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A checkmate, not a stalemate: Turkey versus the PKK

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THESIS

**A CHECKMATE, NOT A STALEMATE:
TURKEY VERSUS THE PKK**

by

Ercan Bulut

June 2014

Thesis Advisor: Michael Freeman
Second Reader: Siamak Tundra Naficy

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Terrorism is based on the use of violence to achieve a goal, such as specific governmental policy changes. Sometimes terrorists win, sometimes they lose, and sometimes terror campaigns end in stalemates. The prolonged conflicts between states and terrorist organizations deplete human and financial resources, public support and time. This thesis aims to test under which conditions in terrorism cases both sides feel themselves caught in stalemates. A historical case study between Turkey and the PKK terrorist organization was used to test hypotheses. William Zartman's Theory of Ripeness handles this question using the mutually damaging stalemate phenomenon as a condition of ripeness and one of the direct reasons for a decision to negotiate. While exploring the theory, the writer also came up with the idea of importing Mitchell and Crocker's mutually enticing opportunities to model as a condition of ripeness for both sides. Actions taken during the 1990s and 2000s give insights into the two aforementioned phenomena, respectively. The former period shows how the Turkish state broke the stalemate and checkmated the PKK, and the latter focuses on internal and regional developments and opportunities as emerging rewards of this success.

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**A CHECKMATE, NOT A STALEMATE:
TURKEY VERSUS THE PKK**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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Terrorism is based on the use of violence to achieve a goal, such as specific governmental policy changes. Sometimes terrorists win, sometimes they lose, and sometimes terror campaigns end in stalemates. The prolonged conflicts between states and terrorist organizations deplete human and financial resources, public support and time. This thesis aims to test under which conditions in terrorism cases both sides feel themselves caught in stalemates. A historical case study between Turkey and the PKK terrorist organization was used to test hypotheses. William Zartman's Theory of Ripeness handles this question using the mutually damaging stalemate phenomenon as a condition of ripeness and one of the direct reasons for a decision to negotiate. While exploring the theory, the writer also came up with the idea of importing Mitchell and Crocker's mutually enticing opportunities to model as a condition of ripeness for both sides. Actions taken during the 1990s and 2000s give insights into the two aforementioned phenomena, respectively. The former period shows how the Turkish state broke the stalemate and checkmated the PKK, and the latter focuses on internal and regional developments and opportunities as emerging rewards of this success.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Justice and Democracy Party
BDP	Peace and Democracy Party
CHP	Republican People's Party
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DEP	Democracy Party
DEHAP	Democratic People Party
DTP	Democratic Society Party
DTK	Democratic People Congress
ETA	Euskadi Ta Askatasuna
EU	European Union
HADEP	People's Democracy Party
HEP	People's Labor Party
IRA	Irish Republican Army
KCK	Kurdistan Democratic Confederation
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
KKK	Kurdistan Democratic Confederalism
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MEOs	mutually enticing opportunities
MGK	Turkish National Security Council
MHS	mutual hurting stalemate
MHP	Nationalist Action Party
MIT	Turkish National Intelligence Agency
MUSIAD	Muslim Businessmen's Association
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OHAL	state of emergency
PJAK	Free Life and Party of Kurdistan
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
TAF	Turkish Armed Forces
TAL	Transnational Administrative Law

TOs	terrorist organizations
TUSIAD	Turkish Businessmen's Association
U.S.	United States
VGS	Village Guard System

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is based on the use of violence against the innocent to achieve a goal, such as specific governmental policy changes. Sometimes terrorists win, sometimes they lose, and sometimes their terror campaigns end in stalemates. This thesis will focus on stalemates between states and terrorist organizations. Generally, the current literature regarding such stalemates focuses on internal wars and state-to-state disputes. Examining terrorism from the point of view of stalemates can produce beneficial outcomes. In that context, this research asks under what conditions do opposing sides find themselves at an impasse?

A.   SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

In particular, this thesis aims to present a broader understanding of mutually damaging stalemates by focusing on the case of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and determining whether the impasse reached in the case of the PKK terrorist organization is detrimental to Turkey. Most scholars view this deadlock phenomenon as occurring in states involved in internal wars or ethnic conflicts. However, this thesis will focus on a stalemate related to terrorism cases, because sometimes terrorism campaigns end in negotiated stalemates, such as those involving the Irish Republican Army[1] (IRA) and the Euskadi Ta Askatasuna[2] (ETA) cases.

The conditions that contribute to a deadlock are the source of much debate. Stalemates may emanate from the each side's perception that it is engaged in a costly situation that has no positive outcome. In some situations, the wrong strategies are implemented, and both sides are left feeling physically, materially, or politically exhausted, which may lead to a stalemate. Within this context, the intent of this thesis is to analyze Turkey's conflict with the PKK

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[1] Dean G. Pruitt, "Escalation and De-escalation in Asymmetric Conflict," *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 2, no.1 (2009): 27.

[2] James K. Esser and Christine M. Bridges, "Negotiating with Terrorists: The Case of The Basques and Spain," *Peace and Conflict* 17 (2011): 60, 61.

terrorist organization over three decades as a case study. Using William Zartman's Ripeness Theory,[3] in which he explains the mutual hurting stalemate as a precondition of the ripe moment for conflict resolution, we will develop some inductive results from our case study.

The methodology of the thesis will include a historical case study of the conflict between Turkey and the PKK terrorist organization. The author will look at two different periods and discuss them as to whether they are stalemates between Turkey and the PKK. The variation within this one case holds other variables constant as much as possible. The first group of stalemates to be discussed occurred between 1993 and 1999, in which the PKK announced its so-called unilateral ceasefire[4] decisions four times, respectively, in 1993, 1995, 1998, and 1999. The significance of and the reasons for these decisions and whether there is a connection with a stalemate will be the focus. The related regional and external developments, such as the ending of the Cold War, the first Gulf War, and structural changes in Iraq, and their effects will also be discussed.

The second group of stalemates to be discussed occurred in the era between 2004 and the present. In this era the PKK announced so-called unilateral ceasefire decisions four times again in 2006, 2009, 2011 and in 2013. In this process Turkey first unofficially then officially held talks with the PKK's European representatives in Oslo and with Abdullah Ocalan in Imrali via Hakan Fidan, undersecretary of Turkey's National Intelligence Organization (MIT) and other MIT representatives.[5] The significance of these talks and whether they represent a perception of stalemate from the perspective of the Turkish government will be discussed.

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[3] William Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," in *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War,* edited by Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2000), 226.

[4] A *ceasefire* is a technical term that refers to the temporal ending of a conflict between states. Sometimes a terrorist organization will call a ceasefire to create political leverage or legitimize its actions. For this reason, this thesis will use the term "so-called unilateral ceasefire."

[5] "PKK Ilk Kez Açikladi...Oslo'Da Neler Oldu?" [The PKK Declared For The First Time…What Did Happen In Oslo?] *Aksam Gazetesi*, April 24, 2013. http://www.aksam.com.tr/siyaset/pkk-ilk-kez-acikladiosloda-neler-oldu/haber-199057.

In the theory section, this thesis uses an expected utility model to explain the logic of stalemates. To provide the necessary background on the existing view of stalemates, a literature review is included later in this chapter. As previously mentioned, the existing stalemate literature generally discusses this deadlock phenomenon as it occurs between states involved in internal wars or ethnic conflicts. Thus, another goal of this thesis is to contribute a fresh perspective to the body of literature examining this phenomenon.

B.   RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES

The historical cost benefit analysis of the struggle between Turkey and the PKK plays a major role in future expectations. This analysis enables the parties involved to evaluate the situation and predict the likelihood of it ending in a stalemate. Cost benefit analysis of the adversaries includes 1) strategies, 2) resources, 3) political willingness, and 4) external developments, as identified in the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Strategies employed by both sides in a conflict influence the lifetime dynamics of the conflicts themselves, and the methods implemented as strategies may cause the struggles to reach a stalemate. Most often states take a direct strategy that targets their adversaries' capability rather than their will to fight. For this reason strategies are major factors that shape the endgame dynamics of the problems and ultimately may cause the situations to end in a stalemate.

Hypothesis 2: The objective indicators of conflicts are resources used in the struggle. Both sides make calculations over the losses they experience, and those losses might be personnel, material, money, or time. As long as each side has enough resources to continue, the conflict is unlikely to reach a stalemate.

Hypothesis 3: The political will of the adversaries, which is subject to change with public support and leaders' personalities or a change in leadership itself during the process, may cause sides to end up in a stalemate.

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Hypothesis 4: External or regional conditions which create secure resources for terrorist organizations, such as safe heavens, state sponsorship or financial resources, may lead to an impasse. Especially since the end of the Cold War, terrorist organizations have sought self-financing methods and evolved into criminal organizations to fund themselves. Failed states, especially in the Middle East and Asia, have hosted several terrorist organizations and provided safe havens for them. The First Gulf War, the 9/11 attacks, the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns, The Arab Spring and its continuation in Syria are some of the external factors that have reshaped dynamics in the Middle East. All these external conditions and safe havens enabled terrorist organizations to secure financing routes and methods, and to reorganize themselves, which have led to stalemates.

C.   LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to explain why and when conflicts are susceptible to resolution through negotiations, Zartman has created the "Ripeness Theory." According to this theory, "If the (two) parties to a conflict (a) perceive themselves to be in a hurting stalemate and (b) perceive the possibility of a negotiated solution (a way out), the conflict is ripe for resolution (i.e., for negotiations toward resolution to begin)."[6] The basic underlying element in a Mutual Hurting Stalemate (MHS) is the cost-benefit analysis of the contentious parties indicating they cannot escalate to victory and so they remain in a deadlock, which is painful for both, and so there is no benefit in sustaining the conflict.[7] According to Zartman, ripeness contains both objective and subjective elements, and it is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for negotiations to begin.[8]

In his book, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*, Zartman associates the point of ripeness with two different terms: the plateau

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[6] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 228–229.

[7] Ibid., 229.

[8] Ibid., 227–229.

and the precipice, which produce different pressures as, respectively, deadlocks and deadlines. A plateau or deadlock refers to that neither side of the conflict is able to achieve victory or goals by following their unilateral policies. A plateau must be perceived by both sides of the conflict as a hurting stalemate, providing no possibilities for decisive escalation or escape. The unilateral policies of the sides must be seen as a more costly and less likely achievable outcome than a policy of negotiation.[9]

On the other hand a precipice is the opposite of the plateau, with an impending or just occurred catastrophe in which both parties of conflict feel themselves in the losing position. It represents a realization that matters will get worse if the parties do not find better solutions that negotiation seeks to define.[10] In summary, Zartman claims that adversaries of a conflict will be likely to consider a negotiated solution when they expect a long period of costly clash together with a low probability of obtaining their goals and a high perceived probability of a catastrophe. It can be concluded for a terrorist organization that ending up in a stalemate with a state is one way of obtaining some of their aims and a success for their side.

The Entrapment model pioneered by Edmead[11] and Teger,[12] on the other hand, describes how decision makers involved in a conflict become trapped in the continued pursuit of victory even after the costs seem unbearable for both sides. The costs become reasons for each side to continue for a win in order to justify physiological and political sacrifices they have already made.[13] The paradigm here is the perception of the terms of winning and losing. Counter-

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[9] William Zartman, *Ripe For Resolution Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 232.

[10] Ibid.

[11] F. Edmead, *Analysis and Prediction in International Mediation* (New York: UNI-TAR, 1971).

[12] Allan I. Teger, *Too Much Invested To Quit* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1980).

[13] Christopher R. Mitchell, "Cutting Losses: Reflections on Appropriate Timing," *The School for Conflict Analysis & Resolution,* September 1, 1995, 1–4, http://scar.gmu.edu/sites/default/files/wp_9_mitchell_0.pdf.

terrorism strategies are employed as long-term approaches, even though the policymakers who implement them are generally looking for decisive and quick results. That is why it is hard for people to find a middle ground between the two sides in a conflict, and why they seek strict outcome definitions.

In "Cutting Losses: Reflections on Appropriate Timing," Christopher Mitchell argues that adversaries may enter negotiations not only because they confront a mutually hurting stalemate but also because a set of favorable conjunctional factors force them to do so. The emphasis is on new benefits rather than existing or anticipated costs, on rewards for adopting alternatives rather than on sacrifices that have to be compensated. From his point of view, a negotiated outcome can occur only if the right perception of rewards appears.[14]

According to Jeffrey Rubin, Dean Pruitt, and Sung Hee Kim, conflicts escalate for a while and then reach stalemate: a situation in which neither side can win, but neither side wants to step back or accept loss. They claim that stalemates emerge for a number of reasons, such as failed tactics, depletion of available resources to continue a conflict, a decline in the support of the conflict by members or allies, or an increase in the costs.[15] The hypotheses of this thesis are constructed on the basis of these reasons. It is important to understand the endgame dynamics of conflicts and the definition of results to connect the idea of stalemate with these reasons.

