

# TURKEY'S INVOLVEMENT IN SOMALIA

ASSESSMENT OF A STATE-BUILDING  
IN PROGRESS

MEHMET ÖZKAN



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Turkey's involvement in Somalia and its success, so far, is a novelty in Turkish foreign policy. Turkey's efforts in Somalia are significant for a number of reasons. First, they have played a role in Somalia's return to the international forum. Second, Ankara's policy in Somalia has had a positive spill over effect back in Turkey by immensely contributing to Turkey's domestic institutions.

What was considered a purely humanitarian initiative when Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Somalia on 19 August 2011 has now turned out to be a comprehensive Somalia and Eastern Africa policy for Turkey. This, in itself, has important repercussions for Turkey's opening to Africa and beyond.

Turkey's Somalia policy is the best current example of inter-agency coordination within the context of Turkey's foreign policy. Through this experience, Turkish policy makers have learned that regularly held coordination meetings are not enough. A maximized level of coordination and a well-planned vision are essential requirements to a successful enterprise. In addition, coordination meetings on Somalia had to go beyond being a purely check-list mechanism of what has been done. A genuine discussion for creating a sustainable political vision had to be developed.

The need for a clear political vision and plan stems from the reality that Turkey's Somalia policy is no longer simply an effort to coordinate technical and humanitarian aid. In this context, for the first time in Turkish foreign policy, appointing a special Somali representative is crucial. Furthermore, an assessment

should be made on the political developments occurring in, and surroundings of, Somalia, monitored and analyzed daily to improve on the decision-making process in Ankara. Thus, this situation underscores the imperative for a special representative with a political mission to be appointed.

After three years of involvement, some government agencies operating in Somalia have shown signs of “Somalia Fatigue.” This will be one of the critical issues in the coming years. The main cause of Somalia Fatigue is the lack of a clearly defined roadmap and the absence of planning. Policy makers and agencies should be able to prepare for worst-case scenarios and be able to criticize their own policies. Somalia Fatigue could only be resolved by the appointment of special representative, who knows the region and has the ability to create a vision for Turkey’s role in East Africa.

Turkey’s “Somali experience” has made major contributions to its aid policies. First, the Somalian experience has set a great example because Turkey had to create an archive for aid politics. Second, Turkish aid organizations did not use local Somalian aid groups to guide them, which is the approach other countries take, instead Turkey directly approached Somalia. This enabled Turkish aid organizations to receive accurate information and find solutions to the problems and questions. Third, Turkey is in the process of developing or articulating a human development model. Therefore, the Somalian experience has served to create a distinctive model for this purpose.

Turkey should consider two important issues for future policies in Somalia: First, Turkey’s “super country” image that has been idealized by many in Somalia and abroad since 2011 should be normalized. This image is not sustainable in the long-term. Second, Turkey should pay careful attention to its “dominant” image in the Somali case. Even Turkey’s smallest contribution in Somalia can attract “all” the attention, as no other country is actually active in Somalia. Turkey’s dominant image is actually discomfoting for many. This could work against Turkey. It would be advantageous for Turkey to establish joint projects with other countries. This will help Turkey to develop a new approach to Somalia, and with the involvement of other actors, both the burden and credit will be shared.

# INTRODUCTION

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Turkey's policy on Somalia is intertwined with his general policy on Africa. In considering Turkey's actions in Somalia, its African foreign policy must be examined closely. Turkey's interest in Africa can be said to have really started in 1998. However, its involvement in Somalia has only been since 2011. Ankara's policy on Somalia has become a "litmus test" for Turkey's policy on Africa. The results and the consequences of Turkey's policy on Somalia will undoubtedly shape the view of other African countries towards Turkey. Although Turkey would like to strengthen its relations and policies in Africa, it's a two-way streak and Africa has to be receptive for cooperation to exist. The African countries desire and receptiveness towards Turkey's involvement in the continent is directly proportional to how they perceive Turkey's reliability and respectability within the region. Any accomplishment or failure in Somali policy will significantly determine the view of the region towards Turkey. Thus, Turkey's policy on Somalia is key to its relations with Africa as a whole.

Turkey's policy on Somalia over the past three years must be seriously evaluated and all aspects must be thoroughly analyzed. A critical assessment of Turkey's accumulated experience since 2011 by decision-makers and practitioners would open the doors to improve the organization and policy practices for the future. Additionally, learning from the previous mistakes would strengthen and expand Turkey's policy on Somalia.

Turkish policy on Somalia is made up of various "firsts" for Turkey. Turkey, for the first time ever, began to follow a strategy of state building within a conti-

ment where it has little experience.<sup>1</sup> When Prime Minister Erdoğan and his delegation visited Somalia on August 19, 2011, it was a new experience for many. In 1993, Turkey directly encountered many of the grave problems Somalia faces through the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations under the command of Çevik Bir. However, there was no life-changing impact on the ground because the mission was considered unsuccessful by many.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, Turkey's direct interest on the issue since 2011 was never understood well and it appeared to many that Turkey was going to drop its involvement in Somalia all together soon after facing the difficult reality on the ground. Nevertheless, Turkey did become involved more each year in state building process in Somalia since 2011 because what was found on the ground was not more than non-functioning and old-fashioned institutions. Once the policy initiative was launched, Turkey's efforts gained momentum in three years. Interestingly, this caused some to become uncomfortable with the situation. The attack on the Turkish embassy in Somalia by Al-Shabaab and the killing of a Turkish police officer was part of the discomfort for Turkish involvement in Somalia.

An additional first for Turkey is the shared experience with the entry of NGOs and government organizations to re-build Somalia as a country together. The State building effort would only be possible if these organizations worked and coordinated together, which was a new practice for Turkish foreign policy. For the very first time, government organizations and NGOs worked towards a common goal. This engendered a shared experience and collective memory. Although these two types of entities have worked together somewhat in various African countries, Somalia created an example of a strong "culture of partnership." However, the entente was not perfect and competitive approaches caused difficulties at times. Still, the lessons learned were highly important and are useful for better results in the future.

The "unification" under a common umbrella of the NGOs, the government, and even Turkey's opposition party in Turkey in its efforts in Somalia was another "first" within Turkish foreign policy. The visit to Somalia on August 2011, by the main opposition party leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu<sup>3</sup> and his delegation, not only in-

1. Mansur Akgün, "Somali'de yeni bir devlet inşa ediyoruz," *Star*, 22 December 2012; Kani Torun, "Somali'yi baştan inşa ediyoruz," *Bugün*, 7 October 2012.

2. John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*, Washington, DC.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995.

3. "Kılıçdaroğlu Somali'ye gitti," *Hürriyet*, 31 August 2011

licated the profound public support towards the Somalia policy by Turkish society but also indicated a broader political support, including the opposition. With that being said, the policy on Somalia must be viewed as one of great consensus within Turkey on a foreign policy issue. Even with the attack on the Turkish embassy resulting in the death of one Turkish police officer there is no sign of serious criticism.

However, the flip side is that there has been no real interest from the academic, intellectual or research centers on Turkey's efforts in Somalia over the past three years, despite opening of some research centers on Africa in several universities in Turkey. Various foreign institutions and research centers, including the International Crisis Group have prepared meetings and wrote reports on the matter,<sup>4</sup> whereas few studies on the issue coming from Turkey have not gone further than summarizing the history of Somalia or providing general information about Somalia.<sup>5</sup> The academic community in Turkey normally shows a special interest on the areas that are intensive focus of Turkish foreign policy, however, this has not been the case for Somalia as a research subject.<sup>6</sup> This neglect by the academic and intellectual community not only limits potential policy discussions on Somalia but also does not provide the opportunity for policy makers to develop a clear roadmap.

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The visit to Somalia on August 2011, by the main opposition party leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, not only indicated the profound public support towards the Somalia policy by Turkish society but also indicated a broader political support, including the opposition.

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Another "first" for Turkey in Somalia is Ankara's peacemaking role for Somalia's internal sustainability and security. When Turkey arranged a meeting for Somali President Hasan Sheikh Mahmud and Somaliland President Ahmed Silanyo in Ankara on April 13, 2013, it created an initiative towards serious peace making within Somalia. Those leaders, who normally do not even communicate with each

4. For example see Pinar Tank, "Turkey's new humanitarian approach in Somalia," *The Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) Policy Brief*, December 2013; ICG Report, "Assessing Turkey's Role in Somalia," *Africa Briefing*, No 92, 8 October 2012; and Teri Murphy and Auveen Woods, *Turkey's International Development Framework Case Study: Somalia*, IPC-Mercator Policy Brief, February 2014.

5. For example see Tuğba Evrim Maden, "Somali'de Bitmeyen Siyasi Kriz," *ORSAM Report*, No 163, July 2013.

6. For a rare research see, Pinar Akpınar, "Turkey's Peacebuilding in Somalia: The Limits of Humanitarian Diplomacy," *Turkish Studies*, Vol 14, No 4, 2013, pp. 735-757.

other, came together in Ankara, under Turkey's initiative. They signed the Ankara Communiqué and agreed not to use any provocative language against each other. Turkey was successful in this diplomatic undertaking.

In general, Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Somalia on August 2011, accompanied by a large delegation, was viewed at internal and international levels as a purely humanitarian mission based on the idea of supplying short-term aid. Therefore, many western governments believed that Ankara would soon realize the dire and complex issues that Somalia faces. Meanwhile in Turkey, opposition claimed that the humanitarian aid initiative toward Somalia was being used as part of domestic policy propaganda. However, today, it is increasingly clear that Turkey's involvement in Somalia is no longer just a matter of humanitarian aid; instead it is a political matter, which includes a nation-state rebuilding process.

A key point that should be underscored is that Turkey has entered into an era of its foreign policy with Africa based on the Somalia initiative. Somalia has become a test case, reflecting Turkey's political power in Africa but also in assessing the impact that Turkey can have in Africa. Prime Minister Erdoğan and his diplomatic team's efforts to bring to the UN and find workable solutions to the issues of hunger and the Somali political quagmire; preparing various meetings to initiate the restructuring of Somalia; and finally the Ankara Communiqué all demonstrate Turkey's endeavors to find a long-term solution for Somalia.

This new era of Turkish-African relations has introduced a policy strategy that is far beyond the classical view on economic and political development as well as trade relations. In particular, this brought Turkey to the forefront in contributing to the restructuring of the Somali state and its sustainability. Turkey, over the last two years, has been carrying out development projects in Somalia. Various public institutions such as TIKA, AFAD, Diyanet, and Kizilay along with numerous Turkish NGOs such as the IHH, Cansuyu, Hudayi Foundation, Kimse Yok Mu, and Deniz Feneri have directly participated in these projects directly and indirectly. However, a number of questions can be raised, as a consequence of this flurry of activity by the Turkish government, private companies, and NGOs in Somalia. Is there a coherent political plan or strategy behind this involvement and should there be? Are these activities being monitored in any way? How successful has Turkey been in attempting to raise the Somalia issue on a regional and global scale, and, consequently, creating political solutions? Finally, what kind of policy must be put into place to foster sustainable peace and development in Somalia?

So far, neither the Turkish government nor the other Turkish actors involved in Somalia have offered any clear answers to these questions. It appears that the Somalia case is considered to be a quasi-internal political issue because of the extensive involvement and interest of many state institutions in Turkey. Unfortunately, there is no real data covering the activities of these various state, private, and civil society activities to allow for a proper analysis. This dearth of information weakens the ability of government agencies and NGOs to formulate appropriate day-to-day policies and works against their ability to plan for the long term. To counter this reality, the first purpose of this study is to provide a reference point for Ankara's Somalia policy. Second, it will also attempt to provide a critical assessment of the policies made by Turkey and their effectiveness. Third, it will give suggestions for the near future.

