Middle East is reaping many questions. One of the reasons often encountered in the media and conferences with Erdogan regarding these foreign policy changes is that Turkey has great energy needs with the Middle East countries, which makes Turkey begin to consider developing good relations with the Eastern countries Central, in order to continue supplying Turkey's energy needs. In addition, Erdogan and Turkey consider that striving for regional stability is increasingly important, given that regional stability will also have an impact on international stability.

If looking at these Turkish foreign policy changes through the international system analysis rankings, it can be said that the international system also has an

impact on this change. However, it can not be said that the international system is the only reason behind Turkey's foreign policy changes. Other variables, such as national attributes, can also be one of the reasons behind Turkey's foreign policy changes. The enormous influence of the international system does encourage Turkey to re-correct its foreign policy and make changes, so that Turkey can maintain its position in the international sphere and not continue to be a country that adheres to countries with great powers and supranational organizations. Turkey's position is now a middle power that encourages Turkey to take its own decisions that are considered to provide benefits for Turkey. In this regard, Turkey has also begun efforts to contribute and provide an initiative in the international sphere, not just to follow the direction and influence of the stronger countries of Turkey. This can be seen from Turkey's efforts to mediate amid conflicts in the Middle East, with the aim of realizing regional security and stability. Given that the Middle East is a conflicting regional region, Turkey hopes that with Turkey as a mediator, the Middle East becomes a safe, stable and safe regional region that can contribute to the creation of international security and stability in various aspects.

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