Ivan Arreguín-Toft in his article, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," emphasizes the ideas of states' and adversaries' tactics and approaches countering each other, and their decisive and power irrelevant roles on the outcome of asymmetric conflict. According to him every strategy has an ideal counterstrategy, and the strategic interaction of opponents leads them to come up with four optimal approaches: direct-direct/indirect-indirect and direct-indirect/indirect-direct (Figure 1). In the former two, states are likely to win in the

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[14] Ibid., 6.

[15] Jeffrey Rubin, Dean Pruitt, and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement,* 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994), 152–5.

short term, whereas in the latter two strategies, conflict favors the weak in the long term. [16]

The direct approaches target the armed forces of an adversary to end its fighting capability while the indirect approach aims to finish its will to fight.[17] "Strong actors lose asymmetric conflicts when they adopt the wrong strategy vis-à-vis their weaker adversaries. Same-approach interactions whether direct-direct or indirect-indirect favor strong actors because they imply shared values, aims, and victory conditions."[18] Moreover, delays and reverses in the process will finally encourage a conflict weary public or elites to force the state leadership to abandon the fight.[19] Generally, terrorists follow indirect approaches, whereas states choose to follow direct approaches, and that works well for terrorists.

Figure 1.   Expected Effects of Strategic Interaction on Conflict Outcomes, expected winners in cells.[20]

From Arreguín-Toft's perspective, following the wrong approach or strategic interaction may lead a state to end up in a stalemate with an opponent.

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[16] Ivan Arreguín-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars," *International Security* 26, no. 1 (2001): 104–109.

[17] Ibid., 104,105.

[18] Ibid., 121.

[19] Ibid., 97.

[20] Ibid., 108.

For an effective solution the state should come up with the same strategy as that of its opponent. Employing all of the states' resources and institutions as part of a grand strategy must be the precondition of overcoming the adversary for ending its will to fight rather than only using military means to end the adversary's fighting capability.[21] It is this perspective that informs the hypotheses on strategies.

Ben Connable and Martin Libicki in *How Insurgencies End* claim that according to their qualitative analysis of 89 insurgency cases, modern insurgencies last ten years on average. Their study describes four types of outcomes (Government loss, Government victory, Mixed type, Inconclusive or Ongoing outcome). In a mixed type outcome they counter the idea of Zartman's claim about stalemates providing critical opportunities for negotiated settlements. They claim such stalemates seldom occur, and when they do, such conflicts typically end due to physical, material, or political exhaustion. Exhaustion only plays the role of catalyst in the path of negotiation, victory, defeat or hibernation. External support, presence of safe havens and sanctuaries are positively correlated with the duration and success of the endgame for the insurgency.[22] "The total absence of sanctuary leaves insurgents with only a one-in-seven chance of winning (out of decided cases)."[23] These notions of external events and external support underlie hypothesis three.

In "Things Fall Apart: The Endgame Dynamics of Internal Wars," Gordon McCormick, Steven Horton and Lauren Harrison focus on the ending internal conflicts. Contrary to common sense, they claim that more than 80 percent of internal conflicts were resolved by force. There are three main outcomes of conflicts: a win by a state, a win by the insurgency, or an effective stalemate that constrains both sides with limited maneuver space and neither side with a

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[21] Ibid., 99,100.

[22] Ben Connable and Martin Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010), 14, 15, 18, 19.

[23] Ibid., 36.

dominant advantage over the other. They categorize win types as weak and strong, in which a strong win requires pushing an opponent to its breakpoint besides effective control over the political space, whereas the former represents pushing an opponent under the breakpoint but unable to extend its control over the political space. The main paradigm of this type conflict is its asymmetrical structure. Although the state has the power advantage, the insurgency has invisibility because of its small size. The states and insurgencies approach their breaking points in very different ways: states pass the tipping point and decline at an accelerating rate, but insurgencies, by contrast, decline at a decelerating rate (Figure 2).[24] The key for unlocking the endgame paradigm is turning the tide of information to one's advantage, and understanding that it shouldn't be expected a quick and decisive solution against terrorism cases. The terrorist organizations' breakpoints are curve shaped; it requires time, patience and resources for states to overcome this difficulty.
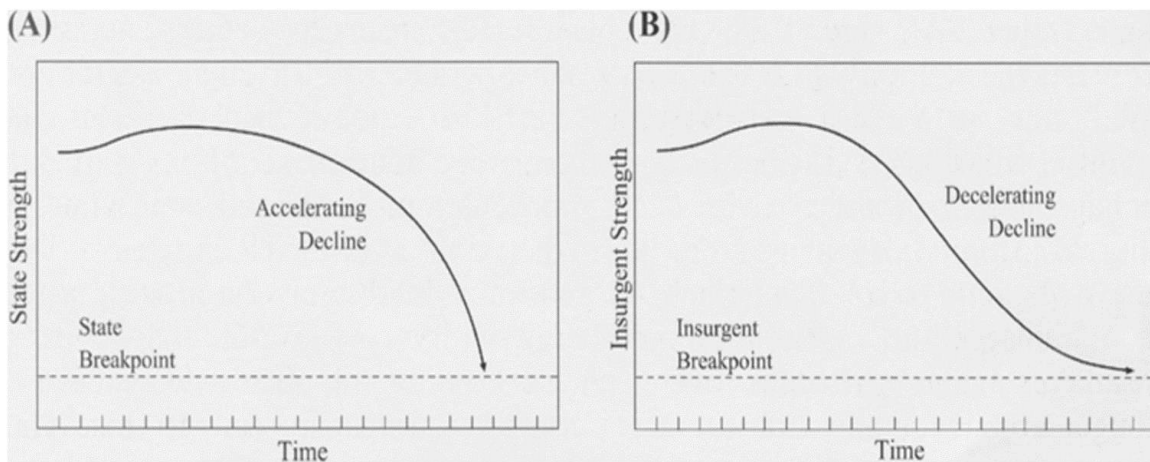
Figure 2.   Endgames for state (A) and insurgency (B).[25]

In "How Terrorist Groups End" Seth Jones and Martin Libicki claim that there are five major reasons why terrorist groups end: policing, military force,

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[24] Gordon H. McCormick, Steven B. Horton, and Lauren A. Harrison, "Things Fall Apart: The Endgame Dynamics of Internal Wars," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (March 2007): 321–327.

[25] Ibid., 327.

splintering, politics or victory. In their summary, they conclude there are two effective end ways for terrorist groups: They adopt nonviolent tactics and join the political process, or they are overcome by law enforcement agencies. According to the results of their survey of 268 cases, in 43 percent of the cases terrorists adopt nonviolent tactics and join the political process.[26] The groups using terrorism may end with politicization as a way of achieving their goals due to fact that their members view nonviolent political means as a more effective way of achieving their goals.[27] So, the connection between politicization and stalemates should be examined closely. In most of the cases the perception of the stalemate between sides may lead terrorists to engage politics, and it is proper to claim that politicization partly takes root from the stalemate.

For political solutions used by terrorist groups, Jones and Libicki point out two major facts. The narrower the terrorist organizations' goals, the more likely it is the outcome could be an agreement on a settlement; the broader their goals, the more difficult it is for terrorists to reach these aims, and they are more unlikely to seek a nonviolent resolution. As Figure 3 shows most terrorist groups end due to narrow policy goals such as policy change or regime change, whereas when they broaden their policy goals, as seen on the right of the x-axis, they are not likely to end because of politics.[28] Therefore, the narrower goals of terrorist organizations may emerge as enticing opportunities for both sides, whereas the broader goals may lead sides to costly hurting stalemates. In that context, for the PKK case, it is easier to understand why their goals started at the far right in the 1990s, but over time in the 2000s moved to the left.

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[26] Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 9–36.

[27] Ibid., 14.

[28] Ibid., 20–21.
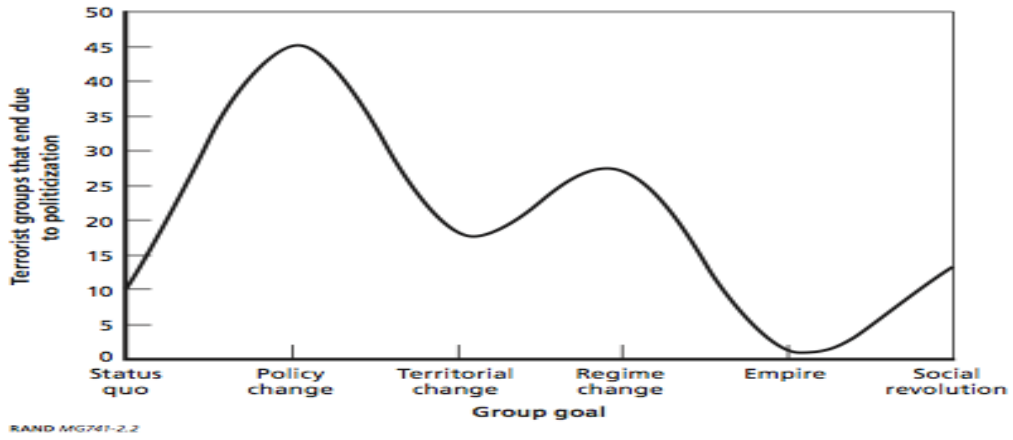
Figure 3.   Politics and Group Goals.[29]

29 Ibid., 19.

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II.   STALEMATE: THEORY AND CONDITIONS

This thesis tries to understand under which conditions and circumstances parties may feel themselves to be in stalemated situations. William Zartman's Theory of Ripeness handles this question by exploring why and when stalemates arise.[30] In the light of this original model, the writer's reinterpreted version of the Ripeness Model will be discussed as the basis for the structural argument of the PKK case.

This chapter introduces the reader to the author's reinterpretation of the Ripeness Model. First, the core elements of the original theory will be discussed through the reinterpreted model. Second, some major criticisms and counterviews about the original theory will be focused on. Third, independent variables will be explored, and finally, an expected utility approach will be examined in order to understand the logical base of the Mutually Hurting Stalemate phenomenon.

There are two main approaches to the study and practice of negotiated conflicts: one deals with the substances of the proposals for the solution part, and the other handles the timing element.[31] The focus of this thesis is timing element, and according to it sides resolve their conflict only when they are ready to do so. When the parties' unilateral strategies of achieving their expected outcomes are blocked, and they find themselves in a costly and uncomfortable situation, they are more likely to recalculate the solution proposals that were already in the air, and previously ignored.[32]

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[30] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 225.

[31] Ibid., 225.

[32] Ibid., 225.

The Theory of Ripeness addresses the timing and initiation elements of negotiations.[33] The Theory of Ripeness is also concerned with the thought processes of decision makers looking for negotiation or mediation.[34]

A.   A REINTERPRETED THEORY OF RIPENESS

The reinterpreted theory expands the original theory's framework with the addition of the Mutually Enticing Opportunities (MEOs) to the model. From a deductive perspective, the final point of the decision to negotiate[35] will be explored by illuminating the concept and preconditions of ripeness. The expanded model is depicted in Figure 4.

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[33] Ibid., 226.

[34] Dean G. Pruitt, "Whither Ripeness Theory," Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution Working Paper 25/2005 (Washington, DC: George Mason University, 2005), 1, http://scar.gmu.edu/wp_25_pruitt.pdf.