In this context, this study emerged through the general literature and debates on the issue as well as the interviews conducted regarding the topic and results from the workshops attended by various institutions. This study primarily aims to provide an analysis on a regional and global scale while providing insight into the actions of Turkish institutions and organizations in Somalia. Turkey's three year-long experience in Somalia is the basis of this study. The goal is to constructively contribute to establishing a clear paradigm and planning for this type of work.



# SOMALIA IN THE CONTEXT OF TURKEY'S AFRICA POLICY

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Since the beginning of Turkey's African initiative in 1998, none of the developments in Africa has attracted Turkey's attention as much as the hunger crisis in Eastern Africa, especially in Somalia. Turkey-Africa relations mark a new era in Turkish foreign policy owing to the heightened sensitivity shown by the Turkish public, the ruling party and the opposition party, as well as NGOs. To put Turkey's current active policy in Somalia into context, an overview of Turkey's foreign policy towards Africa should be considered. Turkey's foreign policy towards Africa can be delineated into three basic periods during the post-Cold War era. First period is between 1998 and 2005; second is between 2005-2011, and the last one is the ongoing process since Turkey's Somalia policy in 2011.<sup>7</sup>

Turkey's active foreign policy towards Africa began in 1998. It was the year of the "Opening up to Africa Plan." Thus, the first phase ran between 1998 and 2005. In particular, 2005 was declared internationally to be the "Year of Africa." This was a watershed year and must be examined closely as a period of infrastructure development and diplomatic preparation for Turkey's African policy. The second phase from 2005-2011 should be viewed as a period of strengthening relationships and reinforcing Turkey's diplomatic presence through the

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7. For an overall assessment and periodization see Mehmet Ozkan, "A New Actor or Passer-By? The Political Economy of Turkey's Engagement with Africa," *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol 14, No 1, 2012, pp. 113-133; Mehmet Ozkan, and Birol Akgun, "Turkey's Opening to Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol 48, No 4, 2010, pp. 525-546.

opening of embassies. This period also signaled Turkey's increased interest towards Africa as a place where Turkey would develop long-term relationship with many African countries. For that aim, Turkey has strengthened its involvement in international organizations related to Africa. It is now an observer in the African Union; it has become a member of the African Development Bank; and most importantly it organized the Turkey-Africa Summit in Istanbul, in 2008. The Summit was focused on rapidly growing trade relations and civil society activities, developing social and commercial relationships, and seeking to re-establish their mutual interests. The third period of Turkey-Africa relations began in August 2011 with Turkey's involvement to alleviate the hunger crisis in Somalia and taking a leadership role on this issue. This is the phase that will be the main source in evaluating Turkey's real effect impact in Africa. It will also serve to determine to what extent Turkish political "power" can exert influence to solve Africa's problems.

Turkey's active engagement in Somalia is a reflection of its great interest in the future of Somalia, in particular, and of the continent, generally. Additionally, Turkey is seeking to reinforce and strengthen its presence as a new political actor. The significant amount of development and humanitarian aid Turkey has poured into the country as well as increased commercial developments are the main bridges of its new Africa policy. Additionally, religion is an important factor and is perceived as a legitimate basis for its involvement. In addition to government organizations, such as the Directorate for Religious Affairs (Diyanet), NGOs have been actively engaging and supporting Turkey-Africa relations. Ankara's policy in Somalia and other African countries will demonstrate that Turkey is not only an economic power but also a political power. In this study, various aspects and levels of this relationship will be discussed.

Although Ankara appears to be more of a political actor, it has recently increased its efforts to help in resolving Africa's problems. To this end, Turkey organized a conference along with the UN in Istanbul on May 21, 2012, entitled "Preparing Somalia's Future: Goal 2015." Fifty-seven countries and eleven regional and international organizations attended this conference to address water, energy, transportation, and racism issues. The conference set out a roadmap for the re-establishment of Somalia and presented a five-point comprehensive plan for state reconstruction. This five-point plan included the followings themes: the establishment of national unity, the creation of a new political system, a comprehensive structuring of economy, the configuration of national Somali forces, and

the development of the country.<sup>8</sup> As Turkey's relations with Somalia continue to be strengthened, deputy prime ministers and many other ministers make official visits to follow-up with the projects. As a result, Somalia has become a quasi- internal issue for Turkey's government and society.

Turkey's presence in Somalia is different in some aspects, as compared to other actors within the region. First of all, the nature and implementation of humanitarian aid is one of the differences. Turkey's goal is to achieve long-term development projects in the region mostly in micro level that touches people's live directly and rapidly. Secondly, the common religion of Islam plays an important role in legitimizing Turkey's presence in Somalia, as opposed to Western and non-Western actors. Thus, religion is the major reason for them to trust Turks and their "work ethic." Turkish schools in Africa have rapidly increased and have successfully trained a new generation of self-sufficient educators. This is critical for the development and modernization of the continent. However, certain Turkish schools activities – not referring to those run only by Gulenists but also many other Turkish NGOs – , their approached to education, and methods could be compared to the nineteenth century European missionary approach. Efforts in education, in particular, are thought to potentially re-shape and change the path of Africa's future social dynamics.

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Despite these differences, Turkey's long-term socio-political existence and stability in the region depends not only on increasing trade relations but also on efforts in finding durable solutions for the African continent's problems, which are similar to Somalia. If Turkey is able to contribute to peace and security in Somalia, it could then join the group of powerful political nations, along with the USA, France and Britain, who are interested in promoting the continent's economic and political stability, instead of being part of the group that has only economic interests in Africa, such as India, China, and Brazil.

8. "United Somalia a Must: Davutoglu," *Al Shahid*, 10 December 2012.

Somalia's example is not only an important turning point for Turkey-Somalia relations but also reflects Turkey's strategy to be one of the major players in promoting Africa's development. Turkey's successes or failures could potentially shape priorities in Turkey's Africa as well as determine how Africa and other actors in the region will perceive Turkey in the upcoming years.

# TURKEY'S SOMALIA POLICY

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In the summer of 2011 a disastrous draught hit Somalia, combined with the ongoing years of civil conflict caused Somalia to declare its first official declaration of “famine.”<sup>9</sup> Somalia’s declaration that it was starving, given the magnitude and severity, was a dangerous alarm. Somalia’s dire predicament meant a three-dimensional burnout for its people: First, Somalis were unable to maintain their livelihood as their agricultural production was insufficient to even ensure a minimum amount of food and drink. Second, the majority of the population had no access to their government officials. Third, Somalis had neither the power nor the opportunity to alleviate their indigent conditions. Government and NGOs began their activities in Somalia prompted by the public opinion’s concern seeing the destitute situation of the Somalis. Moreover, concern was heightened and the Islamic world was all the more touch by this plight, as it occurred during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Turkey was among the first of these countries to act.

Turkey’s visit to Somalia, in 2011, at the Prime Ministry level was intended to put the spot light on the horrors of starvation and to grab the world’s attention and focus it on the tragedy happening in the region. However, the objectives of some of the government organizations as well as certain well-known NGOs evolved with the goal of promoting the “contribution to the development of a self-suffi-

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9. Nisar Majid and Stephen McDowell, “Hidden Dimensions of the Somalia Famine,” *Global Food Policy*, Vol 1, No 1, 2012, pp..36-42.

cient Somalia,” under the banner of aid activities. Turkey’s Somali policy displays a multi-dimensional and also multi-actor situation when compared to the policies implemented by other countries. In order to understand this multi-dimensional and multi-actor structure, a conceptual sense for Turkey’s policy in Somalia is necessary. Later on, the activities done by all the actors who are part of Ankara’s Somalia politics will be documented. Turkey’s Somalia policy can be categorized and analyzed essentially under seven categories:

## EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN AID

Emergency Humanitarian aid was the first step in Turkey’s involvement in Somalia. It was launched following the scores of deaths caused by the drought and famine in Somalia and Western Africa in 2011, mentioned above. Turkey became aware of this crisis through the international media, as it previously had not been an issue on Turkey’s policy agenda. On August 19 2011, Prime Minister Erdoğan visited the capital city of Somalia, Mogadishu accompanied by a large delegation, which included his wife Emine Erdoğan, his daughter Sümeyye Erdoğan, Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdağ, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, and other ministers and executives.<sup>10</sup> Besides the fact that this was the first official visit to Somalia’s capital city Mogadishu in the last twenty years by the Turkish government and its ruling party leader, the visit brought this subject to the attention of the international community, and in particular the Turkish public. Already, Turkish society’s attention had been directed to the Somali crisis when a high profile delegation of parliamentarians and entertainment artists, such as Sertab Erener, Nihat Dogan, Ajda Pekkan, Muazzez Ersoy, along with businessmen such as the President of TÜSIAD, Ümit Boyner, and the President of ASO, Nurettin Özdebir, visited Somalia.

At that time, the goal of the Prime Minister and his delegation was mainly to provide emergency humanitarian aid for the people in need rather than establish a long-term Somalia policy. Turkey sent a large amount of food aid and other necessities, and launched a variety of campaigns to stem the crisis in Somalia. Turkey’s policy of aid over rhetoric garnered appreciation not only from the Somalis but also foreign countries. This aid provided Turkey with legitimacy when it developed its subsequent policies towards Somalia.

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10. “Başbakan Somali’de,” *Sabah*, 19 August 2011.

## DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Development assistance has been one of Turkey's soft power strategies in its foreign policy arsenal in recent years.<sup>11</sup> As mentioned above, Turkey's foreign policy has made serious efforts in development assistance in the region, in particular, as a result of TİKA's restructuring and the expansion of its activities.<sup>12</sup> Turkey's development assistance was instrumental in rebuilding Somalia's dilapidated and war-torn infrastructure, such as rebuilding the airport in Mogadishu, paving much needed roads that now connect Mogadishu's city center to the airport, and helping Somalia to modernize. This fosters Somalia's reentry into the global world<sup>13</sup> In addition, direct flights from Istanbul to Mogadishu by Turkish Airlines have facilitated Somalia's communication with the world.

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Turkey's Somali policy displays a multi-dimensional and also multi-actor situation when compared to the policies implemented by other countries.

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Turkey provided Somalia with essential infrastructure projects. Turkey built field hospitals, giving doctors the much-needed medical infrastructure to care for approximately one 1,200 patients daily. Also, a hospital with a 200-bed capacity was opened. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) cooperated with the State Hydraulic Works (DSİ) to drill wells, providing for the water needs of one hundred and twenty six thousand people, in a country struggling with drought. And an Agricultural School was opened in Somalia to educate Somalis on how to prevent drought and foster awareness of the richness of their land.

Turkey also helped to build a Fisheries Training School in Somalia. The former Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdağ attended the inauguration to lay the

11. Hakan Fidan and Rahman Nurdun, "Turkey's Role in the Global Development Assistance Community: The Case of TİKA", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol 10, No 1, 2008, pp. 93-111; Abdirahman Ali, "Turkey's Foray into Africa: A New Humanitarian Power?", *Insight Turkey*, Vol 13, No 4, 2011, pp. 65-73.

12. For a wider discussion on the issue see, Cemalettin Haşimi, "Turkey's Humanitarian Diplomacy and Development Cooperation," *Insight Turkey*, Vol 16, No 1, 2014, pp. 127-145; Mehmet Ozkan, "Does 'Rising Power' Mean 'Rising Donor'? Turkey's Development Aid in Africa", *Africa Review*, Vol 5, No 2, 2013, pp. 139-147.

13. See Oktay Bingöl, "Somali'de Barış ve Kalkınma Sürecinde Türkiye'nin Rolü," *Akademik Bakış*, Vol 7 No 13, Winter 2013, pp. 81-106.

foundation for the school. Although Somalia has Africa's longest ocean strip, its ongoing civil war, which has lasted for almost a quarter of a century, put an end to fishing on one of the world's most beautiful coastlines. Teaching the Somalis how to fish again through this will be a lasting investment in the economic sustainability of the country by creating employment, restarting a valuable food sector, and even developing a fisheries industry.<sup>14</sup>

All of these projects fit into a more long-term development assistance plan. However, the main obstacle confronting Turkey's success in developmental assistance remains the issue of security. In a country where chronic security problems persists, the population generally migrates away from the rural areas, where agricultural is produced towards the cities or areas where there is relatively more security. If security can be re-established on the coast and in the agricultural areas, the development assistance efforts undertaken by Turkey can have a lasting impact.

