

Influence Of Turkey's Foreign Policy In The Black Sea On Policy Of Global And Regional Players

Nuri Demirel

Department of Political Science and International Relations,
V.I. Vernadsky Crimean Federal University,
Simferopol, Russia
demirel75@yahoo.com

Abstract—After the end of the First World War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Europe sought to gain control of the Black Sea straits by dividing the territory of the Ottoman state by the 1921 Peace Treaty of Sevile between several European states.

However, the Turkish authorities refused to ratify this document and continued the struggle for independence. The Lausanne Treaty of 1923 finally formalized the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, establishing new borders for Turkey.

He consolidated significant territorial changes that significantly influenced the further Black Sea policy of Turkey. The western coast of the Bosphorus, the territory of East Thrace, remained within the borders of the new republic, the Bosphorus and Dardanelles were to become demilitarized, passage through them was allowed by the merchant and military courts of other countries, subject to some restrictions. However, the basic rules for passing through the Black Sea straits were drawn up at the Montreux Conference in 1936, the first result of which was the restoration of the rights of the Republic of Turkey, which regained the ability to control the straits subject to the principles of international law.

Thus, not forgetting its historical heritage in the form of former leadership in the Black Sea region, Turkey was able to defend the right to control the Black Sea Straits. In the middle of the XX century. The Republic of Turkey joined NATO and became an outpost of the West on the southeastern borders of the alliance. Moreover, she practically did not have a Black Sea foreign policy strategy until the 90s of the XX century. It has pursued a predominantly Western-oriented foreign policy.

In this article, the author will examine the influence of Turkey's foreign policy in the black sea on policy of global and reginal players. In this study, political relations, security, economy, energy, and security will be discussed. In the conclusion of the study, the current state of actors' relations and assessments will be made about its future.

Keywords—*Black Sea, NATO, EU, Turkish foreign policy.*

I. Introduction

Like Turkey itself, the Black Sea region is located at the intersection of Europe and Asia. It unites the eastern and western worlds, which makes its geopolitical position unique and defines its distinctive features. The geopolitical characteristics of the Black Sea region determine its role in modern international relations and are the basis for the manifestation of a significant range of interests of regional and world actors in international relations in its relation.

In order to consider the foreign policy of the Turkish Republic in the Black Sea region, it is necessary to determine the geopolitical foundations of its formation, which have undergone many changes over the past decades. First of all, this concerns the definition of its borders and the number of states related to it.

The most straightforward determination of the extent of the Black Sea region is based on the proximity to the Black Sea of the states included in it. According to this principle, only coastal Black Sea countries enter the region: Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine. This approach was relevant in the framework of the imperatives of Turkey's foreign policy until 1991, since, in the period before the collapse of the USSR, the Black Sea region was primarily a zone of confrontation between the socialist and capitalist camps. Since 1952, when Turkey joined the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO), its regional cooperation with the Black Sea powers became minimal due to ideological confrontation and was reduced to formal Soviet-Turkish relations of that period.

II. Turkish politics and global and regional actors' position in the Black Sea region

The history of Russian-Turkish relations includes more than five centuries. Their foundation in the 20th century was laid by the Treaty of Friendship and Fraternity between the Government of the RSFSR and the Government of the Turkish Grand National Assembly of March.16, 1921[1].

The modern period, which began after the nineties of the twentieth century, opens the 1992 Treaty between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey on the Foundations of Relations. It began the development of modern political and economic ties between these countries. [2]. In the initial period, the main driving force of Russian-Turkish relations was economic interaction. However, since the beginning of the XXI century, the cooperation of these states has reached a higher level of strategic partnership.

The first step in the development of their relations was the signing in 2001 of the "Action Plan for the Development of Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey." [3]. This document, for the first time, identified the main areas of further cooperation and areas of mutual interests, such as the Black Sea and Mediterranean regions, Afghanistan, the Balkans, the Middle East, Cyprus, Iraq, Central Asia and the South Caucasus. On its basis, it was decided to hold bilateral consultations on the fight against international terrorism, as well as on energy, trade, transport, tourism, and environmental protection.

The following "impetus" was the dialogue between these states in 2004, during the first visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Turkey. At the time of the return visit in 2006, the President of Turkey of that period, A. Sezer, noted that "high-level visits have become a new impetus in the development of bilateral relations" [4].