[35] It is not in the scope of this paper to argue whether negotiating with terrorist organizations (TOs) is proper. Although negotiation presents an alternative nonviolent path, and empowers the moderate doves against hardcore hawks, it may also produce negative consequences. First, engaging negotiations with TOs legitimize their causes, means, and goals. Second, it may cause other groups with similar types of grievances to engage in terrorist activities. Third, TOs are ghostly structures and states are unable to find representative agents of them with whom to come to the table. Fourth, trust is a major obstacle. Finally, most of the TOs follow nonnegotiable goals.
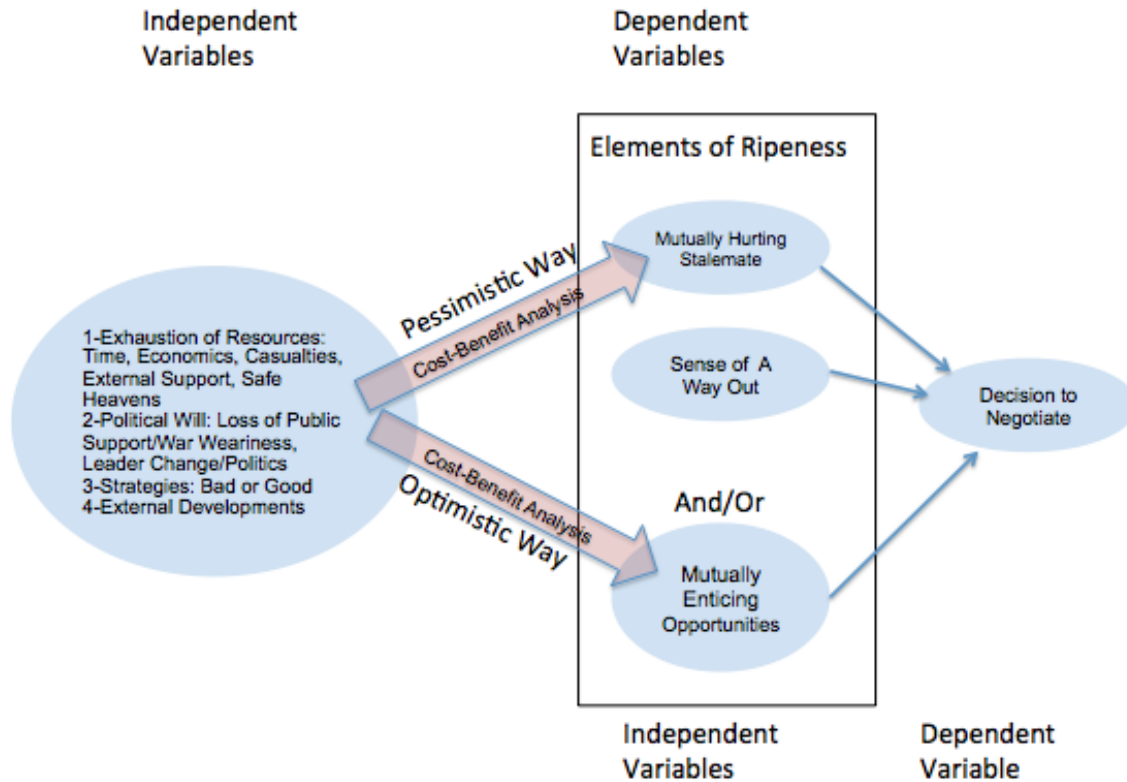
Figure 4.   The Reinterpreted Ripeness Model.[36]

In the first part of the model, the elements of ripeness, the MHS, the sense of a way out and the MEOs, are located as dependent variables, and the independent variables are the cost benefit analysis of resources, political wills, strategies and external developments. In the original model, Zartman claims persuasion and the objective elements as independent variables of a MHS.[37] In the updated model, the MEOs concept of Mitchell and Crocker[38] are imported to the model as one other way of seizing the ripe moment with or without an MHS.

In the second part, elements of ripeness function as independent variables of a negotiation decision. The MEOs can also trigger the decision to negotiate

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[36] The reinterpreted model created in the light of the original model of William Zartman with the addition of the concept of Mutually Enticing Opportunities of Mitchell and Crocker. The objective elements and persuasion factor in Zartman's original model converted to more overt variables.

[37] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 229, 230.

[38] Mitchell, "Cutting Losses," 2.

independent from the other two ripeness elements. In Zartman's original model the MEOs and the decision to negotiate are independent variables of a successful negotiation,[39] but the updated model argues that the MEOs can play a role in a decision to negotiate outcome rather than a successful negotiation. The MEOs are subject to being affected by the initial preconditions of the MHS', instead of the pessimistic judgment of the costs of the initial independent variables, actors can assess their opportunities in an optimistic fashion. Therefore, the initial independent variables, especially the political will or any other beneficial prizes both for individual and institutional levels, may generate the right conditions to lead a negotiation decision for sides as emerging MEOs.

In the reinterpreted model, the MEOs are accepted as the third variable of ripeness. According to Zartman, an MHS is a negative, "pushing" element that forces parties to take a decision to negotiate. At that point, in order to reach a more stable, more attractive and long-lasting future settlement, the MEOs may take part in the process as a "pulling" element.[40] Supporting this, Mitchell argues that extended pain cannot be the only or the best learning experience for decision makers or leaders. They may find more effective ways of learning than mutual hurting stalemates for achieving their goals.[41] That is why the MEOs can play a replacement or a reinforcing role in either the lack or the presence of an MHS as an independent variable of the final outcome of negotiating.

The MEOs' logic is based on a more optimistic approach of leaders to conflict with new options that cost less and offer more likely gains. It suggests that leaders can change their mindsets and act more creatively for better alternatives than deadlocked coercive preferences. The major rewards can be political results for future leadership, some electoral results, or expectations of a share in political power. In the case of the Basque conflict, for instance, a

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[39] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 242.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Mitchell, "Cutting Losses," 2.

decentralized shared political system became the result of a negotiation process.[42]

Ripeness is not a magical solution to resolve the conflicts. It is necessary, but not a sufficient condition for disputes to settle with a negotiated outcome.[43] By itself, ripeness is not enough for negotiations to begin. Sometimes negotiations may be a result of a tactical maneuver, a breather for rest and rearmament, a stop to external pressure, without any serious or sincere intent for negotiations.[44]

Furthermore, ripeness is a subjective phenomenon. The subjectivity or perceptions of each side can become persuasive with the objective indicators of the MHS, and the parties may feel a way out from the situation.[45] An example could be the sudden increase in the casualty numbers in the Nagorno-Karabakh War between Armenia and Azerbaijan that led both sides to ceasefire negotiations.[46]

Ripeness is only a condition and it must be obtained either by the sides or by the persuasion of a third party or mediator.[47] The mediators can position themselves in the process of turning ripe moments to negotiations by persuading sides with some specific tactics.[48]

B.   THREE CRITICISMS OF THEORY OF RIPENESS

There are three major critiques to the ripeness theory. The first one is the MEOs' concept that pain is not the only exit from a deadlocked situation; some

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[42] Ibid., 6, 7.

[43] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 227.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., 231, 232.

[46] Pruitt, "Whither Ripeness Theory," 2.

[47] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 227.

[48] Ibid., 232.

positive incentives may lead sides to recalculate their approaches to problem.[49] Zartman overcomes this problem of integrating the MEOs into his model by claiming it is a precondition of a successful negotiation.[50] By contrast, the updated model locates it as a ripeness element.

The second problem is the issue of being trapped in the conflict. Entrapment is directly the opposite of ripeness; pain or losses may trap decision makers to continue the conflict.[51] Instead of the idea to give up, both sides may justify the fight and sacrifices that have already been suffered, and hope to win in the end in order to validate previous losses.[52] Zartman accepts that kind of an approach, but he claims a major catastrophe might change the decision makers' willingness to continue to fight.[53] Norms, cultural values and beliefs may affect the society's tolerance or perception of entrapment.[54] For instance, it is sacred to resist and endure against the sanctions or the West for leaders and society in Iran.[55] Similarly, the Asian cultures have a high level of commitment to conflicts, and it is hard to seize a ripe moment for a resolution. Terrorism cases are similar; it is not easy for states to give up or negotiate with terrorists despite high levels of losses and sacrifices.

The last critique of the Theory of Ripeness is that it lacks a political dimension; that it is based heavily on the leader's decision-making process; and it neglects the internal political processes which overrides or substitutes the leader's decision making.[56] Besides leaders, the stakeholders of decision mechanisms should be taken into consideration. Both for the terrorists and

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[49] Mitchell, "Cutting Losses," 6.

[50] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 241, 242.

[51] Mitchell, "Cutting Losses," 4.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 238, 240.

[54] Ibid., 239.

[55] Morteza Dehghani et al., "Emerging Sacred Values: Iran's Nuclear Program," *in Judgment and Decision Making*, Vol 4 (7) (2009): 930–933.

[56] Pruitt, "Whither Ripeness Theory," 22.

states, some collective approaches may affect the final decision to continue or give up. The reinterpreted model aims to overcome this problem by integrating political will into the model. The stakeholders and their positioning will be discussed in the case study.

C.   INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

In this part the independent variables of ripeness will be discussed. According to the thesis, independent variables are the cost benefit analysis of resources, political wills, strategies and external developments.

1.   Strategies

There are many variables that affect the conflict management processes, and the strategies are the most significant ones. The strategies play a major role and determine the outcomes of the conflicts. The correct strategy may produce desired outcomes, whereas the wrong strategies may generate stalemates or losses. There are five different types of strategies for approaching conflicts: contending, problem solving, compromise yielding, withdrawing and inaction.[57] In terrorism cases sides generally prefer contending strategies.

Contending refers to a party's unilateral efforts to resolve the conflict by dictating its own terms no matter what the other party seeks.[58] By contrast, problem solving requires a mutual effort for identifying the disputed issues and working together towards a solution that appeals to both sides.[59] But, at initial stages of terrorism cases, it is unlikely to accept a problem solving approach from the point of either side. After a stalemate situation such an approach can be considered as an option, and a shift in strategy towards a problem solving approach may occur.

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[57] Rubin, Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 130.

[58] Ibid., 25.

[59] Ibid., 26.

Stalemates occur when contentious strategies fail.[60] At that point, other than contentious strategies, the most attractive strategy to follow is problem solving by first creating contact and communication, and second by preparing some subordinate goals that the adversaries could work on together to create a mutual understanding and trust rather than a debate.[61] That is not to say both sides should approach the conflict with a problem solving approach.

One problem is the way states handle the contending strategies. From one perspective, instead of annihilation as a goal achieved by seizing the opponent's territory and resources, destroying its military forces and ending its control over the population, states may follow exhaustion strategy that will defeat the opposition by forcing its political leadership to quit.[62] In most cases the problem with counterterrorism strategies is that they are not supported with a grand strategy built on the idea of the second approach. They aim to defeat terrorist organizations by only military means that are not supported by some other instruments of the state.

2. Resources

Resources can be economics, time, lives, external support and safe havens. Exhaustion of resources can be defined as the physical or psychological loss of energy to sustain the conflicts.[63]

First, the major cost of conflict is the financial losses parties experience. Although terrorist attacks are cheap to conduct, logistically sustaining an organization is costly and requires money. On the other hand, counterterrorism measures require huge investments.[64]

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[60] Ibid., 130–137.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Erik Claessen, *An Anatomy Of Conflicts between Democracies, Islamists, and Muslim Autocrats* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010,) 5.

[63] Rubin, Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 127.

[64] Ibid.

Second, time works on behalf of terrorists. They will be the source of the problem and the problem gets bigger and insurmountable as long as they survive. It is hard for terrorist organizations to push states to their breaking points; therefore, remaining in the struggle and protracting the conflict over time is one way of leading their struggle to a stalemated outcome. Especially for the terrorist organizations, such as the PKK, who are ethnically oriented and aiming to get some policy changes, territorial claim, or sovereignty, the best-value outcome is a stalemated situation in which a third party or mediator addition to the process may produce some concessions on their behalf in the long run.

Third, the casualties suffered on both sides show the objective pain of the struggle that may lead adversaries to recalculate the cost benefit analysis and reconsider the situation.[65]

3. External Developments

The external support, regional rivalries and developments may change the direction of unequal power and information asymmetry on behalf of either party. State sponsorship or safe heavens are the most likely form of external support for terrorists. The international support a state gains against a terrorist organization provides narrative superiority, international cooperation, and information dominance for the state and leads to isolation of the terrorist organization. On the other hand, terrorists may extend the life span and threshold of their organization by gaining sanctuaries and external support.

4. Political Will

The political will to sustain the conflicts depends on internal dynamics such as the level of public support and changes in leaders.

Political support is a major component of a conflict, and the loss of it may lead a side to abandon the conflict or revise their goals or means that are used.[66]

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[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid., 127, 128.

The loss of popular support may trigger internal political outcomes ranging from protests to electoral results. The policy makers' decisions may be shaped according to the support they get from their public. From the terrorist organizations' point of view, political support is the backbone of their struggle. Terrorist organizations are successful only if they succeed in influencing and getting their targeted audience's support.

Change in leadership itself, in some instances, also provides sides with the ability to seize a ripe moment. A new leader may abandon the predecessor's failed policies more easily, so that change costs less in political terms. He can have some space to maneuver for building his own policies, and as a newcomer to the problem he may have a deeper understanding or fresh outlook.[67] Yitzak Rabin in Israel and Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union were some examples of new leaders who made efforts to seize the moment of ripeness.[68]

Discord within the political sphere may also affect the decision mechanisms. From a state perspective a coalition government is less likely to follow a consensus. Especially in stalemated situations, more hawkish approaches might be accepted. From a terrorists' perspective the same disagreements may result in weakness and a lower level of resistance, and more frequently, in splintering.

All these preconditions are interrelated; success or failure in one affects others. The crucial point is the cost benefit analysis of the sides, which depends on whether adversaries are in MHS or MEOs frames.

D.   AN EXPECTED UTILITY APPROACH TO STALEMATES

Terrorist organizations act rationally no matter how irrational terrorism might seem at first. Leaders, for both sides, calculate the expected utilities for their outcomes. The essence of the expected utility approach is to calculate the

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[67] Pruitt "Whither Ripeness Theory," 5.

[68] Ibid.

costs and benefits of some available options and their probabilities, and finally reach an optimal course of action according to these calculations.[69] Therefore, in a stalemated situation, costs may cause the abandonment of existing policies, or benefits may lose their attraction. The expected utility may be redefined with the addition of the costs and benefits that have already been experienced to the equation as current benefits and costs. This calculation of benefits and costs is represented by the following models (where B1 and B3 are current benefits; C1 and C3 are current costs; B2, B4 and C2, C4 are future benefits and costs, p2: probability of state benefit to happen and 0<p2<1, and p4: probability of terrorists benefit to happen and 0<p4<1).