## STATE-BUILDING

It would not be an overstatement to say that the official government and aid organizations in Turkey are working together to re-build Somalia.<sup>15</sup> If the experience in the Republic of Northern Cyprus is taken as an example then state building was never at the core of Turkish foreign policy. This kind of policy requires a very comprehensive approach and a deep knowledge about the country under question. In considering how Western countries participated in state-building in the post-colonial period, Turkey has played a more "passive" role throughout this process of state-building in Somalia. The tactic chosen by Turkey has been to put forward local Somali actors and strengthen them while supporting various projects relating to emergency aid and developmental assistance. Although the Turkish authorities do not officially use a "state-building discourse," Somali actors' ability to make their own decisions and to establish a mechanism that can allow them to stand on their own two-feet is equivalent to state-building. Turkey has supported the establishment of some government-supported organizations and institutions, as well as some projects in various countries such as Afghanistan, Palestine, Tunisia, and Libya. However, the experience in Somalia is different compared to these previous ones, as everything has to be rebuilt from the scratch.

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14. [http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem\\_turkiye-somaliye-balik-tutmayi-ogretecek\\_2057441.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_turkiye-somaliye-balik-tutmayi-ogretecek_2057441.html) (10 November 2013).

15. Mensur Akgün, "Somali'de yeni bir devlet inşa ediyoruz," *Star*, 22 December 2012.

Moreover, Somalia's on-going civil war for the past twenty year and its legacies of chaos and a failed state have left Somalia with a situation that can be described as an "unsystematic system" structure. Therefore, the Somalia experience is a first for Turkey in terms of state-building. This experience will affect Turkey's future policies in either positive or negative way.

Almost no reference is made to Turkey's northern Cyprus experience when Turkey's policies in Somalia are examined in terms of state-building.<sup>16</sup> However, Turkey's efforts in Northern Cyprus for several decades could be useful in examining the lessons learned from that experience to utilize not only in Somalia but also in larger foreign policy.

## CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNAL PEACE: PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Although Turkey aims to follow a policy that respects the territorial integrity of Somalia, it is aware of the intense difficulty of maintaining a single state in Somalia, given the continuing political strife. Already, Somaliland has acquired a semi-independent status since 1991 and is reluctant to unify under Somalia as a single state.

Turkey realizes that it would be difficult, in terms of structuring a Somali state, to unite Somaliland, Puntland, and Mogadishu under one "roof," however it is also aware that at least a political dialogue among these structures is extremely important for the future of Somalia. In this context, Turkey has added another item to its mediation efforts by leading talks between the central government and Somaliland.<sup>17</sup>

In this framework, Turkey's President Abdullah Gül met with the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hasan Sheikh Mahmud, and Somaliland's President, Ahmed Silanyo, on April 13, 2013 at the Presidential Palace in Çankaya, and brokered an agreement between the two leaders, which could be considered as historic. At the peace talks that took place, upon Turkey's invitation, the Ankara Communiqué was signed to resolve issues between Somalia and Somaliland through dialogue. In a meeting that Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu also attended, the resolution of disputes between Soma-

16. I would like to thank Bilal Kendirci, Turkish Prime Ministry Expert on Cyprus, for pointing this out to me and sharing his experiences and knowledge on the subject.

17. "Ankara devreye girdi Afrika'nın sorunu çözüldü," *Sabah*, 14 April 2013.

lia and Somaliland as well as further deepening relations between Turkey and African countries were primarily discussed within the framework of regional issues. Subsequently, the Ankara Communiqué was signed as the first step of a new process to resolve the conflict between the Federal Republic of Somalia and Somaliland. According to this, both parties jointly agreed to come together again in Istanbul within 90 days to shape their future and resolve problems through dialogue. After realizing the second phase of the negotiations within the following 90 days in 2013 in Istanbul; another meeting to discuss the process of negotiations took place in the spring of 2014 in Turkey.

Although Turkey's efforts to create a common dialogue mechanism and connect it to a time frame would unlikely to lead to the reunification of Somalia, it has helped to set up a common forum where Somalis can talk out their issues among themselves.

ANKARA COMMUNIQUÉ <sup>18</sup>	
<b>13 April, 2013</b>	
Following the meeting at Chevening House (UK) of June 20-21, 2012 and the one in Dubai (UAE) of June 28, 2012, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of the Somali Federal Republic and President Ahmed Mohamed Silanyo of Somaliland Government met on 13 April, 2013 in Ankara.	
The meeting is hosted by the Government of Turkey at the request of the two parties.	
The purpose of this meeting is to reopen the dialogue after the change in the leadership of the Somali Federal Republic, and to establish a way forward for the dialogue.	
<b>The two parties:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expressed their commitment to the continuation of the Dialogue.</li> <li>2. Endorsed the content of the Chevening House Declaration agreed on 21 June 2012, and the Dubai Statement signed on 28 June, 2012.</li> <li>3. Stated that the Dialogue is between the Federal Government of Somalia and the Government of Somaliland. The international community that is supporting this process will only provide facilitation when it is needed.</li> <li>4. Agreed to encourage and facilitate International aid and development provided to Somaliland.</li> <li>5. Agreed the need to consolidate a cooperation on security sector through sharing intelligence, training as well as sharing scholarships for security sector professionals in order to become more effective in the fight against terrorism, extremism, piracy, illegal fishing, toxic dumping, maritime crime, and serious crime.</li> <li>6. Proposed to meet within 90 days in Istanbul at a date later to be agreed by the parties.</li> <li>7. Agreed to refrain from using any inflammatory language and any other act which may put the continuation of the Dialogue at risk.</li> </ol>	
H.E. Abdikarim H. Guled Minister The Federal Government of Somalia	H.E. Mohamed A. Omar Minister The Government of Somaliland

18. For the full-text of Ankara Communiqué see <http://www.tccb.gov.tr/news/397/85761/turkeys-contribution-to-efforts-to-overcome-problems-between-somalia-and-somaliland.html> (10 January 2014).

## EFFORTS TO PROVIDE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Turkey's Somalia policy since 2011 has always sought external support for helping and restructuring Somalia. The drought and subsequent famine in Somalia were the most urgent and important issues that highlighted the need for international cooperation and assistance. On August 12, 2011, Turkey called upon the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for an emergency meeting<sup>19</sup> in Istanbul regarding the famine crisis in Somalia. Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, the Somali president at the time, also attended the August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, in Istanbul. He met with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and President Abdullah Gül. A total of 228 million Turkish liras (USD 105, 5 million) were raised, as part of a comprehensive aid campaign held in Turkey, towards alleviating the famine in Somalia.<sup>20</sup> The Turkish Red Crescent, one of the first aid agencies that went to the region, undertook to organize the distribution of funds collected from Turkey. Prime Minister Erdoğan visited Somalia, after his pre-planned visit to West Africa from August 19-20, to observe the distribution of aid as well as to view the situation in the region. He was joined by a delegation, which included Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, a large number of Turkish entertainers, media members, and businessmen.<sup>21</sup> Statements made by Prime Minister Erdoğan during this visit urged the world community to help Somalia, stating that humanity's conscience is being tested, as the situation in Somalia is truly severe.<sup>22</sup> Erdoğan's call for aid from the international community contributed to the increase of awareness and sympathy to the matter, especially in the Islamic world.

Turkey, in the same manner, has moved into the international arena for Somalia, in efforts to garner and organize international support to Somalia.<sup>23</sup> Within this framework, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan focused on Somalia for a significant portion of his speech at the UN General Assembly on September 22, 2011. Erdoğan said, "No one can speak of peace, justice, and civilization in the world if the outcry rising from Somalia is left unheard. It is impossible for me to put into words the poverty and suffering I have seen in Somalia. The tragedy of Somalia, where tens of thousands of children died due to the lack of even a

19. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2011/08/110817\\_somalia\\_turkey.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2011/08/110817_somalia_turkey.shtml) (17 August 2011)

20. <http://www.sbn.gov.tr/icerik.aspx?id=6345> (15 January 2012)

21. <http://tr.euronews.net/2011/08/19/basbakan-recep-tayyip-erdogan-somali-de/> (15 January 2012)

22. "Somalililere Seslendi: Sıkıntıyı Birlikte Atlatacağız," <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haber-no=1171118&title=somalililere-seslendi-sikintiyi-birlikteatlatacagiz&haberSayfa=0> (20 August 2011)

23. For an overall assessment of Somalia crisis in a regional and global context see, Mehmet Özkan, "Somali'ye barış nasıl getirilebilir?", *Dünya Bülteni*, 6 September 2011, <http://www.dunyabulteni.net/?aType=haber&ArticleID=173543> (15 March 2012).

piece of bread and a drop of water, is a shame for the international community.” Erdoğan also stated that the conscience of humanity is being questioned, and criticized the world for watching the events as if it were a movie.<sup>24</sup>

Along with these calls to action, Turkey has organized joint meetings in Istanbul with the United Nations and has made efforts to find support within the international arena on the Somalia issue. The First Istanbul Somalia Conference was among the first organized events by Turkey with the backing of the United Nations. The Istanbul Conference, held from May 21-23, 2010, was actually a follow up to the decision of the International Somalia Contact Group in line with the Djibouti peace process. The content of the “Istanbul Declaration” anticipated co-operation between Somalia and the international community. Testimony to the international community’s commitment to Somalia, signatories at the conference included UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon along with many high-ranking officials representing 55 countries and 12 international organizations. In the same context, 54 countries’ Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Cabinet-level representatives, as well as the UN Secretary-General, the Chairman of African Union Commission, and the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, international and regional representatives of organizations attended the Second Istanbul-Somalia Conference with the theme of “Preparations of Somalia’s Future: 2015 Goals” from May 31 to June 01, 2012.

In addition, prior to the Second Istanbul-Somalia Conference, a Somalia Civil Society Groups meeting was held in Istanbul on May 26, 2012. Somalia’s existing problems and the future of Somalia were discussed at the Somali Civil Society Groups’ meeting with the attendance of Somali’s Traditional Opinion leaders, who elect the members of parliament and constituent assembly, as well as scholars, civil society, and diaspora representatives, intellectuals, youth and women representatives. A spokesman representing the participants of the Somali Civil Society Groups meeting made a speech and submitted proposals as well as demands at the political session of the Second Istanbul-Somali conference.

In its effort to galvanize international support for Somalia’s problems, Turkey also participated in the meeting on Somalia that was held on February 23, 2012, in London. Ankara is aware that it is difficult to solve Somalia’s entrenched problems without the existence of an international “will” to stabilize and help the country.

24. <http://www.usasabah.com/Siyaset/2011/09/23/erdoganin-bm-konusmasinin-tam-metni> (15 January 2012)

## SOCIAL SUPPORT AND SOCIAL RESTRUCTURING

The fact that the policies implemented by Turkey have a direct impact on the lives of the Somali people is perhaps what differentiates Turkey's Somalia policy from that of most other Western countries. One of the first types of direct aid that comes to mind are the scholarships provided to Somali students. Many students from Somalia obtain their education in various fields within Turkey's numerous universities, funded by scholarships. The goal here is the long term, as these students are expected, one day, to play a significant role in the social, economic, and political organization and rebuilding of their country. As the table below illustrates, Turkey is the country that receives the most number of Somali students with scholarship. This situation highlights Turkey's efforts in helping to rebuild Somalia as a country with a future.

During Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Somalia on August 19, 2012, a promise was given to provide scholarships to more than 1,200 Somali students.<sup>25</sup> To accomplish this, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) provided scholarships to 421 university level students with Somali nationality since 2012; other state agencies such as Diyanet provides scholarship around 650 students resident in Turkey and around 400 in Somalia both at university and high-school levels. Since 2010, the Turkish government agency, The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, has provided and coordinated Turkish scholarships and a special scholarship scheme is designed for African students.<sup>26</sup> These scholarships were distributed on a needs basis and the recipients were expected, in return, to give back to their own countries. As the author of this study has personally observed in Somalia and elsewhere in Africa, students who wanted to study in certain departments, such as social sciences, agriculture, civil engineering, political science, and international relations were given priority in relation to the needs in those departments.

25. "Türkiye Afrika'yı sallıyor," *Sabah*, 21 February 2013.

26. For a detailed information on Turkish scholarship see the official website <http://www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr/index.php/en/> (28 August 2014).

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS FROM AFRICAN COUNTRIES BY YEAR- TOP 10 COUNTRIES<sup>27</sup>**

	Countries	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
1	Somalia								2	2	14	19	19	17	315	106	494
2	Egypt	1							2	6	21	25	31	30	35	85	236
3	Morocco								3		7	11	21	71	26	57	196
4	Ethiopia					1		3	2	3	2	19	9	32	47	43	161
5	Tunisia			1		1	1	2	1	3	3	5	21	27	32	47	144
6	Ghana				1			4			1	5	10	21	48	52	142
7	Uganda		1			1				3	7	16	16	15	21	34	114
8	Democratic Republic of Congo			2			1		7		6	9	12	5	36	30	108
9	Kenya					2	2			2	1	11	14	15	26	35	108
10	Gine Bissau								2	1	4	18	31	20	15	14	105
	Total of All African Countries	2	6	12	4	9	11	38	71	61	94	294	334	492	1062	1091	3581

Another way Turkey contributes to the social reconstruction of Somalia is through the Somali diaspora. In this context, Somalia's diaspora in various countries was interviewed and it was given support to act together, instead of being fragmented. Additionally, a well-attended Somali diaspora meeting held during the summer of 2014 in Istanbul allowed the identification of problems as well as potential cooperation opportunities through workshops.

## SECURITY

Since the early 1990s, Somalia has been torn apart by civil war and security issues. It is still considered one of the most dangerous places on earth. One of the greatest risks facing Turkey and other Western countries in providing aid is the ramped insecurity in Somalia. In terms of general policy, Turkey is one of the main actors trying to solve the security problems even though it is also vulnerable to these dangers. For example, Turkey has one of the few embassies that operate in Mogadishu. It also has been at the forefront of building and improving the country's hospitals and schools.

However, Al-Shabaab (an extremist group that controls much of Southern Somalia) launches periodic attacks against Turkish targets. Its goal is to try and

27. These numbers are taken from Kemal Kaya, *Türkiye'nin Afrika Açılım Stratejisinde Uluslararası Öğrenci Hareketliliğinin Rolü*, Ankara: Başbakanlık Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı, Expert Thesis, February 2014, p.74.

deter Turkey from continuing its aid activities and involvement in the country. For instance, in an attack targeting the Red Crescent aid convoy on April 15, 2013 fifteen Somali aid workers were killed and four Turks were wounded.<sup>28</sup> Also, a Turkish businessman was assassinated at the hotel he was staying in Mogadishu on May 25, 2012.

Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for two more recent deadly attacks. One of these attacks was a suicide attacks aimed at public buildings in Mogadishu in October 2011 that led to the deaths of 70 students, to whom Turkey had provided scholarships. This attack was perceived as an attack against Turkey. Turkey sent an air ambulance to treat the surviving the injured students. Another major attack was a direct attack on a Turkish target. It was carried out by a suicide bomber in front of an annex building of the Turkish Embassy, on July 27, 2013 in Mogadishu. In connection to this strike, Al-Shabaab made a statement on twitter accusing Turkey of supporting a non-Islamic and secular structure. During this outbreak of violence, one of four Turkish special operations police was killed in the clash while others were injured. The attack on the Turkish embassy is of particular significance, as Al-Shabaab is sending a direct message to Turkey that it is against its efforts to resurrect the social and political life of Somalia.

Turkey, which is a direct victim of the security problem in Somalia, provides support to the Somali central government in the area of training security services. Turkey dedicated a budget of 20 million Turkish Lira for the restructuring of the Somali army and its police forces. One project is to build a non-commissioned officer school with a capacity of 100 student-officers in the first phase, followed by plans to start building the foundations of professional military Ground, Air and Naval Schools. It is important to highlight, once again, that Turkey is dedicated to rebuilding Somalia, which has been destroyed by a 20-year long civil war. It cannot be underlined enough that one of the most important pillars in restructuring this country is creating security. Turkey's General Directorate of Security, the Turkish General Staff, and the Ministry of Foreign affairs have conducted various studies on how to best restructure the Somali army and police forces. Building infrastructure, configuring and training the Somali police and army as well as modernizing the country are all part of Turkey's development assistance. To this end, it brought 60 Somali police officers to Turkey, through the General Directorate of Security, then sent those police officers back to Somalia after they received train-

28. "Kızılay konvoyu hedef oldu", *Taraf*, 15 April 2013.

ing at the Police Academy The design of their police uniforms were also prepared by the General Directorate of Security. Subsequently, a police team of more than 500 police officers are expected to come to Turkey to be trained.<sup>29</sup>

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is evaluating a project to restructure and train the Somali army that is being prepared by a team of six people, which were sent to the region at the behest of the Turkish General Staff. The Somali soldiers will be trained by the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), as requested by the Somali government. The initial phase of the project, mentioned above, which is to build the foundations of a non-commissioned officer school with a capacity of 100 officers, is being planned as part of the project prepared by the TSK team of one brigadier, two lieutenant-colonels, two commanders, and one colonel in consultations with Somali officials. Turkey, again, has allocated approximately 20 million Turkish Liras in order to contribute to the modernization of Somalia's army to help easing their security problems.<sup>30</sup> The amount could be further increased, especially with additional funding by the international community.

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The second major security issue in Somalia is the prevalent problem of piracy on the coastline. Since 2009, Turkey has been providing necessary military support to fight against this scourge. In this context, Turkey has taken an active role in combatting piracy in the Gulf of Aden. Turkish G-class frigate TCG Giresun joined the Combined Task Force 151, which was formed by the United Nations Security Council.<sup>31</sup> The Giresun Frigate was sent on a four-month mission, starting February 25, 2009, within the framework of Turkish Armed Forces authorization to serve in the sea off of Somalia, which was accepted by the Turkish parliament on February 10, 2009. According to the authorization, which was valid for

29. "TSK Somali Askerini Eğitecek", *TimeTurk*, 4 March 2013, [http://www.timeturk.com/tr/2013/03/04/tsk-somali-askerini-egitecek.html#.UOKBvqh\\_uBI](http://www.timeturk.com/tr/2013/03/04/tsk-somali-askerini-egitecek.html#.UOKBvqh_uBI) (10 June 2013)

30. "TSK Somali Askerini Eğitecek", *TimeTurk*, 4 March 2013, [http://www.timeturk.com/tr/2013/03/04/tsk-somali-askerini-egitecek.html#.UOKBvqh\\_uBI](http://www.timeturk.com/tr/2013/03/04/tsk-somali-askerini-egitecek.html#.UOKBvqh_uBI) (10 June 2013)

31. "Giresun Firkateyni korsan avına çıkıyor," *Hürriyet*, 17 February 2009.

one year, Turkish armed forces personnel would not engage in ground operations against piracy and armed robbery; instead it would provide protection to Turkish merchant and military ships within its task areas. A total of 263 personnel, including 32 commissioned officers, 150 non-commissioned officers as well as nine specialized sergeants and 72 rank and file personnel were working in the frigate until its mission expired on 25 June 2009.<sup>32</sup>

Upon the expiry of its mandate, the Giresun Frigate returned to Turkey on 25 June 2009. However, on June 19, 2009 a different frigate, the Gediz Frigate, was sent to the Gulf of Aden for the same purpose. This frigate had 28 commissioned officers, 156 non-commissioned officers as well as 10 specialized sergeants and 72 rank and file personnel on board.<sup>33</sup> Subsequently, the TCG Gokova frigate was sent off to combat piracy after the return of the Gediz Frigate due to expiration of its mandate in September 2009. There were total of 267 staff, including 30 commissioned officers, 158 non-commissioned officers, and 79 soldiers, whom served on the frigate for 5.5 months, which was until February 2010 in the Gulf of Aden.<sup>34</sup>

Turkey's involvement in the fight against piracy has continued to be active in the following years in the Gulf of Aden despite the low level of attacks on ships coming from pirates. On February 20, 2010 SAT commandos have neutralized seven sea pirates in the Gulf of Aden. The TCG Gemlik Frigate (F-492) indicated that SAT commandos diffused a situation where the pirates were about to attack a Japanese ship in the Gulf of Aden.<sup>35</sup>

Also on April 1, 2010 a Taiwanese flagged ship was hijacked and then on April 7, 2010 a Turkish bulk carrier named YASIN-C was hijacked while on its way within 270 nautical miles to Kenya's city of Mombasa port. The ship, with a crew of 25 Turkish nationals, was carrying bulk wheat, which it was taking from the port of Mariupol, Ukraine to Mombasa. In a statement,<sup>36</sup> on April 1, by the Turkish General Staff, the Gallipoli Frigate had interfered with a pirate ship in the Gulf of Aden, which was preparing to attack other ships, and captured nine pirates. Again, in a statement made by the Turkish General Staff on April 18, 2010,<sup>37</sup>

32. "Mehmetçik Somali'ye Gitti," 17 February 2009, <http://www.stratejikboyut.com/haber/mehmetcik-somali-ye-gitti--16335.html> (8 June 2013).

33. "TCG Gediz Fırkateyni Aden Körfezi'ne uğurlandı," *Sabah*, 19 June 2009.

34. <http://www.denizhaber.com/HABER/19132/26/tcg-gokova.html> (10 July 2013).

35. "TCG Gemlik Fırkateyni, 7 deniz haydudunu ele geçirdi," *Milliyet*, 21 February 2010.

36. *Afrika Gündemi*, Ankara, ACAUM, February 2010, pp. 36-37.

37. *Afrika Gündemi*, Ankara, ACAUM, February 2010, pp. 36-37.

the Gallipoli Frigate had reportedly organized an operation with two speedboats near the northeast of the Seychelles against a pirateship, which was close to the route of the Turkish-flagged ship Servet-Y. Following this operation, 13 pirates were neutralized and the materials used were captured.

# INSTITUTIONS OPERATING IN SOMALIA

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Turkey's Somalia policy is of a multi-dimensional and multi-agent nature. The organizations listed below reflect this reality. The goal of virtually most Turkish NGOs and relevant government agencies in Somalia is to carry out projects in a way that provides support. The following is a list, albeit possibly not exhaustive, of Turkish organizations and institutions in Somalia: TIKA, the Red Crescent, the Diyanet Foundation and Presidency of Religious Affairs, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, State Hydraulic Works, the State Airport Authority, the Ministry of Health, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, the Anadolu Agency, Yardımevi, IGMG Hasana Association, Bashir Association, Cansuyu, the Deniz Feneri, Ihlas Foundation, the Africa Brotherhood and Solidarity Association (AFKAD), ISRA Association, IHH Turkey, IHH Europe, Kimse Yok Mu, the Nile Organization, the Charity Stone, Doctors Worldwide, Aegean Health Association Federation (ESAFED), AID (Association of International Physicians), and the Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi Foundation.<sup>38</sup>

Details of all the activities of these institutions will not be covered in this study. It is noteworthy to underline here that many institutions in Somalia, for different reasons, refuse to share the details of their work and disclose any information. This makes it very difficult for researchers to get to the bottom of matters and cull useful data. But generally speaking, many small organizations or governmental organizations record their activities in line with other major organizations.