Also, at the beginning of the XXI century, documents important for political dialogue were signed. Among them, "The Joint Declaration on Deepening Friendship and Multifaceted Partnership between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey" (2004) [5]. and "The Joint Declaration on advancing to a new stage in relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey and further deepening friendship and multifaceted partnership" (2009) [6].

The establishment symbolized the new stage in the development of the political dialogue between Turkey and Russia in 2010 of the "Council of Cooperation at the highest level." In 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin paid an official visit to Turkey, which included participation in the fifth meeting of the Council. The Turkish Prime Minister noted that this visit is a landmark and that Turkey attaches great importance to the Council [7].

This year was a landmark for relations between Russia and Turkey, as it was significantly complicated by the events in Ukraine and Crimea, and the reaction of Western countries to them. However, despite the Turkish authorities' public disapproval of the annexation of Crimea by Russia, Ankara did not support Western sanctions and maintained relations with Moscow as an essential strategic partner.

A more difficult test for Russian-Turkish relations was the end of 2015 when a Russian Su-24 bomber

was shot down over the Syrian-Turkish border by the Turkish Air Force, which allegedly violated the country's airspace. According to a statement by the Turkish military, the Su-24 was repeatedly warned of a violation before being shot down. In Russia, they said that the plane did not cross the Turkish border, but flew over Syrian territory.

After this incident, Russia imposed sanctions on Turkey: restrictions on bilateral economic cooperation, import of certain types of goods into the Russian Federation, restrictions on the activities of Turkish organizations on Russian territory, a ban on employing Turkish citizens, the abolition of a visa-free regime in force since 2011, and a ban on charter flights between Turkey and the Russian Federation. All these temporary measures were aimed at "ensuring the national security of Russia and protecting citizens from criminal and unlawful acts." [8].

In relation to the partially recognized states of this region that are related to Russia, Turkey has a fundamentally different policy. South Ossetia is viewed in the general Georgian context. With regard to Abkhazia, a very active policy is being pursued. Turkey relies on Turkish citizens of Abkhazian and North Caucasian descent - descendants of the Mahajirs. Economic activity is concentrated primarily in fisheries, construction, and the hotel industry. In 2014, an official delegation of the Parliament of the Republic of Turkey visited Abkhazia. During the 2014 presidential election, Abkhazians living in Turkey received voting rights. Voting took place at polling stations in Istanbul.

Regarding the second region, as we have already written, Crimea and the situation in Ukraine, in general, cause the most significant differences in the positions of Ankara and Moscow. The leadership of Turkey has repeatedly articulated a position regarding the non-recognition of the new status of Crimea. R. Erdogan himself repeatedly condemned the accession of the Crimean peninsula to the Russian Federation, the "repressive policy" regarding the Crimean Tatars in the "annexed Crimea" expressed support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Another difficult "Ukrainian question" in Russian-Turkish relations is the military-technical cooperation between Kyiv and Ankara. In Russia, the scale of this cooperation is greatly exaggerated. However, no significant progress in this cooperation can be called.

For Turkey, it is vital to borrow some of the military technologies that Ukraine owns. In particular, since 2016, joint work has been ongoing on the production of radar equipment. In Ukraine, production facilities for this were created back in Soviet times. Turkey is also interested in engines, including the «Altai » tank.

In 2015, for several reasons, Turkey's contract with the Austrians for the purchase of engines for armored vehicles was disrupted, and she was forced to switch her efforts, including to interaction with Ukraine, but

not in terms of the acquisition, but joint design. Kyiv, in turn, is interested in acquiring Turkish «Bayraktar» drones in reconnaissance and strike equipment. [9].

Military-technical cooperation with Russia itself is also an essential aspect of Turkey's relations with it. Its development is due to the fact that in the Republic of Turkey, only a small part of the military budget is spent on the purchase of weapons and military equipment. With a total defense spending of about \$ 13 billion in 2017, more than 54% of Turkey's military budget had to be spent on salaries to personnel; and up to 22% on food and ammunition. As a result, only a little more than 20% is spent on the development and procurement of military and technical equipment, which significantly reduces the possibilities of military-technical cooperation.

Another "pain point" in this matter is the lack of domestic production of most types of military products. The exception is only the production of infantry fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers. The tank fleet and frigates are mainly updated at the expense of Germany, and the significant differences between these countries can create problems for the procurement of new consignments of these types of military products.

Disagreements with the administration of D. Trump limit access in the short term to obtaining breakthrough technologies. Turkey lags significantly behind other NATO powers (notably the USA, Great Britain, and Germany) in the matter of robotizing its armed forces, primarily the creation of a fleet of uncrewed reconnaissance aircraft. Thus, Ankara faces a severe problem of updating the armament and military equipment park, without which Turkey cannot be positioned as a valuable regional player.