EU (State)=(B1-C1)+(p2*B2-[1-p2]*C2)

EU (Terrorist Organization)=(B3-C3)+(p4*B4-[1-p4]*C4)

Current benefits and costs (B1, C1 for the state, and B3, C3 for the terrorist organization) at the time affect the future expectations in two ways.

In the first condition, if the current cost-benefit analysis is negative (B1-C1<0 or B3-C3<0 the first parts of the models), the parties are in the losing frame;[70] and (a) it may cause parties to commit themselves more to cause, but (b) if the losing portion is big in scale, both sides may start reevaluating the situation and go for a reconciliation strategy. The former case is called an entrapment, or a true believer problem, in which the pain or the losses already suffered justify and push the sides to commit even more.[71] It may be also considered a problem within Zartman's model. He explains this problem with his first proposition that ripeness is necessary but not a sufficient condition by itself for negotiations to begin. Therefore, in such conditions sometimes an MHS

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[69] Christopher Mitchell, "Ending Conflicts and Wars: Judgment, Rationality and Entrapment," *International Social Science Journal* 43 (February 1991): 38.

[70] Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," *Econometrica,* 47(2) (March 1979): 288.

[71] Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," 238, 240.

makes opening negotiations more difficult.[72] In the latter situation parties may start to perceive a stalemate. If the current cost-benefit analysis is more negative, then the second part, the marginal cost benefit analysis, comes into evaluation in the equation. The possibilities of future costs and benefits (C2, C4 and B2, B4), which we may call marginal values, may generate a positive mood so that both sides may continue to follow their policies. If the marginal part is also negative in the minds of both sides, then both sides are more likely to feel a stalemate and to abandon the current policies.

In the second condition, if the current cost-benefit analysis is positive (B1-C1>0 or B3-C3>0), the parties are in the winning frame.[73] They will be more likely to follow their current policies in the case that the marginal part seems positive to both sides. They may increase their endeavors to win the struggle. On the other hand, if they expect a negative future outcome they can either continue or change their means and goals according to their private information and the signals they receive from the other side.

It is useful to evaluate how parties may end up in a stalemate in this simple expected utility model. Arguably, terrorism cases present pure zero sum games and that states' losses are terrorist organizations' gains or vice versa. Therefore, the likelihood of a stalemate is hard to reach and paradoxical. This is why both sides' perceptual perspectives differ and ripeness is a subjective phenomenon that is often hard to realize.

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[72] Ibid., 238.

[73] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory," 288.

III.   THE TURKISH-PKK CONFLICT AND ITS COMPONENTS

A.   HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT

In the last few decades, instead of focusing on a broader international agenda, Turkey has used much of its resources to overcome a separatist terrorist organization, the PKK.[74]

The PKK, established in 1978, started its armed campaign in 1984.[75] Even though the PKK tries to position itself as the sole representative of the Kurds and claims itself as a guerrilla organization, it lacks the Kurdish public's support.[76] Around 40,000 people, officials and civilians, lost their lives. According to a government report the direct overall cost of PKK's terror in Turkey is around 300 billion dollars, whereas indirect cost is estimated around one trillion dollars.[77] It is designated as a terrorist organization by not only Turkey, but also the U.S. and EU.[78] It specializes in bloody financing methods and operates as a criminal transnational organization on a broad scale from human smuggling to drug trafficking.[79] Throughout its history, it enjoyed the support of state sponsorship and safe havens that local power vacuums provided.

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[74] Henry J. Barker, "Turkey's Kurdish Dilemma," *Survival: Global Politics And Strategy* 35, no. 4 (2008), 60.

[75] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," *IHS Jane's,* Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism (February 26, 2014), 1–36. https://janes.ihs.com/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=Reference&ItemId=+++1320763&Pubabbrev=JWIT,

[76] Durna Tuncay, Ferhat Goktepe, and Debora G. Keeling, "PKK Terrorism in Turkey: History Ideology, Structure and Strategy," in *The PKK: A Decades-Old Brutal Marxist-Leninist Separatist Terrorist Organization,* ed. Samih Teymur and Cindy J. Smith (Washington, DC: The Turkish Institute for Security and Democracy, 2008), 30.

[77] The Justice and Development Party, "Sorulari ve Cevaplariyla Demokratik Acilim Sureci: Milli Birlik ve Kardeslik Sureci," [Questions and Answers to Democratic Opening Process: National Unity and Brotherhood Process] *Akparti* 28, 56, 61, January 2010, www.akparti.org.tr/upload/documents/acilim220110.pdf

[78] Audrey K. Cronin, Huda Aden, Adam Frost, and Benjamin Jones, *Foreign Terrorist Organizations,* Congressional Research Service, February 6, 2004, www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL32223.pdf.

[79] Murat Sever and Mitchel P. Roth, "Convergence of Terrorism and Organized Crime: The Case of PKK," i*n The PKK Financial Sources, Social and Political Dimensions,* ed. Charles Strozier and James Frank (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr Müller, 2011), 130.

First, the scale of the threat should be examined. The PKK must be named as a global threat rather than a local problem of Turkey. Although it is internationally accepted as a terrorist organization, the cooperation level against it is arguably low. Figure 5 is a depiction of the terrorist organizations on a periodic table by Navanti Group, and it provides a better understanding of the scope and level at which they function. The chart presents information about the acronyms, sizes, locations, ages, activity levels and attacks of terrorist organizations. The PKK, from whatever perspective one evaluates this chart, with its huge number of attacks and members, is in the list of the top five terrorist organizations.
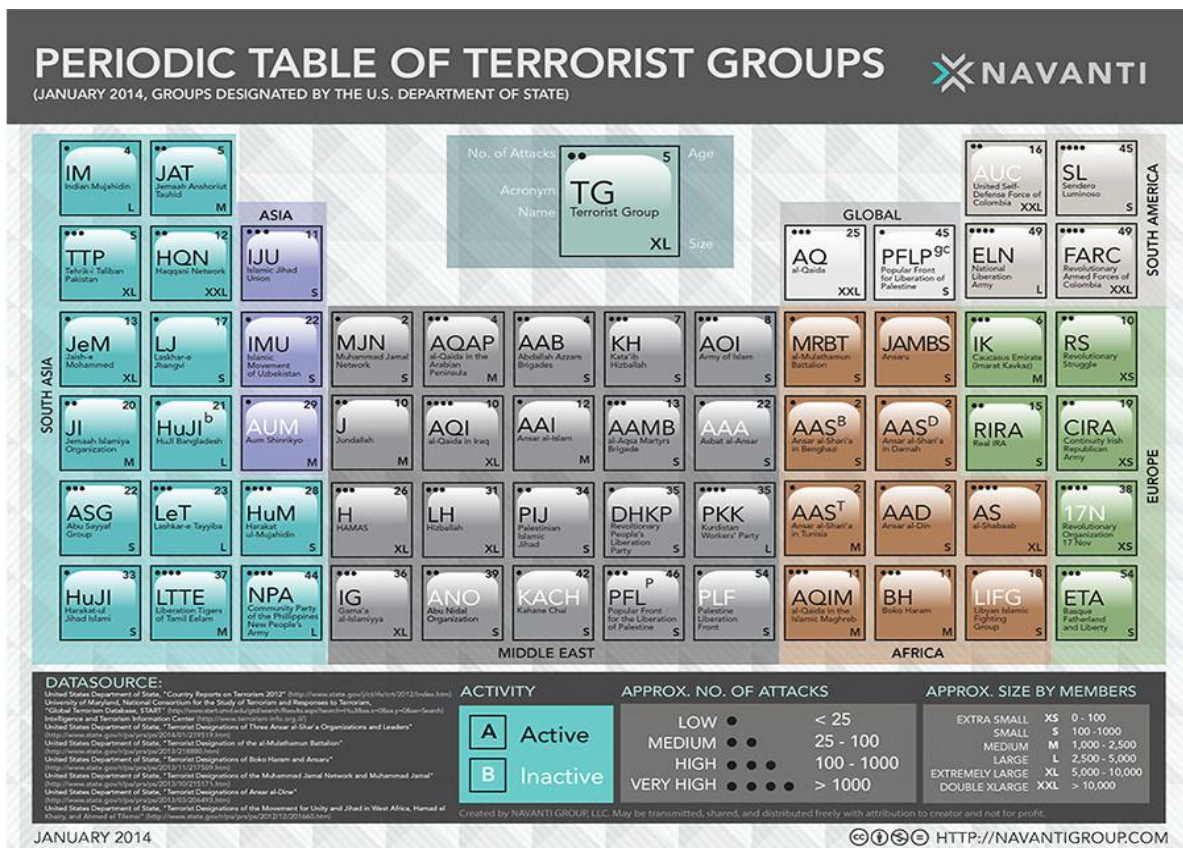
Figure 5.   The Periodic Table of Terrorist Groups.[80]

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[80] "Periodic Table of Terrorist Organizations," Navanti Group, January 2014, http://navantigroup.com/content/periodic-table-terrorist-organizations.

Second, there are issues that the southeastern part of Turkey has faced for years, such as social, economic, and security problems. The PKK is one of the major reasons and sources of these problems. Every step the state takes for solving these problems has been subject to sabotage and disruption by the PKK.[81] For example, they killed teachers and clerics, set fire to construction machines and schools, kidnapped workers and threatened businessmen, and damaged health centers, electricity lines, post offices and bridges.[82] State investments to the southeastern part of the country have been consistently higher than the revenues gathered from there,[83] no matter how the PKK tries to corrode those efforts.

In the current situation, approximately 25 percent of the deputies in the Turkish National Assembly are of Kurdish origin,[84] and it is a good representation when compared with an estimated 15 to 20 percent Kurdish population in Turkey.[85] By law everyone is equal before the state, and any kind of ethnically-oriented separatist thoughts are forbidden. The Turkish citizenship described by the constitution is the bonding element of the country. A new constitution is in progress, and there will be additional reforms on cultural and social issues in it.

Turkey has such a strong democracy that there are some PKK-affiliated deputies of Kurdish origin who do not condemn the PKK's bloody attacks or call the PKK terrorists, but rather warriors and freedom fighters.[86] These deputies use their freedom of speech at the highest level in the National Assembly.

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[81] Andrew Mango, *Turkey and The War On Terror: For Forty Years We Fought Alone* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 39.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] "Meclis'te Kac Kurt Milletvekili Var?" [How Many Deputies of Kurdish Origin Are There in The Assembly?] *Internethaber,* January 31, 2010, http://www.internethaber.com/mecliste-kac-kurt-milletvekili-var-230866h.htm.

[85] "Turkey: Ending The PKK Insurgency," *International Crisis Group Europe* Report *N°213 (*September 20, 2011): 1, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/213%20Turkey%20-%20Ending%20the%20PKK%20Insurgency.pdf.

[86]"BDP'liler Suc Makinasi Gibi," [The BDP Members Act as Criminals,] *Bugun,* August 25, 2012, http://gundem.bugun.com.tr/bdpliler-suc-makinesi-gibi-haberi/203080.

Moreover, the steps and reforms that have been taken to qualify for EU membership are well beyond expectations, although the reform effort has lost its pace in recent years.

The aim of the PKK terrorist organization was originally to establish a Marxist-Leninist independent Kurdish state by using Maoist guerrilla warfare tactics.[87] However, it could not find many communists in the tribal God-fearing Kurdish community. Over time, PKK has modified its aims and strategies according to the needs of each period's internal and external dynamics. Rather than following an ideological Marxist-Leninist path to survive, especially after the fall of Soviet regime, the PKK focused on the religious and ethnic sentiments of its target population.[88] Their main grievance was their perceived threat to Kurdish identity.[89] Their updated goals ranged from the release or home arrest of their imprisoned leader, Abdullah Ocalan,[90] to cultural and political rights in a separate state or a federative structure for Kurds.[91]

On the other hand, the counter narrative of Turkey is that the integrity and the unitary structure of the state cannot be jeopardized under any circumstances.[92] The PKK is a separatist terrorist organization, and it does not represent the Kurdish community in Turkey. The goal is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of PKK's members.[93]

The majority of the Kurds in Turkey want to move toward a more modern and democratic Turkey, and they want to turn to the West in Turkey's unity, not

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[87] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 2.

[88] Ibid..

[89] Ibid.

[90] Durna, Goktepe and Keeling, "History Ideology, Structure and Strategy," 30.

[91] Nimet Beriker Atiyas, "The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Issues, Parties and Prospects," *Security Dialogue* 28, no. 4 (1997): 439.

[92] Ibid., 442.

[93] Duygu Guvenc, "Hedef: DDR," [Target: Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration,] *Sabah,* January 6, 2013, http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2013/01/06/hedef-ddr.

the East, or the bloodshed that the Middle East offers.[94] They are well aware of the separatist threat PKK poses for the country, and they remember the bloody history of the PKK. Approximately half of the Turkish Kurds are living in the southeastern part of the country; the other half live dispersed and blended within the society on the western side of the country.[95] One major obstacle in front of the PKK's unlikely goal of an independent state is the integration of the Turkish Kurds into society countrywide.