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38. <http://haber.stargazete.com/yazar/somalide-yeni-bir-devlet-insa-ediyoruz/yazi-714006> (20 February 2014).

## TURKISH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AGENCY (TIKA)

The Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) is the organization responsible for the implementation and coordination of Turkey's development aid policy within the general paradigm of Turkish foreign policy. TIKA has been in Somalia since the beginning of Turkey's involvement and is one of the principal governmental agencies implementing projects since 2011. TIKA's office in Somalia has been developing many new projects. Furthermore, most of the remaining projects from earlier years are at the stage of completion. While it is impossible to mention all of TIKA's projects in this report, some of its outstanding projects include the following:<sup>39</sup>

- Galkayo Hospital Emergency Department Rehabilitation;
- Galkayo Vocational Training Centre and Youth Sports Center Project;
- Furnishing and technical equipment assistance to Galkayo Orphanage;
- Ventilation of Galkayo Prison Courtyard and Rehabilitation Project;
- Completion of two water wells and four water ducts at Camp Tevekkül;
- Goat Distribution in Camp Tevekkül in cooperation with the Universal Islamic Cultural Trust;
- Furnishing and technical equipment assistance to the Universal Islamic Cultural Trust;
- Hardware Support to the Galkayo Regional Health Administration Project;
- Hargeisa Regional Education Administration Project (construction of the building and refurbishment of educational facilities and conference rooms and offices of the building);
- Barbera Hospital Renovation Project;
- Maintenance, Repair, Renovation and Furnishing in Barbera Education Center Project;
- Technical research on water resources and rivers in Somaliland and Mogadishu in cooperation with the Turkish National Department of Waterworks (DSI);
- Installation of approximately a 9 km length of wire mesh and walls for the Mogadishu Airport;
- Renovation, refurbishment and construction of Mogadishu airport's VIP salon and the offices of civil aviation directorate at the airport;
- In order to ensure the safe take-offs and landings of aircrafts at the Mogadi-

39. For a list of projects see <http://www.kdk.gov.tr/haber/bekir-bozdog-ve-cevdet-yilmaz-somali-ve-sudani-ziyaret-etti/226> (25 February, 2014).

shu Airport, Turkey has sent a technical team to carry out the installation of VOR devices;

- Clearance of aircraft wreckages from the runway of the Mogadishu Airport and full restoration of the runway;
- For the safe arrival of international flights all electronic modernization, security infrastructure, and physical refurbishment work was carried out by TIKA;
- Reconstruction of offices and conference hall for the Constitution Council and its renovation, repair, and refurbishment;
- 450 Somali students were trained in vocational high schools in Turkey with all the expenditures covered;
- TIKA also covered the expenses of additional 114 Somali students brought by the Ministry of Education for vocational and special training;
- Somali National Youth Council members received educational and technical training on several management issues as well as seminars as part of a training program;
- TIKA, in cooperation with Turkish World Municipalities Association, realized an educational project to develop the capacity of Somalia municipalities, especially in the northern regions as well as in Mogadishu. The Transitional Federal Government's local administrators also joined this experience sharing program. In this context, Somalian populated Carissa town administrators in Kenya were also part of the local administrators group.

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### Turkey's Somalia policy is of a multi-dimensional and multi-agent nature.

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- Starting with the University of Mogadishu, TIKA provided the educational institutions of Somalia with all sorts of important high-tech supplies, such as computers, projectors, and generators. As part of this grant, initially 400 computers and 100 printers were sent to Mogadishu.

Besides all these activities, TIKA completed joint social and economic development projects with various civil society organizations. In this context, it is important to mention the opening of agricultural schools in Somalia, as Somalian soil is very fertile. Thus, it could develop its agriculture and locally produce much needed food. TIKA has also given several grants to develop livestock and animal husbandry and prepared reports on developing fisherie

## DISASTER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRESIDENCY (AFAD)

AFAD, as the name suggests, operates within the framework of emergency needs and necessities. In the beginning of the drought and famine in Somalia in 2011, AFAD activities came to the fore more frequently, as emergency aid was the priority. However, as the famine subsided, the need for development assistance has become more important and AFAD aid is less visible than previously. Currently, AFAD has focused its attention on the immediate needs of Syrian refugees.

AFAD activities in Somalia can be listed as follows:

- Since August 2011, a total of 22,128 tons of humanitarian aid, equivalent to 92,690,000 TL (USD 42, 9 million), has been sent to the region on sixteen aircrafts and eight vessels. AFAD has also brought 57 wounded Somalis to Turkey for medical treatment.<sup>40</sup>
- February 9, 2012 - 40 tons of medicine and medical supplies were sent to Somalia.
- February 13, 2012 - from Somalia, 19 injured and 16 wounded in a bomb attack were brought to Turkey with their companions.
- February 28, 2012 – a Turkish Airlines cargo plane went to Somalia with 40 tons of medicine and medical supplies.
- March 5, 2012 - in coordination with the Somalia Ministry of Health (7 tons), Crescent (650 kg), and TIKA (7 tons), a total of 15 tons of humanitarian aid has been sent.
- May 1, 2012 – a total weight of 47 tons humanitarian aid amounting to 1,193,471 TL (USD 552, 3 thousand) was sent by the Turkish cargo plane.
- June 26, 2012 - in cooperation with the Somalian Ministry of Health, Aselsan, the Turkish Police, the Red Crescent, and various NGOs, TIKA sent a humanitarian plane with 60 tons of humanitarian aid.
- June 26, 2012 – pharmaceutical and medical supplies were sent to a field hospital in Somalia along with Aselsan's communications equipment via a cargo plane to Mogadishu.
- July 22, 2012 – Under AFAD coordination, aid amounting to 6,493,553 kg collected by various NGOs, TIKA, and the Red Crescent was sent to Somalia via a humanitarian aid ship.

40. AFAD, *2011 Yılı İdari Faaliyet Raporu*, Ankara: AFAD, 2012, p.45.

- February 24, 2012 - 27 tons of humanitarian aid to Somalia was sent by AFAD.<sup>41</sup>
- April 2012 – Humanitarian aid amounting to a value of 27,563,092.28 TL (USD 12, 7 million) and 5 ambulances were sent to Somalia to be used at the Sahra Hospital in Mogadishu to cover the needs of health personnel.
- May 2012 – AFAD supported the repair of Mogadishu Airport's road and funded the Drinking Water Pipeline Project, as well as additional side projects - cost 22,561,058.87 TL (USD 10, 4 million). As part of this project, 20 water wells were opened in Mogadishu to provide drinking water to approximately 175,000 people.
- April 2012 – 19,862,439.74 TL (USD 9, 1 million) has been allocated for a 200-bed hospital to be built in Mogadishu.
- AFAD along with the Ümraniye Municipality in Istanbul launched a charity campaign for Somalia during the month of Ramadan in 2012.
- In the field of training activities, the AFAD in partnership with Diyanet, brought more than 400 young Somalis to continue their education at high school level to Turkey.

AFAD, as in the case of TIKA, has worked in close consultation with other agencies and played an important role especially in the transportation of humanitarian and medical aid by cargo, and financing small projects. As of December 2013, all the resources that were collected for Somalia by AFAD have been exhausted. In coming years, AFAD is expected not to involve in projects in Somalia, unless there is an emergency.

## RED CRESCENT

The Red Crescent has released a detailed report regarding their humanitarian activities in Somalia. According to this report, between August 8, 2011 and March 29, 2013 humanitarian relief supplies, totaling 16 shipments (10 by air and 6 by sea) with an overall value of 56,881,905.72 TL (USD 26, 2 million) were sent to Somalia.<sup>42</sup> In addition, the total operating cost of the Red Crescent in Somalia is calculated at 141,970,304.52 TL (USD 65, 5 million). The following list reflects the main headings (rubrics) of the recovery projects and areas:

41. AFAD, *2012 Yılı İdari Faaliyet Raporu*, Ankara: AFAD, 2012, p.73-74.

42. [http://www.kizilay.org.tr/dosyalar/1371624027\\_170613D\\_Somali\\_Insani\\_Yardim\\_Operasyonu.pdf](http://www.kizilay.org.tr/dosyalar/1371624027_170613D_Somali_Insani_Yardim_Operasyonu.pdf) (March 10, 2014).

- Shelter
- Ground repairing and road works
- Water and sanitation procedures
- Educational services
- Social Services
- Health and hygiene services
- Food and food delivery services
- Distribution of aid materials
- Waste collection and calcimine project
- Animal sacrificial and cold meat storage project
- Bone combustion unit project
- Rehabilitation of bone and animal waste, and the Turkish Red Crescent stadium project
- Public roads and bridges cleaning (Collaboration with Qatar Red Crescent)

Furthermore, in the January 2012 Report by the Turkish Red Crescent Disaster Management Directorate in Somalia, the sum of 99,264,498.55 TL (USD 45, 7 million) was collected in donations for humanitarian operations in Somalia. The Red Crescent and the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, from the outset of the process, focused on basic food and medical needs projects. Red Crescent's activities are concentrated in the capital city Mogadishu and have not reached other regions. Nevertheless, these projects in Mogadishu contributed to job creation in Somalia. In this context, studies show that there are more than 280 local workers employed. In addition, the Red Crescent's technical equipment contributions will help to empower local communities through their use of advanced technologies.

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**The total operating cost of the Red Crescent in Somalia is calculated at 141,970,304.52 TL (USD 65, 5 million).**

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Besides the Report, the Red Crescent has established a tent city to accommodate 25,000 people with all of the necessary support needed by its residents. However, recently the possibility of the removal of these tents was raised, as the goal is to help the local displaced population to return to the agricultural areas to cultivate their lands and begin improving their own living conditions. It can be, again, underlined that Somalia has huge agricultural potential. The recently improved

security situation in rural areas is also another reason behind the idea of removing the tents. Indeed, the full removal of the Red Crescent tent city is underway and contacts have been made with the Interior Ministry and other officials in Somalia.

## THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

As part of Turkey's activities in Africa within the broader foreign policy, the Turkish Ministry of Health has contributed substantially to Africa's development by building hospitals. Development projects, particularly in Sudan and Somalia, stand out in this respect. Initially, one of the priorities of Turkey's policy towards Somalia was to prevent famine and epidemics. In this regard, considering the ongoing humanitarian activities in the region two Sahara Hospitals were established.<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, the Ministry of Health recognized that the capacities of the Sahara Hospitals were insufficient to deal with the array of health problems at hand. So, the Ministry decided to build perhaps the most comprehensive and exclusive hospital in Eastern Africa. This hospital is Eastern Africa's most technologically advanced hospital and is located on Mogadishu's highest hill and was recently completed.<sup>44</sup> This hospital has the capacity of 200 beds and was constructed by Albayrak and Siyah Kalem Construction. It will treat the most common diseases, injuries, and ailments in Somalia, which happen to be orthopedic, ophthalmologic, pediatric, and women's diseases. The administration of the hospital's operation, after a certain period, will be transferred from the Turkish Ministry of Health to the Somali government. In this context, the protocol related to hospital management and transfer of it was signed as part of bilateral cooperation in the field of health between the two countries on June 27, 2013.<sup>45</sup> In addition to the hospital, the construction of a nursing school is also underway by Turkey.

By the end of 2012, the Ministry of Health sent to Somalia 72 physicians, 3 pharmacists, 174 health practitioner, 6 technicians, 10 chefs, making up a total of 265 health personnel in Somalia. A total of 263,380 patients were examined and 1,928 surgeries were performed. Furthermore, Turkey sent 5 ambulances ready for immediate intervention and 16 local health personnel have been trained in Somalia.<sup>46</sup>

43. <http://www.sgb.saglik.gov.tr/index.php?lang=tr&page=55&newsCat=3&newsID=687> (March 10, 2014).