The Republic of Turkey is trying to solve this problem in several ways:

- changing the structure of the military budget in favor of the military and military aviation through a consistent reduction in the number of armed forces - from 427 to 386 thousand troops for the period 2013-2018[10].

- arranging the assembly of different military products on its territory, as well as diversifying exchanges of military technology.

As planned purchases of military equipment by the Turkish armed forces show, NATO partners remain the leading military suppliers to Turkey. Even if the crisis deepens in relation with the D. Trump administration, the possibilities for Russia to enter the large-scale Turkish defense market are quite limited.

In the field of heavy equipment, for which official Ankara plans to spend the most massive amounts on purchases, Germany and France remain the leading suppliers, since the modernization of the existing armament and military equipment park is most profitable due to the products of those countries where the current weapons were produced. The

continued cooperation with these countries in the military-technical field is an essential argument in favor of Turkey's full participation in NATO activities and its restraint in matters of particular importance to partners in Syria and Iraq.

The decision of September 2017 on the procurement of Russian S-400 air defense systems not only strengthens the defense of Turkey, but will demonstrate the diversification of military-technical contacts, and in the field of the latest technology. The Turkish authorities may hope to use this factor in the future to push their NATO partners to deeper military-technological cooperation.

The next important area of Russian-Turkish cooperation is energy. Here, the positions are more promising, since, as the authors of the monograph "Modern Turkey: Development Trends and Importance for Russia" write: "Turkey is the second most important market for Gazprom in the western direction. Serious risks from competitors are not expected here" [11].

Commenting on the imposition of sanctions, Turkish President R. Erdogan stated that "the position demonstrated by Russia is completely non-diplomatic. They approach the problem emotionally. When the West imposed sanctions against Russia, Turkey did not support them, saying that Russia is their strategic partner. The decision of the Russian Federation to abandon Turkish products is not serious for the country" [12].

This incident provoked a severe complication in Russian-Turkish relations, which, however, did not mean their complete cessation. The areas of constant intersection of the interests of the two states are certain territories, such as the Caucasus and Crimea.

According to experts, at present, in general, Turkey's policy in the South Caucasus does not have a confrontational attitude towards Russia. "Both states are interested in preventing the militarization of the Black Sea and the arrival of external forces here. In the future, the nature of Turkey's policy in the South Caucasus will be determined by the situation in the region, as well as the general context of international relations. The reasons for the emergence of acute contradictions have not yet been fixed." [13].

Gas demand in Turkey in 2017 increased after five years of stagnation. This is largely due to the fact that Gazprom went for price discounts for Turkey. If such a policy continues, one can expect a slight increase (up to 5-15 billion cubic meters of gas) in the next ten to fifteen years.

The main question in this sphere of relations is whether Turkey will be able to transform into a massive transit hub for gas export from the Caspian region. According to experts, this implementation of this is a problem, since, over the past 25-30 years, no breakthroughs have been seen. This is due, firstly, to the fact that there is an "energy revolution" in Europe,

wind and solar power plants are being built at a faster pace. Secondly, Turkey, as a significant gas hub, does not meet the economic interests of the largest gas consumers in Southern Europe, for example, Italy. Moreover, thirdly, Turkey is lagging behind the restructuring of the financial and banking systems of European countries with reliance on digitalization.

From the perspective of investors evaluating investment risks, the gas supply chain "Turkmenistan - Azerbaijan - Georgia - Turkey - Greece - Albania" represents an excess risk. Updating such a chain will require at least 10-15 billion dollars, and there are no market reasons for potential investors to provide such a large amount of financing.

In addition to 8-10 billion cubic meters from Azerbaijan, for which contracts were signed between Azerbaijan and European companies back in 2013, there is no Caspian gas in any relevant long-term forecast of gas demand and import of Europe. Moreover, this means a significant loss by Turkey of its energy position.

The last important project for cooperation between Russia and Turkey is the plan to build a new canal parallel to the Bosphorus Strait, as well as a channel parallel to the Dardanelles from the Aegean to the Sea of Marmara. Turkey is very interested in implementing these plans, as for several decades, it has taken measures to strengthen control over shipping in the straits. However, Ankara is not empowered to introduce any measures to regulate shipping in them without consultation and coordination with other participants, including within the framework of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Russia is not interested in tightening the passage through the straits of vessels flying the Russian flag or belonging to Russian shipowners.