During the initial stages of their armed campaign, the PKK killed many Kurds in the southeastern part of Turkey in order to establish their presence; it also eliminated rival Kurdish structures by coercive and violent means.[96] At the same time, the PKK enjoyed support from Turkey's neighboring states' such as Greece, Syria, and Iran.[97] PKK played the roles the regional rivals of Turkey wanted them to fulfill. Therefore, Turkey's relations with its neighbors are mainly based on the support that they provide to the PKK.

Similar to its diverse source of support, PKK has a heterogeneous organizational structure; it has recruits not only from the Kurdish communities of Turkey but also Syria, Iraq, Iran and Europe.[98] This international dimension makes the problem's resolution more complicated.

PKK's history can be evaluated in two major parts; the first phase starts with its armed attacks in the 1980s and ends with the capture of its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, in 1999. In the first phase, the PKK established its organizational capacity and started its armed campaign. In the 1990s, its violence reached its peak, and counterterrorism efforts ended this phase with the capture of Abdullah Ocalan in 1999. There was a nonviolent period between

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[94] "Turkey: Ending The PKK Insurgency," 2.

[95] Hugh Pope, "Turkey and Democratic Opening for Kurds," in *Understanding Turkey's Kurdish Question,* ed. Fevzi Bilgin and Ali Sarihan (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2013), 117.

[96] Durna Goktepe and Keeling, "History Ideology, Structure and Strategy," 22.

[97] Audrey et al., *Foreign Terrorist Organizations*, 54.

[98] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 13, 14.

1999 and 2004. The second stage started in 2004, and it has continued until now. Especially in the 1990s and 2000s there were some turning points that could be considered as stalemates which will be discussed later.

B.   STAKEHOLDERS OF THE PKK PROBLEM

For the PKK case, one important element that should be taken into consideration is the stakeholders and decision-making mechanisms involved in the problem. All stakeholders' approaches to the PKK problem determine the power balance in the equation. The cost-benefit analysis of the strategies, resources, political will and external developments are under the influence of these actors' actions and intentions. Therefore, a perceived stalemate could be a consequence of these actors' dynamic relations. For instance, as long as the external support and the safe havens exist the PKK's life span is likely to be extended. These political actors can be considered on three levels: the institutions, the individuals who lead those institutions, and the external parties. Institutional change in policies is hard to bring about, but changing individuals in power over time may produce shifts in approaches.

1.   National Security Council (MGK)

The NSC (MGK) is the highest-level decision making mechanism of the Turkish State. National policies concerning both regional and global challenges and opportunities are subject to discussion and responses considered by the Council. Under the chairmanship of the President, the Council includes the Prime Minister, the Commander of the Turkish Armed Forces, Deputy Prime Ministers, the Ministers of Justice, National Defense, the Interior and Foreign Affairs, the Commanders of the Land, Naval and Air Forces and the General Commander of the Gendarmerie. According to the agenda, concerned ministers and individuals can also be invited to the meetings of the Council for consultations.[99]

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[99] "About The National Security Council," *Milli Guvenlik Kurulu,* accessed March 30, 2014, http://www.mgk.gov.tr/en/index.php/national-security-council/about-the-national-security-council.

2. Turkish Armed Forces (TAF)

The TAF is one of the biggest armies in the world with its 623,351 personnel.[100] It is one of the main components of the decision-making mechanism of the Turkish State. Historically, military leaders are major actors in state decisions. They play critical roles in developing civil leaders' decisions regarding security-related problems. TAF is the major force for conducting counterterrorism efforts of the state. The idea of dialogue or negotiation with terrorists goes against the *raison d'etre* of the TAF.[101] The military's focus is more on building a grand strategy to overcome the PKK threat that is supported not only by the security but also the social and economic dimensions.

3. National Intelligence Agency (MIT)

The MIT is the information and intelligence domain of the state, and it also provides back channel communications. Some covert contacts were made with the PKK and Abdullah Ocalan by means of the MIT in 2000s. The MIT played the representative role of the state in discussions with the PKK's actors. Respectively, first Emre Taner and later Hakan Fidan took part in the negotiations with PKK as the head of MIT.[102]

4. Presidency

Although the presidency is the head of the state, the position is more symbolic than functional in the decision process. Due to fact that presidents are generally nominated by major political parties, and elected especially with the ruling party's support, they are not likely to contradict with governing party policies.

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[100] "TSK'da Kac Personel Calisiyor?" [How Many Personnel Do Work In The TAF?] *Sabah,* April 1, 2014, http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2014/04/01/tskda-kac-personel-calisiyor.

[101] Atiyas, "The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Issues, Parties and Prospects," 442.

[102] Cengiz Candar, *Dagdan Inis-PKK Nasil Silah Birakir?* [Leaving The Mountain-How Does PKK's Disarmament Take Place?] (Istanbul: Artpress, 2011), 58. http://www.tesev.org.tr/assets/publications/file/11452%20SilahsizlandirmaWEB.pdf.

5.   Ruling Parties

Ruling parties' roles depend on the power they hold in the Parliament. Especially in the 1990s, coalition governments were power-sharing structures that mainly followed the military's guidance for approaching the PKK problem. But since 2002, the Justice and Democracy Party (AKP) has held control of the government. In that 12-year period until now, it has won three general and three local elections and two constitutional referendums by highly increased margins. In the last local elections AKP took 45 percent of the votes.[103] Therefore, for policy building the AKP has the self-sufficient public support and chairs in the assembly. The leader of the party is Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the party owes its reputation to him. There is a huge capacity for AKP and its leader, Erdogan, for approaching the PKK problem from any perspective to use hard or soft means.

6.   Opposing Parties

In Turkey, within the context of PKK terrorism, other than the PKK-linked Kurdish party, all parties traditionally agree that military means offer the best way to handle the PKK problem.[104] Negotiating with terrorists is heavily criticized. One major promise of the opposing parties to their voters during elections is terminating the terrorism threat.

7.   Media

The media plays a critical role for shaping public opinion on disputed issues. It can be a useful tool for leading people in desired directions. The media can be arguably manipulative on behalf of or against an issue. Since stalemate is a perceived reality, the media can play a role in creating the public perception of a stalemate towards a negotiation process. The media in Turkey could be considered of in three broad categories: published media, the visual media, and

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[103]The Justice And Development Party, "1 Nisan 2014 Basin Raporu," [April 1, 2014, Press Report,] *Akparti,* April 1, 2014, http://www.akparti.org.tr/site/basin-raporlari/tarih/2014-04-01.

[104] Atiyas, "The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Issues, Parties and Prospects," 444, 445.

the Internet and interactive social media. The second and third types of media are the most influential ones. The easiest way to reach people is visual media since every house has a television. Internet usage in Turkey is also increasing and can be important platform for creating public opinion.

8.   Kurdish Political Parties

Since 1991, Kurds in Turkey have taken part in political life with ethnicity-based agendas, and they could not have successfully integrated themselves into politics independently from the PKK. Ocalan spoke out in support of those parties, since they were acting as the mouth of the PKK in the Parliament. Respectively the Kurdish People's Labor Party (HEP), Democracy Party (DEP), People's Democracy Party (HADEP), Democratic People Party (DEHAP) and Democratic Society Party (DTP) were all banned for the same reasons: violating the constitution and the law on the political parties, having links with the PKK, and following separatist agendas.[105] The current Kurdish party is the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) and it is still operating in the National Assembly, though it is on the same pathway as its predecessors.

9.   Abdullah Ocalan

Ocalan is the founder and undisputable head of the organization. Even though he has been the symbol of Kurdish nationalism to PKK supporters, he is the son of a Kurdish father, but a Turkish mother. His main language (*mother tongue*) is Turkish and he is reported to have only a rudimentary command of Kurdish.[106] There is no collective decision making for Ocalan's PKK. Even though he has been imprisoned on Imrali Island since 1999, he is still the major actor and decision maker of the PKK. In the history of the terrorist organization, he eliminated anyone he considered a rival to himself.[107] After 15 years of

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[105] Zuhal Ay Hamdan, *A Critical Analysis of Turkey's Fight against PKK* (Saarbrucken: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011), 38.

[106] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 16.

[107] Nur Bilge Criss, "The Nature of PKK Terrorism in Turkey," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 18, no.1 (1995):19, doi: 10.1080/10576109508435965.

imprisonment, though, his leadership of the PKK has not been replaced; however, it can be claimed that the 1990s' and 2000s' Ocalan differs in mentality and style. Since a change in his jail conditions or a home arrest has created as an enticing opportunity, Ocalan is more moderate about a negotiation and ending armed campaign.

Other than Ocalan, Murat Karayilan, Cemil Bayik, Duran Kalkan and Adem Uzun are the influential actors for the PKK in their Kandil headquarters.[108] Remzi Kartal and Sabri Ok are important European front actors.[109] Especially after Ocalan, Karayilan has led the PKK as an operational head. In 2013, Bayik became the new second man behind Ocalan. Bayik is from the hawkish wing of the PKK and is speculated to have close links with Iran.[110] This change could be read as a message of Ocalan to the latest negotiation process to deliver more concrete results.

10.　Kurdistan Democratic Confederation (KCK, Koma Ciwaken Kurdistan)

The KCK was a new organizational format for the PKK. It is a social agreement that arose in 2005 when Abdullah Ocalan ordered his lawyers to develop for the PKK an alternative confederative umbrella system to the existing Turkish state.[111] It was also a call for the other regions' Kurds, respectively in Iraq, Syria, and Iran, to meet in a confederative system.[112] It was first introduced to PKK's sympathizers in the Nevrouz of 2005 as the Kurdistan Democratic Confederalism (KKK, Koma Komalen Kurdistan), but later its name changed to

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[108] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 19, 20.

[109] Ibid., 20.

[110] Cengiz Candar, "PKK'da Degisiklik: Nasil Okunmali, Ne Anlasilmali?" [Change in PKK: How to Read, How to Understand?] *Radikal,* July 11, 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/cengiz_candar/pkkda_degisiklik_nasil_okunmali_ne_anlasilmali -1141293.

[111] Yildirim Necati, Ekrem Suzer and Firat Celik, "Kurdistan Democratic Confederation," *The PKK: Financial Sources, Social and Political Dimensions,* eds. Charles Strozier and James Frank (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr Müller, 2011), 39, 44.

[112] Ibid., 44.

KCK.[113] KCK consists of leadership (Ocalan), a legislative branch (KONGRA-GEL, Kurdistan People's Congress), an executive organ (KCK Executive Council), and committees (such as those on education, health, science, culture, economy, ecology etc.)[114] The operations that started in April 2009 against KCK disrupted the PKK's urban structure and put the organization in a difficult situation.[115]

11.   Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs)

The NGOs in Turkey are generally connected with Kurdish issues and act like front organizations of the PKK. Human rights organizations, especially, strongly connected to the PKK. Most of the more than 600 NGOs' individuals and associations gathered under the banner of the Democratic People Congress (DTK) in 2008.[116] "It is led by BDP politicians and backs some KCK policies, often holds its meetings in BDP buildings and is influenced by PKK."[117]

On the other hand, some economic NGOs such as the Turkish Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD) and Muslim Businessmen's Association (MUSIAD) played crucial roles economically in the development of the southeast part of Turkey throughout history. But their attempts, though supported by the state's incentives, could not produce the desired outcomes due to the PKK's coercive tactics against entrepreneurs in the region.[118]

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[113] Ibid., 39.

[114] Ibid., 39, 40.

[115] Ahmet Donmez, "KCK Operasyonlari 30 Yillik Mucadelenin En Onemli Hamlesi," [The KCK Operations Are The Most Crucial Steps Of Three Decades Struggle,] *Zaman,* November 1, 2011, http://www.zaman.com.tr/politika_kck-operasyonlari-30-yillik-mucadelenin-en-onemli-hamlesi_1199405.html

[116] "Turkey: Ending The PKK Insurgency," 2, 29.

[117] Ibid.,29.

[118] Atiyas, "The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Issues, Parties and Prospects," 445.

12. Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)

Barzani and Talabani led two major parties of the Northern Iraq Kurdish Administration, the KDP and PUK historically became the major stakeholders of the PKK problem. Although they claim not to support directly the PKK, even their inaction has given passive support to the PKK and provided vast maneuvering space in Northern Iraq. Although PUK/KDP have different agendas and have had some friction between them, dealing with the PKK problem is not a priority for them. Instead, increasing economic relations with Turkey is important and makes them part of the PKK issue.

During the 1990s, Turkey feared that Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) autonomous structure would increase separatists' thoughts in Turkey. However, in the 2000s, that fear of an independent Kurdish structure in Northern Iraq went unrealized in the face of increasing energy-based cooperation. Approximately 1,023 Turkish firms operate in KRG's territory, and Turkey and the KRG agreed to build one gas and two oil pipelines that would bypass the Baghdad-controlled Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline in May 2012.[119] That increased cooperation and created mutually enticing opportunities that changed the position of KRG, and it can indirectly push the PKK to quit its armed campaign.