44. "Somali'ye sađlıđı Türkler getirecek", *Yeni Şafak*, 7 May 2013.

45. <http://sgb.saglik.gov.tr/content/files/haberler/20136/Malidurumraporu.pdf> (March 10, 2014).

46. <http://www.saglik.gov.tr/TR/dosya/1-82968/h/faaliyetraporu2012.pdf> (March 10, 2014)

The Ministry of Health has also coordinated meetings on health-related issues. For this purpose, the ministry prepared an Action Plan for Somali Health Aids for the development and the implementation of projects in the region (2011-2014). The Ministry also organized the Somali Health Aids NGO Coordination Meeting on March 1, 2012 in Istanbul in order to ensure the cooperation and coordination between civil society organizations. During this meeting, the nature of aid related to the health sector in Somalia was also debated and evaluated for future actions.

## **DIRECTORATE FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS (DIYANET)**

Religion and history are the two most important elements that legitimize and help create a relationship of trust between Turkey and the Muslim countries in Africa. In this context, the role of religion is very important both for state-to-state relations and for social relations. Diyanet, until recently, did not have an active role in foreign policy and just focused on the religious issues of Muslims in Turkey. With Turkey's multi-dimensional foreign policy approach, religion has become one of Turkey's soft power elements, notably in Africa.

Overall involvement of the Directorate for Religious Affairs in Somalia can be assessed in two categories: one is the work and projects of the Diyanet Foundation, as a semi-independent entity, and second is the involvement of Directorate as part of the Turkish state. But what can be said is that the involvement of both has been result of urgency and was not well planned. Nonetheless, especially with the opening of the Turkish Embassy in Mogadishu, the involvement of the Directorate has become more organized. As a result, the Directorate for Religious Affairs is expected to appoint an attaché for religious affairs to Mogadishu at the end of 2014.

The first involvement of the Diyanet in Somalia was solely in the form of direct humanitarian aid. However, it has shifted the focus of its projects to its core purpose such as education, religious services, and bringing students from Somalia to theology faculties for religious studies in Turkey. Although numbers kept fluctuating, as of 2014, there are 300 students studying in Turkey with the help of the Diyanet. It is estimated that the Diyanet spent more than 3.5 million dollars in total for its activities in Somalia since 2011.

Some of the Diyanet's projects:

- August 9, 2011 – the Diyanet reportedly sent Somalia 222,416,000 TL (USD 102, 6 million) in cash assistance and 1,470 tons of material relief on 5 cargo aircrafts and one ship.

- August 11, 2011 – A campaign called “one Fitr and one Iftar donation from every home to Africa” launched by the Diyanet, which collected around 40 tons of food packages for Somalia.<sup>47</sup>
- On 31 January 2012, around 400 Somali students were brought to Turkey for training and education at various universities by the Diyanet. The main cities where the students are attending school are in Kastamonu, Samsun, and Istanbul. Upon the invitation of the Diyanet, a delegation of 40-people, consisting of Somalia’s religious community received in-service training in Konya.<sup>48</sup>
- The Diyanet is currently providing three hot meals daily to approximately 1,500 patients, staying at the biggest hospital in Mogadishu, Banadir Hospital and Rehabilitation Center, and their relatives. A total of around 650 students are studying at the Imam-Hatip High Schools and several Theology Faculties in Turkey.

## THE PRESIDENCY FOR TURKS ABROAD AND RELATED COMMUNITIES (YTB)

Educational training is one of Turkey’s top policies in Somalia. YTB coordinates the student section of the policy and as of spring 2014, offers scholarships to about 494 students from Somalia at various levels, including masters and doctorates. Furthermore, YTB conducts studies in the field of education and research in Somalia to build on the current university system in place. At the same time, the expansion of the university facilities has been completed to improve the current infrastructure.

The Diyanet along with the Ministry of Education is assisting YTB in educational matters in Somalia. The Directorate General for Lifelong Learning at the Ministry of Education, after the Turkish Prime Minister’s visit to Somalia in 2011, brought 450 Somalis to Turkey for middle and high school education. An additional 280 students were also brought to Turkey for enrolment in vocational schools.

The largest contribution of YTB in Somalia is its ability to evaluate current developments with a well-equipped staff. In particular, at every scholarship interview, YTB has gathered more field experiences in Somalia, which developed the organization into a critical key information center on Somalia in Turkey. Therefore, YTB’s vast knowledge allows the organization to contribute to Turkey’s policy toward Somalia through its publications and meetings.

47. <http://www.diyamet.gov.tr/tr/icerik/yardim-paketleri-somaliye-gonderilmeye-devam-ediyor/6975> (February 5, 2014).

48. <http://www.diyamet.gov.tr/tr/icerik/somalili-ogrenciler-2-subat%E2%80%99ta-ankara%E2%80%99da/7346> (February 5, 2014)

## THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (KDK)

The purpose of KDK's establishment is to increase the visibility and effectiveness of Turkey in international public opinion. Therefore, KDK follows and archives all of the work and activities of Turkish governmental and civil society institutions in Somalia and elsewhere. Consequently, even though KDK has not done any humanitarian work in Somalia, the organization helped Turkish people to understand their nation's role in Somalia. Its official website regularly posts comprehensive reports and articles on Turkey's operations in Somalia, available to the public.

The KDK also brings journalists from various countries and explains ongoing and completed projects in Somalia and elsewhere within the general context of Turkish foreign policy. In this regard, the African journalists that have been invited to Turkey have great interest in Ankara's involvement in Somalia. These delegations of journalists' visit to Turkey are a great opportunity to explain Turkey's efforts in Somalia and provide a deeper understanding of Turkey's Africa initiative. Furthermore, the KDK has prepared a documentary on Turkey's projects in Somalia and public reaction to it. The documentary was aired at various times on national television and promoted Turkish society's understanding of Ankara's Somalia initiative. Furthermore, the KDK has also taken several journalists to Somalia by organizing programs, so, they can observe the situation on the ground. As a result, more than 200 news articles have been published and many TV programs have been made on Somalia.

Overall, what the KDK's work has achieved is that it has kept the Turkish public attentive to the plight of Somalis and never let Somalia retreat from the agenda of ordinary people. This is one of the main reasons that kept Turkish involvement in Somalia active, even after three years and beyond the initial famine crisis.

## CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The key features of Turkey's policy in Somalia are multi-dimensional and multi-actor involvement in the process, however what makes this policy last is the involvement of civil society organizations. Turkey's Somalia policy is similar to Turkey's overall policy towards Africa. It can best be described by the triangle of state, civil society, and the business world combined together to support each other's involvement in the area. Furthermore, it paved the way to produce permanent policies. As mentioned in the previous section, many civil society organizations carry out activities in Somalia. However, one of the main NGOs involved in projects in Somalia is the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms (IHH). Its efforts will

be discussed below. Additionally, the reason behind the selection of the IHH, as a case study, is to illustrate how state and civil society cooperate in the framework of various projects that are carried out in conjunction with TIKA.

The IHH has been implementing sustainable projects against drought and famine in Somalia and working to promote Somalia's independence from international aid. The IHH has been operating in Somalia since 1996 and spent a total of 40 million dollars in the country. Moreover, the IHH was the first foreign aid organization that entered the region of South Sebelli, located 50 km from the capital city of Mogadishu, during the time of the most intense period of famine and drought within the region. IHH's perspective is that projects should be more comprehensive to stem the potential problems, which may arise in the future in Somalia. Therefore, the IHH has taken up the Water Well Projects, which it has also undertaken in various other African nations, to prevent Somalis from drinking water that is contaminated with mud and germs that could cause epidemics. Seeking to facilitate access to clean drinking water in Somalia, the IHH provided support for the opening of 636 water wells in last several years.

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**Turkey's Somalia policy can best be described by the triangle of state, civil society, and the business world combined together to support each other's involvement in the area.**

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Another long term project that has been implemented by the IHH is related to orphans. Large sections of the population have been victimized by the internal problems in Somalia. Many are orphaned children. Indeed, the numbers of orphaned children are usually higher in countries enduring long-term conflicts, like in Somalia. Considering this, the IHH has established an orphanage for these children over an area of 10.000 m<sup>2</sup> in Mogadishu, called "Anatolian Training Center and Orphanage." This big complex consists of a school, a health center, a Quran School, water wells, and a Mosque. It can accommodate 400 Orphans and 1400 students. Moreover, the IHH has rebuilt a burned down village that is located in the region of South Sebelli and has also built several mosques across Somalia, schools, and public healthcare centers serving residents free of charge.

IHH's model can be applied to many Turkish civil society organizations in Somalia. It is used as an illustrative case here. It is very difficult to find an archived collection of all the projects, currently run, or completed by Turkish NGOs, how-

ever, one can say that they are the ones that drive Turkey's involvement in Somalia since the beginning. Their projects directly touch the lives of Somalis and are a long-term imprint.

In the case of Somalia, there is close cooperation between state and civil society organizations in Turkey – an experience that opened new ways of implementing projects. Upon realization of the inadequacy of immediate aid to Somalia at the time of the famine, the IHH partnered with TIKA to build a school for Agricultural Studies to prevent future draughts and food shortages.<sup>49</sup> The goal is to educate Somalis, who are not familiar with modern techniques of farming, and to develop agricultural sectors. Agricultural experts from Turkey have been sent to the region, in coordination with TIKA, to teach Somalis about arid conditions of cultivation, irrigation techniques, and water conservation techniques. With this project the first greenhouse was established in Somalia, where melons and eggplants were grown. Alongside with the school of agricultural studies, which has helped to grow 50 different kinds of fruits and vegetables in the country, this school has also accepted over 1000 students from 1000 different villages in Somalia and given them scholarships. Some students came from areas where the IHH has built water wells. They are then sent back into their villages to apply their knowledge in real life. They go through a training process for one-month of intense theoretical and practical training. Then, they continue to be supervised. Vegetables and fruits seeds were brought from Turkey to teach the usage of modern agricultural techniques and pave the way for locals to develop agricultural skills. This way, the program will eventually assist locals on how to contribute and revive their social and economic lives.

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49. "Somali'de Türk izleri artıyor", *Sabah*, February 6, 2013.

# OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF TURKEY'S SOMALIA POLICY

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First, assessing the information presented so far, Turkey's initiatives in the health field is noteworthy. The construction of hospitals and the transfer of patients to Turkey should be underlined. Another, important action has been the opportunity offered to Somali students that are brought to Turkey to receive secondary school, university, and vocational education through the efforts of TIKA, AFAD, the Diyanet, and YTB. And the Red Crescent and AFAD lead the projects on housing, water, sanitation, hygiene, ground leveling, and refuse collection arrangements. All in an effort to promote sustainable development in Somalia beyond immediate food aid relief.

Second, following the visit of Prime Minister Erdoğan of Turkey to Somalia and the opening of the Turkish Embassy in Mogadishu on November 1, 2011, the relations between two nations have substantially improved. Bilateral relations between Turkey and Somalia have grown in strength by the Turkish Prime Minister's public campaigns and gained serious support from all segments of society. Turkish Airlines flights to Somalia have been another major milestone in Turkey's Somalia relations. With Turkish Airlines flights, for the first time after almost 20 years, Somalia's connection with the world and international community was re-established.

Third, with the start of the humanitarian aid in 2011, Somalis sympathy towards Turks has increasingly gained momentum and the locals have reflected this sincere affection by waving Turkish flags upon the arrival of the first Turkish aid

workers. However, there is now a different perception towards Turkey's involvement in Somalia. Turkey's super-country status in the eyes of Somalis in 2011 was highly emotional and understandable. The current trend shows signs of normalization. Somalis view Turkey more as a regular country. This goes hand in hand with the Turkish approach that Somalis should take care of their own responsibilities. This recent development is more balanced and healthier. It should pave the way for a long-term and rational relationship between the two countries.