In Russia's position, Turkey's construction of a canal parallel to the Bosphorus Strait cannot erode the Montreux Convention. However, it can worsen the security situation in the Black Sea region. Since the Montreux Convention applies both to the Bosphorus, connecting the Black and Marmara Seas, and the Dardanelles, between the Aegean and Marmara Seas. Accordingly, the path to the new channel from the Aegean Sea will go in any case pass through the Dardanelles, which means that all convention restrictions on the passage, first of all, warships of non-Black Sea countries will remain in effect.

In September 2018, the Government of Turkey distributed information on its decision to amend the conditions for vessels to pass through their straits. For the most part, this applies to restrictions on approaching bridge piers, ten days notice of the passage of vessels longer than 300 meters, the movement of oil tankers and gas carriers only in the daytime. Also, it was stated that Turkey would equate civilian vessels with military cargo on board to warships [14]. In essence, this means that the vessels of the Black Sea states are obliged to notify via diplomatic channels of their passage in 8 days, and

non-Black Sea - in 15 days. Information should also be provided on the purpose, type and number of vessels, the date of passage in both directions, and during the passage, data on the composition of the detachment, the name of the vessels, and their number.

The main related question is whether measures to limit the passage of warships of non-Black Sea states will also apply to civilian ships carrying military cargo. On the one hand, Russia may be interested in such innovation, since it is aimed at restricting the delivery of military cargo, primarily from the United States to the ports of the Black Sea states (Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine). On the other hand, Russia itself carries out the transit of military cargo through the straits, primarily in the direction of Syria. Moreover, such restrictions will delay the process of passing ships with Russian military cargo.

The last issue related to the Black Sea is the agreement on the delimitation of the continental shelf, signed in 1978 between the USSR and Turkey. According to it, the bottom of the Black Sea is divided between these countries along a modified midline, each point of which is located at an equal distance from the Soviet and Turkish coasts. Then, after the 1982 Convention introduced the institution of the exclusive economic zone and coastal states established such zones on the Black Sea, the USSR and Turkey agreed that the borderline of the continental shelf established by the 1978 Agreement is also the economic border line zones between the USSR and Turkey.

After the collapse of the USSR, this border between the two countries was divided, respectively, into the Ukrainian-Turkish, Russian-Turkish and Georgian-Turkish sections of the border. The annexation of Crimea by Russia led to the fact that the Ukrainian-Turkish section of the maritime border no longer exists, and instead of it a rather long stretch of the Russian-Turkish border arose, based on previous agreements of 1978, 1986 and 1987.

This situation has led to yet another ambiguity in Russian-Turkish relations, whether Turkey recognizes the sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction of the Russian Federation in the maritime waters around Crimea, or if measures can be taken to protest Russia's rights in these maritime waters.

III. Conclusion

The Black Sea region plays an important role in energy policy, being the southern export corridor for the supply of natural gas to Europe and Turkey. The first Black Sea pipeline was the Blue Stream, opened in 2005, which was intended for the supply of natural gas to the Republic of Turkey. The ability to supply natural gas to Europe through the Black Sea became most relevant after the change of power in Ukraine as a result of the internal political crisis of 2013-2014. Thus, it became apparent that the Black Sea region

has acquired great importance not only for regional but also for global actors in international relations.

Based on the analysis, we can conclude the geopolitical significance of the Black Sea region and its place in the foreign policy imperatives of Turkey. Important factors determining its place in the international system are economics, politics, energy, and security. In addition to the policies of important global actors, they determine the scale of the region. For example, based on the energy factor, Azerbaijan was included in the Black Sea region, which is the leading supplier of energy resources from the Caspian Sea to Western countries. Moreover, based on the regional security factor, Armenia and Moldova, which are participants in the "frozen conflicts" in the Black Sea region, require special attention. Under the current conditions, the main imperative of Turkey is defined as the comprehensive expansion of its influence and the return of historically determined leadership positions.

As a result, we can conclude that at the moment, relations between Russia and Turkey in the Black Sea are complex and contradictory, which does not cancel the joint work and efforts to resolve complex issues of each of the parties. There are territories and situations, such as the Caucasus, Crimea, Syria, sea straits, causing the most significant difficulties. However, I am present and areas of interaction, such as energy, trade, military-technical cooperation. They suggest opportunities for the further development of dialogue between these countries, taking into account the Black Sea problems.

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