13. The European Union (EU) and the United States (U.S.)

As described previously, the two actors recognize the PKK as a terrorist organization. Since Turkey is following the EU membership process, especially after the 1999 Helsinki Summit in which Turkey's full membership period started, the PKK problem has always been an obstacle in front of Turkey.[120] The EU focuses on the human right issues related to the Kurds and also the conduct of counterterrorism strategies in Turkey, but the terrorism produced by the PKK and

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[119] Emanuella Pergolizzi, "An Uncertain Road to Peace: Domestic and Regional Challenges In the Turkish-Kurdish Process," *Istituto Affari Internazionali Working Papers* 13, no. 18 (June 2013):8.

[120] Gunes Murat Tezcur, "When Democratization Radicalizes: The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no.6 (2010):778.

the expanded rights for the Kurds should not be mixed with and evaluated on the same grounds. The cultural and social precautions are considered as necessary steps for Turkey to take not only for the Kurdish community but also everybody in Turkey. Between 1999 and 2004, eight major constitutional amendments were enacted by Turkish government.[121]

> These reform packages abolished the death penalty; liberalized the political parties, press, and associations laws; improved imprisonment and custody regulations; facilitated broadcasting and education in languages other than Turkish (i.e., Kurdish); recognized the legal standing of the European Court of Human Rights; increased civilian control over the military; reduced the scope of the military courts; abolished the State Security Courts; extended greater rights to non-Muslim minorities; and revoked a highly restrictive sentence of the Anti-Terror Law. Given all these developments, Freedom House assigned Turkey a score of 3 for both political rights and civil liberties in 2004 (on a scale of 1 to 7; 1 being most democratic). Turkey's score had been 4 for political rights and 5 for civil liberties in 1999.[122]

The pace of reform had diminished by the time the PKK renewed its campaign of violence after 2004. The EU stands as an opportunity for Turkey's long-lived dreams of being a member. It can play a role as long as it provides the right and fair judgments from Turkey's point of approaching PKK terror. Leaving aside the PKK, Turkey has the capability and desire to protect and expand its Turkish Kurds' living standards.

In the U.S.-Turkey context, Turkey is one of the major strategic partners of U.S. in the region. Even though in some periods there were some policy differences and some high tensions, they are historical partners. It can be argued that Turkey's importance for the U.S. diminished by the end of Cold War, but new developments in the Middle East have proved the geographic importance of Turkey.[123]

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[121] Ibid., 778.

[122] Ibid., 778, 779.

[123] Stephen Larrabee, *Turkey as a U.S. Security Partner (*Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2008), 1.

The U.S.-led War on Terror has had some crucial consequences for the definition of the PKK case. The PKK was internationally recognized as a terrorist organization. But the First Gulf War and the Iraq War created a safe haven for the PKK in the Northern Iraq. The U.S. search for stability in Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein provided an historic opportunity for Iraqi Kurds to reach a semiautonomous structure on the road to an independent state.

From another perspective, the PKK's terrorism is a great opportunity for the U.S. to show that the war on terrorism is not a war on Islam. In recent years, there is an increased anti-Americanism in Turkey,[124] so support in Turkey's struggle with the PKK might be one way of building trust, showing sincerity and increasing cooperation in the eyes of the Turkish people. The model of democracy and a strong partnership that the U.S. seeks in the region could be assured by the solid example of Turkey, but first the terrorism threat must be eliminated. Temporary cooperation is subject to an increased anti-Americanism since temporal actions not likely to produce permanent results. Therefore, cooperation towards a permanent solution might improve the U.S.' image in Turkey. [125]

14. Syria/Iran

Syria and Iran both have a significant Kurdish population. Although they consider the idea of an independent Kurdish state a threat to their own sovereignties, historically they have supported the PKK. PKK has long enjoyed state sponsorship by these countries.

Syria was the first state to support the PKK on its soil. The PKK exploited the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley in Lebanon for a long time. The initial growth of this terrorist organization had its roots in Syrian soil at the beginning of the

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[124] Ibid., ix.

[125] Ibid., 9.

1980s.[126] Syria used the PKK issue as a bargaining chip against Turkey until 1998 for its water problems related to the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and its historical Hatay province[127] wishes.[128]

In the beginning of the 2000s relations normalized between the two until the Arab Spring reached Syria. Turkey positioned itself against the Assad regime's oppressive attacks on its people. The turmoil in Syria created a new opportunity for Syrian Kurds in 2011, and clashes increased in 2013 when a so-called unilateral PKK ceasefire was announced. There is no doubt PKK members joined the fighting in Syria.[129] From that perspective, the timing of that so-called unilateral ceasefire is illusive.

Historically, Turkey and Iran are geographic rivals. The 1979 Revolution in Iran presents a counter narrative for not only Turkey's secular model, but also the Sunni countries' interpretation of Islam. That is why the two non-Arab countries differ in their ideological and religious standpoints. The regional rivalry between the two countries was reshaped after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and the new AKP government increased its political, security and economic relations with Iran.[130] Trade increased from $1 billion to $10 billion between 2000 and 2010, and it is projected to increase to $30 billion.[131] The major area of trade is energy; after Russia, Iran is the second major provider of natural gas to Turkey, and 40 percent of crude oil import comes from Iran.[132]

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[126] Criss, "The Nature of PKK Terrorism in Turkey," 19.

[127] Hatay province joined Turkey in 1939 after its Assembly's decision, and Syria for a long time claimed Hatay province as its own soil, and dreamed to take it back.

[128] Mango, *Turkey and The War On Terror*, 35, 36.

[129] Pergolizzi, "An Uncertain Road to Peace," 7.

[130] Stephen Larrabee and Alireza Nader, *Turkish-Iranian Relations in A Changing Middle East (*Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2013), 2.

[131] Ibid., 31.

[132] Ibid.

The Kurdish issue is one of the concerns the two countries share. Iran had supported the PKK until the PKK affiliate the Free Life and Party of Kurdistan (PJAK) started to operate on Iranian soil.[133] After the PJAK threat, Turkey and Iran cooperated for a while. In the summer of 2010 the two increased intelligence sharing and cooperation about border security against the PKK, but those developments were cut back since the end of 2011.[134] The domino effect of the Arab Spring fueled the race between Turkey and Iran over the control of the political space in Syria, and put them on different sides of the problem. In the current situation, Iran prefers the PKK to be a continued problem for Turkey due to their regional rivalry.[135] The sudden and unexpected increase in the attacks of PKK in 2012, especially in the Semdinli District, could be explained by the deteriorated relations between Iran and Turkey after the Syrian unrest.[136]

Turkey opposes a nuclear Iran, which might lead to an arms race and instability in the region, but it also objects to the idea of a military intervention against Iran due to past economic experiences of similar interventions in Iraq.[137] Therefore, Turkey might play a mediator role between Iran and the West.

All these countries have sought a stable status quo for the sake of regional balance and territorial integrity after the Gulf War[138] and the Iraq War[139] Iran, Syria, and Turkey had bilateral meetings about future possibilities for cooperation against the threat of an independent Kurdish political entity in the

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133 Ali Sarihan, "The Two Periods of The PKK Conflict: 1984–1999 and 2004–2010," in *Understanding Turkey's Kurdish Question,* eds. Fevzi Bilgin and Ali Sarihan (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2013), 96.

134 Larrabee and Nader, *Turkish-Iranian Relations in A Changing Middle East*, 11.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 Ibid., 27, 28.

138 Mahmut Bali Aykan, "Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991–95," *Middle Eastern Studies* 32, no. 4 (October 1996): 357.

139 Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shifrinson, "The Kurds and Regional Security: An Evaluation of Developments Since The Iraq War," *Middle East Brief* 14 (2006): 4.

area.[140] But the recent developments have caused them to focus on their own priorities. Iran and Syria are allied in favor of Assad's regime; by contrast, Turkey backs the opposition.[141] Violence is not likely to de-escalate for the near future, and Syria is already another example of a conflict area bringing on swarming terrorist organizations and instability to the region.

C.   FIRST PHASE: THE 1984–1999 PERIOD

Just before the military coup took place in Turkey in 1980, first Abdullah Ocalan, then his followers escaped to Syria.[142] They increased the PKK's organizational capacity in a short time, and made their first armed attacks simultaneously in the Semdinli and Eruh districts in 1984.[143]

In the first years of its armed campaign, the PKK's strategy focused on intimidating the local people and establishing its authority in the southeastern parts of the country.[144] In some geographically remote mountainous areas, especially those close to the border, the PKK forced people to support them with logistics, and killed whoever countered them.[145] Ocalan's tactic was a copy of Castro's guerrilla warfare tactics; as Castro descended from Sierra Maestra to capture Havana in Cuba, Ocalan started by placing his armed men in the high mountains of the southeast and establishing his authority.[146] They kidnapped children under the name of mandatory service to the organization. Some people started to escape from these fight zones and migrated to the west side of Turkey.

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[140] Ibid., 4.

[141] Larrabee and Nader, *Turkish-Iranian Relations in A Changing Middle East*, 9,10.

[142] Durna, Goktepe and Keeling, "History Ideology, Structure and Strategy," 20.

[143] Cakar Bekir, Mahmut Cengiz and Fatih Tombul, "The History Of The PKK," *The PKK: Financial Sources, Social and Political Dimensions,* eds. Charles Strozier and James Frank (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr Müller, 2011), 12.

[144] Ibid., 12.

[145]Durna, Goktepe and Keeling, "History Ideology, Structure and Strategy," 22.

[146] Mango, *Turkey and The War On Terror*, 37.

Those coercive tactics were alienating people from the organization rather than intimidating them into joining.[147]

The state, in response to the PKK's coercive tactics, enabled locals to protect themselves and established a Village Guards System (VGS) in 1985. For years these locals fought against the PKK shoulder-to-shoulder with the military forces.[148] The VGS showed the logical fallacy of the narrative of the PKK who claimed themselves as guerrilla fighters. That is why, even today, one of the PKK's priorities is the abolishment of the VGS.[149] As a result of the PKK's violence against village guards, the number of village guards, doubled from 16,000 in 1989 to 32,000 in 1993.[150]

The state also declared the state of emergency (OHAL) in the southeastern side of the country in 1987. The increased powers of regional governors by OHAL aimed to combat the PKK more effectively and cut the supplies to the PKK.[151] As a consequence some 3428 villages and hamlets were evacuated.[152] Most of the hamlets were comprised of three to five houses sheltering 30 to 40 family members.[153] In return, the PKK and its affiliates used these evacuations as propaganda and a disinformation campaign on human rights violations. Many of those people who had to evacuate their villages were later compensated by the state. In 2004, Turkey passed a law for Turkish Kurds who were displaced and victims of terrorism to be compensated for their losses.

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[147] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 10.

[148] Durna, Goktepe and Keeling, "History Ideology, Structure and Strategy," 21.

[149] "Turkey: Ending the PKK Insurgency," 23.

[150] Cakar, Cengiz, Tombul, "The History of The PKK," 12.

[151] Sarihan, "The Two Periods of The PKK Conflict," 93.

[152] "Turkey: Ending The PKK Insurgency," 4

[153] Criss, "The Nature of PKK Terrorism in Turkey," 21.

One billion Euros were paid to 133,000 victims.[154] Over 150,000 Turkish Kurds returned to their evacuated villages.[155]

In the early 1990s PKK violence reached its peak, and Turkey in turn was forced to modify its tactics, techniques and technology.[156] In particular, Turkey imported Cobra helicopters and new equipment, such as night vision and thermal cameras to provide superiority along with increased troop numbers in the region.[157] Military units were rearranged based on the nature of the conflict, and police and gendarmerie units more actively participated in the fight.[158] Hot pursuit and large cross-border operations of TAF left the PKK hopeless during the 1990s[159]. Table 1 presents the major cross-border operations and their results. Under those conditions, Ocalan announced the first so-called unilateral ceasefire decision in 1993. Later, in 1995, 1998 and 1999 he announced a similar type of ceasefires. It is better to group the first two and the latter two calls together because of the similar conditions and reasons behind them. Between 1993 and 1995 violence reached its peak with high casualties, and PKK needed time to reorganize for avoiding defeat. The 1998 and 1999's calls were due to PKK and Ocalan's sense of a boxed-in situation. Ocalan lost the support of Syria and tried to present himself as peace seeker, foreseeing his imminent capture.

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[154] "Turkey: Ending The PKK Insurgency," 33.

[155] The Justice and Development Party, "Sorulari ve Cevaplariyla Demokratik Acilim Sureci," 41.

[156] Serdar Ekizoglu, "Terorle Mucadelede Yol Ayrimi," [Junction in The Counter Terrorism Efforts,] 21. *Yuzyil Turkiye Enstitusu,* July 29, 2013, http://www.21yyte.org/tr/arastirma/terorizm-ve-terorizmle-mucadele/2013/07/29/7133/terorle-mucadelede-yol-ayrimi

[157] Ekizoglu, "Terorle Mucadelede Yol Ayrimi," n.p.; Hamdan, *A Critical Analysis of Turkey's Fight Against PKK, 28, 29.*

[158] Ibid.