Fourth, anyone who closely follows politics of Eastern Africa should recognize that it was Turkey who brought Somalia's plight back to the attention of the international community. Today, almost every news piece related to Somalia mentions Turkey in it. This situation has helped Turkey gain the trust of the people in Somalia and its diaspora. Turkey's image has also been bolstered among humanitarian aid workers and all segment of Somalia's society, who have appreciated its relief and development efforts. Furthermore, the influence of Turkish aid to Somalia has stoked the attention of other African societies. The Turkish style and method of humanitarian aid has become a model for other African countries and the problems they face. However, it also brought negative reactions from local African powers as well as their Western allies.

Fifth, Turkey's initiative in Somalia contains the necessary political support to resolve the issue of resource scarcity in the country alongside with economic and technical assistance to the nation. Still, the main source of instability derives from the terrorist group Al-Shabaab. Indeed, Turkey's heavy involvement in Somalia disrupted and disturbed Al-Shabaab's stronghold on the country. In this regard, Al-Shabaab has launched several attacks against Turkish personnel and property in Somalia. For instance, Al-Shabaab attacked Turkish convoys and they launched a suicide terrorist attack on July 27, 2013 in front of the additional building of the Turkish Embassy in Somalia. This resulted in death of one Turkish police officer, wounded 3 others, and caused the death of two other non-Turkish embassy workers. As of 2014, Al-Shabaab's threats towards Turkish embassies in Eastern Africa have substantially increased. The main reason for this is the relative success of Turkey in building and developing Somalia's capacity as a state, which undermines Al-Shabaab's authority over Somalis.

Sixth, viewed in terms of management experience, Turkey has learnt many lessons from Somalia. Turkey understood that a close partnership between the public and private sector brings success and speed in development issues. United under the leadership of the Prime Minister's office, many operations have been

successfully completed in cooperation with NGOs. This reflects Turkey's democratization process and the opening of the Turkish state's relationships with NGOs. This process has been also very useful for NGOs themselves. While, Turkish humanitarian organizations have been present in Somalia long before the 2011 drought started, their horizons and approaches have also expanded on a larger scale after the Somalia experience.

Seventh, it is very hard to determine the exact amount of money spent by Turkey in Somalia, but the estimated figure exceeds USD 300 million. Although in comparison to the western nations' total donations, Turkey's donations may be smaller, the fact that Turkey's aid concretely manifested in the form of direct aid had a tremendous impact. Turkish aid touched and improved the lives of many Somalis on the ground. Moreover, if we look at the overall statistics of western aid, it is visible that the majority of the aid was concentrated on security issues in Somalia while Turkish aid went to sustainable development, especially in the areas of health, agriculture, and education.

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**Turkey's initiative in Somalia contains the necessary political support to resolve the issue of resource scarcity in the country alongside with economic and technical assistance to the nation.**

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Eighth, Turkey's Somalia policy ultimately has deepened Turkey's Africa initiative and its visibility is the clearest example of it. Turkey's presence in the region compared with other actors varies in some respects. First, humanitarian aid is one of those differences. Turkey has worked successfully to establish infrastructural facilities and educational programs in the context of long-term development projects. Secondly, religion plays an important role in legitimizing Turkey's presence, while other actors, both western and non-western, do not share this commonality. Religion makes Somalis trust Turks in Somalia. Improving education in Africa is known to be a critical component for development. Thus, scholarships and other forms of educational activities that are offered in Africa by Turkey are very important to educate the continent's future generations. In particular, an educated class in the coming years will lead to a change in the social structure of Somalia and this is expected to shape the dynamics in the country.

Ninth, aside from different aspects of Turkey's presence, Turkey is looking towards establishing for Somalis long-term socio-political existence and stability.

Turkey is not only looking to increase trade relations, but it is also committed to find solid and permanent solutions to problems of the continent wherever it can. If Turkey's policies help Somalia to successfully transform into a place of relative peace and stability, it is a highly possible for Turkey to gain confidence in its future dealings in Africa. This is likely to distinguish Turkey from other regional powers, such as India, China, and Brazil that only consider Africa in economic terms. Turkey is seeking to fit more into the role that the USA, France, and Britain play in Africa, where political stability and security are the goals.

Last but not least, Somalia's example does not only represent Turkey's relations with Somalia but it can also be considered as an important turning point in Turkey's Africa expansion strategy. Turkey's success or failure in the coming years will shape Turkey's priorities in Africa while developments on the ground will also determine Turkey's image, credibility, and role in the eyes of other African nations.

## **EVALUATING TURKEY'S SOMALIA POLICY**

If we are to evaluate Turkey's policy towards Somalia, it is possible to see many of Turkey's first time experiences as well as the risk factors and the opportunities that come along with them. Thus the following assessments can be made based on this study:

- Turkey's policy in Africa has matured since 1998 and Turkey's involvement in Somalia has deepened this policy. In turn, Turkey's involvement in Somalia has changed Turkey's overall African policy from a trade and aid-centered one to one that is geared to becoming a problem solver for the continent. Even though it was not clear at the first stages, Turkey's involvement in Somalia has elevated Turkey's status to that of a traditional actor on the African stage, allowing it to participate on discussions of politics and security. Therefore, Turkey's Somalia policy constitutes a turning point for Turkey's Africa policy both in nature and content as well as being a possible guideline for shaping future policies.
- While Turkey's interest in Somalia has brought it into international spotlight, the interest that has been shown by the international community has been nothing more than "pseudo acts of kindness" towards Somalia. To this day, the international community has been reluctant to solve any of Somalia's long-standing problems. The United Kingdom has been more inclined to assisting Somaliland, rather than Mogadishu. And the United States and

other nations still consider Somalia as a terrorist stronghold. This approach and negligence actually strengthens the position of Ethiopia and Kenya, who actually do not want a strong and established Somali central government in the region. This eventually leads them to adopt some ill thought out policies in the region. Naturally, the core of the Western policy toward Somalia has been shaped within the framework of a “failed state.”

- One of the most fundamental issues in Somalia is the lack of expertise and technical knowledge in the political management of the country. Moreover, the brain drain of qualified Somalis had made the task of rebuilding harder. This national “tragedy” will not improve unless the security situation substantially stabilizes. This is a setback in the speed and efficiency of implementing projects for Turkey in Somalia. However, based on previous years of experience in Somalia, Turkey has learned to manage with what it has on the ground.
- The most important and perhaps one of the rightful criticisms towards Turkey’s policy in Somalia is the claim that Turkey has a “Mogadishu policy” rather than a “Somalia policy.” This criticism was mainly based on the fact that Turkey used Mogadishu as the center of the operations in Somalia. This type of criticism came from the leaders of the autonomous state of Somaliland and some other semi- autonomous regions within Somalia. Turkey’s policies, in recent years, seem to have exacerbated this trend and reinforced this criticism. It should be seriously considered. Even though institutions, like TIKA, have carried projects in Somaliland and other semi-autonomous parts of the Somalia, such a claim still exist in the minds of many. The opening of a Turkish Consulate in Somaliland in the summer of 2014 is certainly a good step in the direction towards signaling that Turkey has a holistic Somalia policy. However, a visit by the Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey to Somaliland, and perhaps other parts of Somalia too, would at least help change the perception about Turkey and claims of a Turkish partisanship with the central government.
- One way to measure the success of a foreign policy is to determine the sustainability of that policy in the long-run. Although Turkey’s African policy, in general, has proved to be successful so far, perhaps the time has come to discuss whether and how Ankara’s Somalia policy can be made more sustainable. Ankara started off on the right foot in Somali politics and certainly aims to continue in the “right” direction. However, the only way for it to be sustainable in the long-term is to maintain Turkish public opinion’s inter-

est towards Somalia. This requires more involvement of Turkish academics, journalists, and major think-tanks to research issues pertaining to Somalia, to evaluate developments, and assess policies. It also important to have a mechanism that monitors the developments on the ground and suggests policies for decision-makers.

- When the overall process is examined, Turkish institutions went to Somalia without having a serious basis of information, which led to mistakes and disappointments.. This case was a serious “test” for Turkey and its institutions. Among the many challenges, Somalia highlighted the problem of the language barrier. Turkish-speaking Somalis became highly appreciated at the

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Turkey's Somalia policy is no longer limited to coordinating technical and humanitarian aid. In this context, appointing perhaps a special Somali representative for the first time in Turkish foreign policy is a necessity.

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time. Another challenge was the limitations of Turkey's infrastructure and corporate experience. It should have been taken into account by Turkish institutions prior to expanding in other areas. Lessons must be learned.

- Turkey had initially gone to Somalia for purely humanitarian reasons. However, the prestige that Turkey gained, later on, has attracted the attention of African countries and the international community. As Turkey's influence in the region expanded, some countries were discomfited by what they perceived as political competition. Turkey's policies, which undermine public support of Al-Shabaab, have created a de facto alliance against Turkey; between al-Shabaab and other actors. Although the main actor behind the Turkish embassy bombing has not been fully identified, even though Al-Shabaab has taken responsibility of it, the potential for future attacks must be factored in future foreign policy decisions.
- Turkey's Somali policy is the best leading experience, in terms of inter-agency coordination, within the framework of its foreign policy. Despite regularly held coordination meetings, a maximized level of coordination and a well-planned vision must be developed. However, there are a number of small and

large Turkish charities of which the Turkish government is not even aware that continue their activities in Somalia.

- Coordination meetings in Turkey on Somalia must go beyond being a purely check-list mechanism of what has already been done. Instead, a gap needs to be filled and a genuine discussion engendered to create a sustainable political vision. Turkey's Somalia policy is no longer limited to coordinating technical and humanitarian aid. In this context, appointing perhaps a special Somali representative for the first time in Turkish foreign policy is a necessity. An assessment should be made on the political developments and the day-by-day changes in Somalia for a better decision-making process. This situation makes it even more imperative for a special representative with a political mission to be appointed. As mentioned above, Turkey's Somali policy is now bigger than an aid coordination policy, it could potentially shape politics in the region. Thus, the political vision behind it should be redirected.
- It is possible to say that some government agencies operating in Somalia have been showing some sort of "Somalia Fatigue." The experience in the 1990s actually led a similar fatigue in many of the western countries and NGOs dealing with Somalia. It could be said that something similar to it beginning to slowly show itself in Turkey. Although it has not been often mentioned, the main cause of this situation is the lack of planning of future steps and defining a clear roadmap. Institutions, especially with a lack of vision for the future, should be able to think of worst-case scenario and be able to criticize their own policies. Somalia Fatigue could only be resolved if a special representative that knows the region well and has the ability to create a vision for Turkey is appointed. It is a necessity for institutions in dealing with such a volatile political situation to be able to transfer their experiences while criticizing their current approach. They need to create a mechanism that mainly provides in-depth analyses for Turkey's Somalia policy.
- In general, some of the personnel, who have worked in Somalia, are hesitant to return and travel in Somalia. Adjustments to per diem amounts, on behalf of government and aid agencies, need to be made in order to make this assignment more attractive. Those who work in Somalia may face psychological problems as well as security issues. Thus, the prospect of working in Somalia should be supported by incentives. This situation is extremely important, as it is essential to find qualified personnel in this field.