[159] Bulent Sener, "TSK'nın 1983–2010 Yılları Arasında Kuzey Irak'ta PKK Unsurlarına Karşı Yuruttugu Sınır Otesi Operasyonlardaki Basarisi Uzerine Bir Degerlendirme," [An Evaluation of the Success of TAF's Cross-Border Operations in Northern Iraq Between 1983–2010,] *21. Yuzyil Turkiye Enstitusu,* October 23, 2013, http://www.21yyte.org/tr/arastirma/milli-guvenlik-ve-dis-politika-arastirmalari-merkezi/2013/10/23/7260/tsknin-19832010-yillari-arasinda-kuzey-irakta-pkk-unsurlarina-karsi-yuruttugu-sinir-otesi-operasyonlardaki-basarisi-uzerine-bir-degerlendirme.

	THE CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS	DATES	PKK		TAF	
			DEAD	INJURED	DEAD	INJURED
1	NORTHERN IRAQ OPERATION	16 SEPT–7 NOV 1992	1551	1232	28	125
2	DRAGON-1 OPERATION	12–23 APRIL 1994	146	Unknown	5	Unknown
3	HAKURK/DRAGON AND STEEL OPS.	20 MAR–2 MAY 1995	555	13	64	185
4	DRAGON-2 OPERATION	05–11 JULY 1995	204	89	21	
5	OPERATION HAMMER	14 MAY–26 JUNE 1997	2730	415	114	338
6	OPERATION DAWN	25 SEP–15 OCT 1997	865	37	31	91
7	OPERATION SUN	21–28 FEBRUARY 2008	240	Unknown	27	
	SUM		**6291**	**1786**	**290**	**739**

Table 1.   Major Cross-Border Operations of Turkey and Their Results.[160]

In three decades of time, TAF conducted almost 88 hot pursuits and cross-border operations and at least 25 of them were in large-scale operations. The 1990s' operations were bigger in scale and made by land forces, while the 2000s' operations were mainly air force based, supported by intelligence provided by the U.S. and unmanned aircraft.[161]

Table 1 shows the effectiveness of those operations. Contrary to general claims about the ineffectiveness of Turkey's cross-border operations, TAF gained the initiative over the PKK as a result of these operations, and PKK lost a lot of members and was breaking down by the second half of the 1990s.

Turkey claims Iraq's inability to exercise its authority over Northern Iraq after 1991 led the nation to protect its own security with limited in time and scope cross-border operations. In this way, these operations cannot be regarded as a violation of Iraq's sovereignty since Iraq was unable to control the use of its

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160 Sener, 2014.

161 Ibid.

territory by the PKK.[162] As a result, despite Iraq's repeated protests and international condemnation efforts, Turkey has avoided the Security Council's condemnation.[163]

In 2007, the Turkish Parliament passed a resolution authorizing TAF operations in Northern Iraq against the PKK.[164] Since then Turkey has continued its operations against the PKK. The U.S. gave its support in the two mentioned timeframes to Turkey. The probability of a full-scale incursion against Northern Iraq, may have led the U.S. to support Turkey's cross-border operations.[165]

1.   The 1993–1995 Unilateral So-called Ceasefires

Ocalan's announcement of a so-called unilateral ceasefire in 1993 was a result of the difficult situation his organization felt as a consequence of the cross-border operations and especially the 1992 Northern Iraq cross-border operation by the TAF. However, this was more a tactical move rather than a genuine peace-making attempt. As such, though the PKK managed to escalate the level of violence between 1993 and 1997 up to a point, it ended up losing a lot of members in the same period. Table 2 represents the casualty numbers between Turkey and the PKK in these years. There is a significant rise in the casualty numbers in this period. For both sides, 1994 is the most deadly year. The 1993 and 1995 so-called unilateral ceasefires of the PKK could be evaluated as a direct result of casualty numbers in those years.

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[162] Christine Gray, *International Law and The Use of Force (*New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 141,142.

[163] Ibid.

[164] Ibid., 143.

[165] Ibid.

Casualty Table Between 1984–2000			
	PKK	Civilians	Officials
1984	33	20	26
1985	108	67	58
1986	61	57	51
1987	106	217	71
1988	134	91	54
1989	191	160	153
1990	417	160	161
1991	427	127	244
1992	1340	487	629
1993	**1949**	932	**715**
1994	**4111**	682	**1145**
1995	**3007**	292	**772**
1996	**3063**	130	**608**
1997	**2330**	148	**518**
1998	1583	71	383
1999	1017	78	236
2000	307	27	29

Table 2.   Casualty Numbers of State and PKK between 1984 and 2000.[166]

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[166] "Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Watch Commission, "Terör ve Şiddet Olayları Kapsamında Yaşam Hakkı İhlallerinin İncelenme Raporu,"[Terror and Violence Events Report About Human Rights Violations," February 13, 2013, 62. http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/insanhaklari/belge/TERÖR%20VE%20ŞİDDET%20OLAYLARI %20KAPSAMINDA%20YAŞAM%20HAKKI%20İHLALLERİNİ%20İNCELEME%20RAPORU.pdf. See also "1984'ten 2010 Yılına 26 Yılın Kanlı Bilançosu," [The Bloody Casualty Numbers of Last 26 Years Between 1984 and 2010,] *Ensonhaber,* June 24, 2010, http://www.ensonhaber.com/1984ten-2010-yilina-pkk.html.
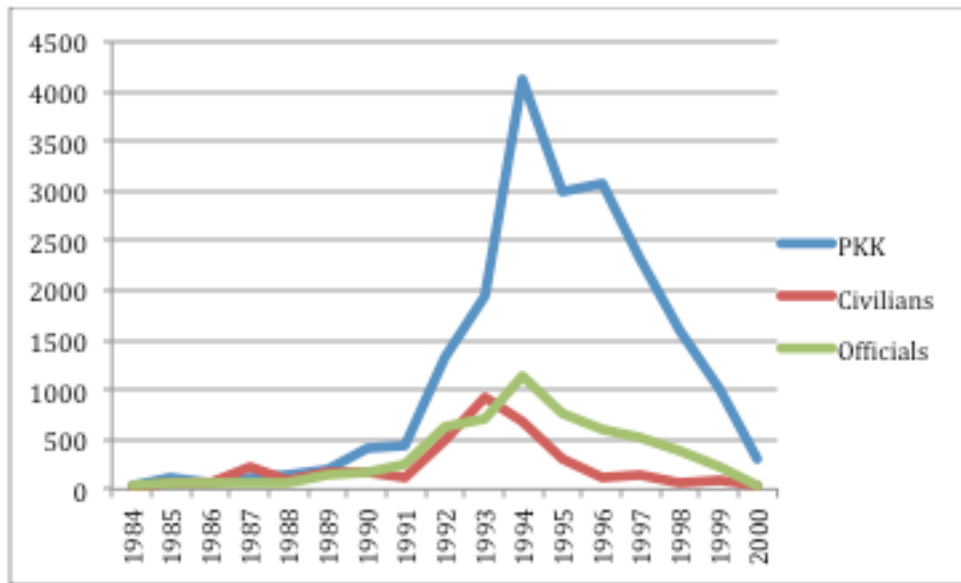
Figure 6.   Graph of Casualty Numbers between 1984 and 2000.

It is clearly visible that from the perspective of both sides there is an increase in the casualty numbers between 1993 and 1997. PKK casualties reached unmanageable levels especially for those years, whereas the state's losses are considerably manageable, but high. Therefore, a partially perceived stalemate can be claimed in those years, during which the PKK announced its so-called unilateral ceasefires in 1993 and 1995, respectively. The losses of both sides reached their peak in 1994; on the other hand, state losses decreased by the end of 1995 and this balance led to a win for state.

Turgut Ozal was the eighth president of the Turkish Republic by the time Ocalan announced his so-called unilateral ceasefire decision in 1993. Talabani, the PUK leader and one of the strong actors of Northern Iraq Kurdish Community, was shown up at the announcement of Ocalan. According to some, he was the back channel of Ozal, and the announcement was an indirect result of Ozal's optimism for a federative solution idea. The same perspective also connects the end of the process with the death of Ozal.[167] It is at this time

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[167] Hamdan, *A Critical Analysis of Turkey's Fight against PKK*, 88–92.

unclear whether Ozal played any direct or indirect role in the announcement of that ceasefire. However, it is a well-known fact that the calls of state leaders to the PKK to disarm were always presented by the PKK as an approach by the state to negotiate. The process ended with 33 unarmed soldiers' deaths by a PKK ambush in Bingol during their transportation to their units.[168]

The second announcement of Ocalan came when TAF's cross-border operations increased and again forced the PKK to declare their so-called January 15, 1995 unilateral ceasefire just one month before the elections. It was also followed by the coalition government's Prime Minister Erbakan's individual effort to win the release of kidnapped soldiers.[169] These kinds of back channel communications by individuals were evaluated differently from the standpoint of the PKK, which aimed to gain political leverage by using similar types of kidnappings in the 2000s. Erbakan's call for unity under the umbrella of Turkish nationality rather than Islam was also promising from the point of view of the PKK.[170]

Erbakan, one of Turkey's Islamic figures, had become the prime minister in June 1996. Zubeyir Aydar, one of PKK's leading figures in Europe, reached Erbakan through Ismail Nacar, who was an Islamic writer and NGO spokesperson for the mediation of the problem. Erbakan appointed the Welfare Party (RP) deputy for Van province to conduct negotiations along with Nacar. But those talks in short time were leaked to the press and all the opposing parties criticized the idea of negotiating with terrorists. The TAF also openly reacted against those kinds of mediation efforts. A coalition partner, the True Path Party (DYP), took a position against its partner. After those harsh criticisms and debates, mediators announced they were not talking on behalf of the Welfare

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168 Ibid., 92, 93.

169 Atiyas, "The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Issues, Parties and Prospects," 446.

170 Hamdan, *A Critical Analysis of Turkey's Fight against PKK*, 140.

Party or the government. In the end, even Erbakan stepped back and declared that the state could not negotiate with terrorists.[171]

2.   The 1998–1999 Unilateral So-called Ceasefires

By the late 1990s the situation was a checkmate rather than a stalemate. The PKK and Abdullah Ocalan were under great pressure from the Turkish state; the losses of the terrorist organization put them on the verge of breakdown again. By 1998, TAF established full control over most of southeast Turkey, confining the PKK to inaccessible mountain areas.[172] After establishing its control over the field, Turkey increased its pressure on the Syrian government for the extradition of Ocalan and ending its support of the PKK. In parallel with the MGK decision, which was planning to levy war on Syria incase Syria continues to support the PKK, the commander of Land Forces, General Atilla Ates, in one of his speeches in the border area of Hatay, threatened Syria for cutting off its support to the PKK.[173] Then, 10,000 troops were deployed to the Syrian border,[174] and that costly signal produced the desired outcome. On September 1, 1998, Ocalan announced another so-called unilateral ceasefire in order to present himself as a peace seeker. Syria then expelled him from the country on October 9, 1998[175].

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[171] Atiyas, "The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Issues, Parties and Prospects," 446, 447.

[172] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 29.

[173] "Suriye'ye Tankla Girecektik," [We Were to Enter Syria With Tanks] *Turkiye Gazetesi,* June 26, 2014, http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/gundem/15842.aspx

[174] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 29.

[175] "PKK Kaç Defa Ateşkes İlan Etti?" [How Many Times Did The PKK Announce Ceasefire?] *Ankara Strateji Enstitusu,* March 21, 2013, http://www.ankarastrateji.org/haber/pkk-kac-defa-ateskes-ilan-etti-611/

He escaped to Europe and travelled to Russia, Italy, and Greece. Finally, Greek contacts led him to Kenya where he was captured on February 15, 1999. U.S. intelligence assisted Turkey in capturing Ocalan.[176] After fifteen years of fighting against terrorism, Turkey had a great success with the capture of Ocalan.

It did not take much time before Ocalan called for another so-called unilateral ceasefire for the PKK on September 1, 1999 from his jail on the Imrali Island. He asked the PKK to retreat to Northern Iraq and look for a political solution. The PKK withdrew its members from Turkey as ordered by Ocalan.[177]

Ocalan was found guilty of multiple charges against the state on June 29, 1999 and sentenced to death. Since Turkey abolished the death penalty in August 2002 for the sake of EU membership, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.[178] After that time Ocalan's priority was the future of his sentence. The timing of Ocalan's 1999 call was interesting in that he announced it between the announcement of his death penalty verdict and the Supreme Court's ratification of his verdict.

The first phase of the PKK, 1984 to 1999, ended with the perception of a big loss for the PKK and Ocalan. The question here is "was there any moment or feeling of stalemate between the sides?" The most violent era was the period between 1993 and 1997, during which some back channel incentives could be considered as individual efforts to stop the bloodshed and provide an alternative way out for the terrorist organization and the state. The long life span of PKK's terror, the public's weariness, and the continuing economic costs of countering the PKK could partially create a perceived stalemate from the point of view of the state, no matter how superior the state was on the field.