- The Somalian experience has made a number of major contributions to Turkey's aid politics. Firstly, the Somalian experience has set a great example by prompting Turkey to create an archive for aid politics. Indeed, a significant civil or public archive was not established for previous aid operations. Thus, in a sense, the Somalian experience has contributed to professionalizing aid archives. Secondly, since Turkish aid organizations did not use local Somalian aid groups to guide them, as organizations of other countries do, instead it directly approached Somalians. This enabled Turkish aid organizations to receive accurate information and answers to problems and questions. Moreover, it also allowed Turkish aid organizations to reduce the time spent between identifying a problem and finding the solution. Finally, Turkey is in the process of developing or articulating a development aid model, therefore, the Somalian experience has greatly contributed to Turkey's own institutional development by creating a distinctive model for this purpose.
- Turkey's Somalian experience requires the emerging aid model – some call a model that based on Anatolian Spirit – to be theoretically discussed, conceptualized, and institutionalized. This experience, if articulated well, can positively contribute to re-organizing and renewing a new institutional framework.
- When looking at the experience and outcomes of the Somalian issue, the major point to be underlined is that universities and think-tanks do not really focus on this matter much in Turkey. Turkish public institutions have considerably more knowledge and experience on Somalia than academics and analysts because of the fieldwork they have been involved in. Therefore, it is worth stressing that there are hardly any academic studies about the matter. New policies should be designed to encourage the information gathering, study, and analysis on Somalia, in particular, and Africa, in general. For example, the involvement of academics in YTB projects, such as interviewing students for scholarship purposes is an excellent step towards cooperation between academics and government agencies. Sharing knowledge and experience, as such, helps Turkish government to increase its collaborative work with academics to serve better Turkey's developing foreign policy.
- It is time for Turkey to review its Somalia policies to render them more effective. For instance, despite the good intentions to build new hospitals, revamping the existing hospitals and staffing them instead would probably have reduced the amount of problems that could arise. Besides, considering

the current state of most of Somalia's equipment, these modern hospitals with state-of-art technology will face problems in the case of technical malfunctions. Therefore, many policies should be revised to accommodate Somalia's local and specific circumstances.

- Although Turkey is in close contact with all Somalis, including the Somali diaspora, more communication channels should be created. For example, Somaliland expects Turkey to show further interest in them and it should be part of a diplomatic visit. Similarly, diplomatic relations with both Puntland and Somaliland should be enhanced. Turkish businesses should concentrate on and invest in Somalia's rich underground resources. Turkish Airlines flying into Somaliland will contribute to the improved perception the Somalis have of Turkey and the expansion of commercial relationships between the two countries.
- When examining Turkey's Somalian policies, it is necessary that Ankara further evaluate Somalia's regional and global dimensions. For example, many Somalian businessmen, among the Somali diaspora, living and working in Kenya are looking to move their business operations and resources to other countries, as they are under pressure in Kenya. Sympathizing with Turkey, if given the opportunity these businessmen are ready to move their business operations to Turkey. Thus, on this issue, if the Turkish embassy in Kenya steps in, and arranges for these Somalian businessmen to be able to settle their businesses in Turkey, both Turkey-Somali relations will flourish and Turkey will profit immensely.
- As mentioned above, Turkey is one of the few countries actively working in Somalia and its Somalia policies are attracting attention worldwide. Turkey's dominant image in Somalia is discomfoting for many. To avoid a backlash against Turkey, Turkey should establish joint projects with other countries. This will help Turkey to develop new and fresh approaches to Somalia. Further, with the involvement of other actors, both the burden and credit will be shared. This would also help Turkey shift from the "super country" image it has built by helping Somalia to a more normalized image.
- Turkey's Middle East policies directly affect its Somalia policies. For example, the United Arab Emirates (who see the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization) is working against Turkey in Somalia. The United Arab Emirates is involved in the same projects as Turkey and even fund Somali politics

to the detriment of Turkey. The goal of the UAE, in part, is to propagate a negative image of Turkey. Many on the ground suspect that the UAE is also liaising with other countries against Turkey. Turkey has to keep a close eye on this situation, as this could contribute to the negativity that is evolving against Turkey.

# CONCLUSION

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Unless a serious political change in domestic politics or a disruptive economic crisis takes place in Turkey, Turkey-Africa relations in the coming years should be expected to continue at the same speed. Especially, due to the intense participation of civil society in the process, it must be emphasized that it is now rapidly becoming a lasting relationship.

Africa is likely to establish itself as an important player on the international stage as many rising powers are increased their development aid and economic relations with the continent. However, with the new players in Africa, the concept of development assistance for the economic growth of the continent as well as what steps need to be taken are likely to be a matter of intellectual discussion. The new nature of development assistance is already an important point of debate in political circles. Evaluating Turkey's experiences in Africa will eventually help to produce new policies that will contribute significantly to its development.

Even though, the international community's interest towards Africa is not pronounced, it appears that it will eventually increase in the medium-term. While, traditional actors on the continent are trying to protect their old positions, new actors are attempting to focus on expanding their sphere of influence. However, while traditional actors have the monopoly on security and political issues, new actors are establishing controls over the economic issues in the continent. On the one hand, some local actors are slowly questioning the legitimacy of involvement of traditional actors in Africa, such as Great Britain, France, and the US. Yet, on

the other hand, new actors are being shown kindness and more acceptance by locals. Turkey's position in terms of influence on security and political issues remains less powerful compared to traditional actors. Moreover, it is also insufficient to compete with the economic power of the new actors. However Turkey's shared religious values as well as its fair and reciprocity-based approach places it in a different category. Thus, Turkey has to closely monitor the positions of other actors while acting in concert with them when it is necessary on certain issues in the continent. This can only increase Turkey's long-term impact on the continent and its involvement in Somalia.

Turkey's Somalia policy should not be considered separately from its overall African policy. Further, the steps Turkey has taken in this general framework should not be overlooked. After Turkey's successful implementation of its Somalia policy, Somalia has actually re-entered the international community's agenda after two decades of being left-alone. Additionally, now Somalis, for the first time since the cold war, can decide on their destiny and identify themselves as "actors."

Turkey's Somalia policy discourse and basis of its operation can be summarized emphatically and clearly as "good intentions and humanitarian aid." Turkey has entered into the third year of its Somalia policy and it is now the time to realize that Turkey can no longer has an emotional approach towards Somalia. It has to be rational about its overall involvement. Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu has called this correctly as an "integrated" approach to East Africa.<sup>50</sup> Turkey's Africa policy has to be supported by a conceptual vision, a logistical framework, and a sound economic infrastructure. It is the only way for Turkey's involvement in Somalia to survive. According to Davutoğlu, the essence of an integrated policy is that Eastern African countries cannot be separated from each other. Rather, the problems of the region have to be seen as all closely related and linked with each other by evaluating the issues in a way to produce a policy that makes sense for the region. This integrated policy is the official foreign policy platform. However, in reality, the majority of Turkey's activities in East African nations have been centered on the opening of embassies. In the short-term, what Turkey has to do is to answer the most basic question, "how to perceive Somalia?" If not, the lack of a comprehensive approach might lead to "Somalia fatigue."

50. Ahmet Davutoglu, Address to 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Ambassadors, Ankara, 2 January 2013, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-sayin-ahmet-davutoglu\\_nun-v\\_-buyukelciler-konferansinda-yaptigi-konusma\\_-2-ocak-2013\\_-ankara.tr.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-sayin-ahmet-davutoglu_nun-v_-buyukelciler-konferansinda-yaptigi-konusma_-2-ocak-2013_-ankara.tr.mfa) (15 January 2013).

In the short and even medium-term in Somalia, Turkey is faced with two main issues. One of them is a matter of “restrictive security.” The factors that cause these security problems are: (1) the weakness of Somalia’s state structure; (2) the structure of the Somali government itself; (3) and the direct and open Al-Shabaab’s threats towards Turkey. According to reports of Somali journalists, there are double agents that work for both the Somali government and Al-Shabaab. Moreover, there are groups that have been supplying weapons and ammunitions to Al-Shabaab within the Somali army. Turkey’s efforts towards strengthening the Somali state may have disturbed certain anti-Turkey segments or interest groups. This could cause a backlash against Turkey, and all of its efforts to help Somalia could be turned around against Turkey. Al-Shabaab’s explicit threats toward Turkey are concrete examples of Turkey’s efforts in Somalia and their legitimacy. At the same time these threats raise questions as to which groups in Somali society and government are actually Al-Shabaab supporters. However, since Al-Shabaab is made of different and independent factions, which can be potentially used by some Somali government officials that are against certain Turkish policies in Somalia.

The second fundamental issue that Turkey faces is the dissemination of deceptive information. Thus, Ankara needs to work on improving the limited communications system in the country. It is crucial for Turkey to either establish or help to set up a radio station that spreads accurate information regarding Turkey and its policies in Somalia. This is a very crucial point of discussion, as disinformation about Turkey’s policies can be used against it. Turkey must look to build better communication’s facilities and networks, not only for Somalia but to ensure its own image is protected.

Turkey is already at a drawback in Somalia because it has not been accustomed to the “political language,” compared to Western states, which speak mostly in political terms, yet do very little on the ground. It is an opportunity and a necessity for Turkey’s Somalia policy to use “political language.” A special Turkish representative on Somalia would be highly effective in expressing the political message Ankara wants to send. Also, this type of diplomatic official could explain and implement Turkey’s integrated policy platform towards the region and hold talks on behalf of the Turkish state. Such an appointment would allow improved coordination and timely planning between Ankara and Mogadishu. Further, Ankara would receive better feedback on Turkey’s private and public development efforts and where Somalis stand on a number of issues. If there is no one in place to carry out these types of functions, Ankara may be caught up in a political cri-

sis with Somalia's government and other representative groups. Also, without a person coordinating Turkey's varied and numerous efforts in Somalia, a crisis in upper management could take place, which would be counter-productive to its development efforts. To determine the importance of Somalia for Turkey's African foreign policy and to quantify its effectiveness, such a special representative is essential. Whether Turkey had intended to or not, it has begun a process of state-building in a place that is far geographically. This policy of state-building is also a serious "test" of Turkey's African policy. The successes or failures of Turkey's Somalia policy will impact and help decide whether Ankara should move forward with similar policies and projects in the rest of Africa.

Turkey should not underestimate how violence against a country bringing aid could impact how Turks view their assistance in Somalia. For example, in 1993, when American soldiers were killed in Somalia, it weighed heavily on the American experience and caused a psychological syndrome. Similarly, Turkey's foreign policy activism in Somalia and in Africa could slow or even cease if Turkish personnel and projects fell under attack. Turkey's Africa policy could be viewed by others as a form of "adventurism" if it fails or comes under attack, even though it is currently being admired. When all these are taken into account, Turkey's Somali policy holds relatively greater importance for Turks than Ankara's other regional or state policies in different parts of the world.. Turkey's public opinion and its government must recognize the important place Somalia holds in Turkey's involvement in development and in Africa, generally. It is strongly urged that Ankara name a representative to Somalia to focus on the political aspect of Turkey's involvement in the region. In this framework, embassies in East Africa must be more integrated with a clear effort by Ankara to coordinate development work, academic research, diplomatic initiatives, and politics.

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# TURKEY'S INVOLVEMENT IN SOMALIA

## ASSESSMENT OF A STATE-BUILDING IN PROGRESS

MEHMET ÖZKAN

Turkey's involvement in Somalia and its success, so far, is a novelty in Turkish foreign policy. Turkey's policy on Somalia over the past three years must be seriously evaluated and all aspects must be thoroughly analyzed. A critical assessment of Turkey's accumulated experience since 2011 by decision-makers and practitioners would open the doors to improve the organization and policy practices for the future. Additionally, learning from the previous mistakes would strengthen and expand Turkey's policy on Somalia.

Turkish policy on Somalia is made up of various "firsts" for Turkey. Turkey, for the first time ever, began to follow a strategy of state building within a continent where it has little experience. An additional first for Turkey is the shared experience with the entry of NGOs and government organizations to re-build Somalia as a country together. The State building effort would only be possible if these organizations worked and coordinated together, which was a new practice for Turkish foreign policy. For the very first time, government organizations and NGOs worked towards a common goal. This engendered a shared experience and collective memory.

In this context, this study emerged through the general literature and debates on the issue as well as the interviews conducted regarding the topic and results from the workshops attended by various institutions. This study primarily aims to provide an analysis on a regional and global scale while providing insight into the actions of Turkish institutions and organizations in Somalia. The goal is to constructively contribute to establishing a clear paradigm for the future of Turkey's involvement in Somalia.