The economic dimension of the problem was manageable for both sides, although Turkey faced some economic recessions in that period—in 1986, 1988,

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[176] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 17.

[177] Ibid.,30.

[178] Ibid., 18.

1989, 1991, 1994, 1998–1999 and 2000.[179] The 1994 economic crisis was especially bad, and could be closely linked with increased counterterrorism costs.[180] Terrorism was not a direct trigger of all those recessions, but the costly expenditures such as technology acquisition and cross-border operations against the PKK could be named as indirect reasons for some of those economic crises. The regional developments, especially the Gulf War, and the sanctions on Iraq negatively influenced the fragile Turkish economy.[181]

Against all those negative side effects Turkey continued its fight against PKK terror and won in the end. There were some elements of a stalemate, but most importantly on the field TAF never lost the initiative to the PKK. The hit and run tactics of the PKK created limited and temporary gains from its perspective. However, they could not spread the violence to the western side of the country. Their attacks in the western regions were all limited and small scale.

Northern Iraq provided not only an operational, but also a financial and demographically safe haven for the PKK. They managed to integrate themselves to a Kurdish "Mafia"-led heroin trafficking business. The black market of Iraq provided them with guns and money. Therefore, their only concern was to hold their losses manageable and recruit every year new members to replace their losses. However, the increase in the casualties of the PKK was unmanageable during the period of 1993–1997.

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[179] Tolga Akpinar, "Turkiyede Ekonomik Krizler," [Economic Crises in Turkey,] *Sinestezi,* April 04, 2009, http://sinestezi.wordpress.com/2009/04/04/turkiye-de-ekonomik-krizler-1994-1998-1999-ve-2001-krizleri/

[180] Criss, "The Nature of PKK Terrorism in Turkey," 17.

[181] Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2003), 34.

D.   INTERVAL: THE 1999–2004 PERIOD

It was a win for the Turkish state, but what type of a win was the question. Gordon McCormick defines win types as weak, strong, and complete.[182] A weak win refers to one in which the prevailing party pushes the other to its breakpoint, but not having control over the political space due to either unwillingness or inability. A strong win occurs when two conditions are met; pushing the opponent to its breakpoint and controlling the political space so that reorganization can not take place. Finally, a complete win can be achieved only by ending the motivation of the opponent, along with the other two conditions. Therefore, a complete win confers a natural control over the political space rather an artificial one, as in the strong win.[183] At this point Ocalan's capture and his call to the PKK to withdraw to Northern Iraq was a win between weak and strong types for the Turkish state. The external political safe haven of Northern Iraq provided PKK a reorganization space. Although Turkey established full control over its soil for a strong win, Northern Iraq's protective position for PKK was a major obstacle in front of Turkey.

In that nonviolent period some spectacular external events took place. After the 9/11 attacks the U.S.-led War on Terror led with the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003, respectively. Before Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, the use of U.S. bases in Turkey and the opening of a way for the second north front was declined by the Turkish National Assembly on March 1, which damaged the trust and relations between the U.S. and Turkish governments. Moreover, the detention of eleven Turkish Special Forces personnel in Northern Iraq by U.S. troops increased the level of crisis on July 4. The rejection of the resolution (Tezkere[184]) on March 1, left Turkey out of the decision making process for the reshaping of Iraq after the fall of Saddam. By

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[182] Gordon H. McCormick, "The Complete Win," in *Gangs and Guerrillas*, eds. M. Freeman and Hy Rothstein (Monterey, CA: NPS Publication, 2011), 3, 4.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Tezkere was Assembly's voting for giving permission to the U.S. for usage of Turkey's soil for the Iraq campaign.

contrast, the Kurds of Iraq played their Northern Alliance role very well and gathered the semiautonomous position as a first step to their long-held dream of an independent state. At the same time, the PKK was reorganizing and building its capacity. Former Iraq Army weapons were all over the black market of Iraq. Even though in the aftermath of 9/11 the PKK was designated as a terrorist organization and isolated, no specific counter measures were taken by the international community by the early 2000s. The PKK changed its name to KADEK and KONGRA-GEL, to remove itself from the international terrorism list.[185]

The deterioration of relations with the U.S. led Turkey to seek regional cooperation against the new Kurdish structure emerging in Northern Iraq and also the PKK threat. The overlapping concern for Syria, Iran and Turkey was the same, that KRG's semiautonomous structure could agitate those countries' local Kurds to demand a similar type of autonomy, and it was a direct threat to the regional status quo.[186]

The foundation of a regional response emerged in April 2003. Turkey, Iran and Syria began talks for establishing a consensus and cooperation for the postwar period. Bilateral talks were held between Turkey and Syria, and Turkey and Iran regarding the Kurdish security challenge, and countries began information sharing on the PKK and PKK-affiliate PJAK activities. Especially during the spring and early summer of 2006, Iran and Turkey escalated the cooperation level by attacking PKK and PJAK bases in Northern Iraq.[187]

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[185] Bal Ihsan and Emre Ozkan, "Dunyada Onemli Olaylar Kronolojisi," [Chronologic Events in The World], Uluslararası *Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu*, http://www.usak.org.tr/dosyalar/dergi/z6UFq2LoFkdiuzBbZSt9qHMi7u4Ke2.pdf.

[186] Shifrinson, "The Kurds and Regional Security," 2.

[187] Ibid., 4, 5.

E. SECOND PHASE: THE 2004–2014 PERIOD

In 2004, after five years of inaction, the PKK started its armed campaign again. The PKK pursued a dual strategy comprising a rural insurgency in southeastern parts of Turkey and an urban political campaign throughout the cities of Turkey. In the 2000s, rather than a achieving a military victory or territorial gain as in the 1990s, PKK was aiming to exert political leverage in the hope of forcing concessions from Turkish authorities.[188] Mass protests, named "Serhildan," were planned, aimed at attracting both domestic and especially international attraction. The intensity of the conflict diminished in that period. PKK's attacks were conducted by small groups of four to six terrorists, and they were mainly improvised explosive device attacks due to the superiority of the TAF in the field. Between 2002 and 2012 around 74 percent of the events took place in six provinces of the southeastern side of the country: Bingol, Diyarbakir, Hakkari, Siirt, Sirnak and Tunceli.[189] Seasonally, PKK attacks decreased from early December to late March due to harsh weather conditions, and intensified from July to October.[190] The major reason for that low level of violence was likely the heavy losses of PKK during 1990s. While the PKK had approximately 10,000 recruits in the 1990s, by the 2000s their numbers had decreased by half to 4000 to 5000.[191] Overall, those small scale and limited attacks were manageable from the state's perspective.

After 2004, the PKK, in accordance with the orders of Ocalan, announced four different so-called unilateral ceasefire decisions; in 2006, 2009, 2011, and 2013, respectively. The first one was mainly because of the regional developments, whereas the latter three might have been the result of covert communications between the two sides.

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[188] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 30.

[189] Gunes Murat Teczur, "Prospects For Resolution of The Kurdish Question: A Realist Perspective," *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 2 (2013): 72, 73.

[190] Ibid., 73.

[191] Sarihan, "The Two Periods of The PKK Conflict," 91, 92.

The U.S. approach against the Kurdish community of Iraq was moderate since they were the one specific community who welcomed the invasion of Iraq. U.S. backing of the PUK and KDP helped to create the de facto Kurdish state within Northern Iraq after the adoption of Iraq's Transnational Administrative Law (TAL) on March 8, 2004.[192] TAL offered substantial improvements for the Kurds in Iraq. First, the Kurdish language was recognized as one of the country's official languages. Second, displaced Kurds gained the right to return to their homes. Third and most importantly, KRG received a share proportionate to its population from Iraq's rich oil revenues.[193]

As a consequence of the situation of KRG, just a short time after the TAL was signed, Kurdish rioting erupted in Syria in March 2004. Similarly, by June 2004, PKK had started its armed campaign again. The PJAK, a PKK affiliate, was established with the aim of fomenting a Kurdish separatist agenda in Iran.[194] In this sense, the U.S. desire for stability in Northern Iraq was promoting instability for Iraq's neighbors.

There were several reasons for the PKK to start an armed campaign again, despite the promising reforms addressing their grievances at the beginning of the 2000s. First, the power vacuum after the Iraq War was exploitable. Second, the KRG reached a level of autonomy that PKK had sought for years. Third, and most importantly, inaction of PKK brought some internal debates and discussions, which led to some splintering within the organization. Ocalan aimed to rally sympathizers and organization members around the PKK flag against the state in order to consolidate his power and prevent internal organizational debates.[195]

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[192] Shifrinson, "The Kurds and Regional Security," 3.

[193] Ibid.

[194] Ibid., 3, 4.

[195] Kilic Bugra Kanat, "Ending Ceasefires for Political Survival: The Use of Diversionary Strategies By The PKK Leadership," in *Understanding Turkey's Kurdish Question,* eds. Fevzi Bilgin and Ali Sarihan (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2013), 108–114.

1.   The 2006 So-called Unilateral Ceasefire

The 2006 so-called unilateral ceasefire decision of Ocalan and PKK was due to the ramifications of the improved relations between the U.S. and Turkey. Relations that had worsened just before the Iraq War in 2003 normalized in late 2006. Moreover, Turkey began to press the U.S. about its opposition to cross-border operations against the PKK camps in Iraq.[196] As a result, during 2006 the U.S. increased its intelligence support to Turkey against the PKK.[197] On the other hand, the KRG was also looking for a stable environment and increased economic relations with Turkey as a new emerging structure. Turkey's suspicions over the KRG's overlapping effect in Turkey took a back seat to mutually developing economic benefits.[198] That is why the only obstacle in front of the KRG and U.S. for a more stable environment in Northern Iraq was PKK's violence. To prevent the intervention of Turkey in Northern Iraq and the rapprochement of Turkey and two U.S. adversaries, most probably those stakeholders persuaded the PKK to stop the armed campaign.[199]

The closer relationship between the U.S. and Turkey created a new coordination mechanism for the PKK issue. Former Commander of Land Forces General (ret.) Edip Baser and a former NATO commander General (ret.) Joseph Ralston were appointed to the counterterrorism coordination branch against the PKK. But this mechanism failed to produce any concrete results, and ended with the resignation of Edip Baser in early 2007.[200]

In short time, the PKK started its armed attacks again, attacking the Daglica Outpost in September 2007, leaving 12 soldiers killed and 16 more

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[196] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 31.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Nathalie Tocci, "Turkey's Kurdish Gamble," *Istituto Affari Internazionali Working Papers* 13, no. 10 (April 2013): 3, 4.

[199] Sedat Laciner, "PKK'nin Ateskesi'nin Anlami," [The Meaning of PKK's Ceasefire], Uluslararası *Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu*, September 30, 2006, http://www.usakgundem.com/yazar/429/pkknin-ateskesinin-anlami.html.

[200] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 31.

injured.[201] Following further actions in November of the same year, the U.S. agreed that Turkey could launch cross-border operations. The first air raid took place on December 16, 2007. The U.S. provided actionable intelligence via satellite imagery to Turkey.[202] Further raids continued during the first eight months of 2008, and in February 2008 the TAF started the "Operation Sun" cross-border operation with land forces which were supported by Air Force bombings. Over 600 terrorists were killed in the air raids and PKK's major infrastructure was disrupted.[203]

2. The 2009, 2011 and 2013 So-called Unilateral Ceasefires

On April 13, 2009, PKK's sixth so-called unilateral ceasefire decision was announced. It is most likely that before the announcement some back channel communications took place between PKK and MIT. Moreover a few months later in August, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan announced a new project: Democratic Opening, or the National Unity and Brotherhood Project, which aimed to build some new social, political, cultural, and economic incentives for Turkish Kurds along with some other ethnic communities.[204] On October 19, 34 PKK members—26 of them from the Mahmur Camp and not operational terrorists, mostly women, the elderly and children—and eight terrorists from Kandil, entered Turkey from the Habur Customs Gate.[205] A couple of thousand Turkish Kurds, mostly comprised of BDP members, welcomed them. A temporary court was established in the Habur due to security concerns, and the verdict was released to accept their surrenders. The BDP and PKK convert Habur surrendering of terrorists to a big welcoming show. The public anger grew all over the Turkey. There were a lot of street protests against such an embarrassing event. Due to

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[201] Tolga Sik, "PKK'dan Dağlıca Baskını: 12 Sehit," [The PKK's Daglica Post Attack: 12 Martyrs,] *Milliyet,* October 22, 2007, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/10/22/guncel/agun.html.

[202] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 31.

[203] Ibid., 32.

[204] "Turkey: Ending The PKK Insurgency," 6, 7.

[205] Candar, "Dagdan Inis," 83.

the public frustration and critics, the government felt itself guilty of the situation and froze the Democratic opening for a while.[206]

At the same time MIT was holding some covert meetings with the PKK's front leaders Mustafa Karasu and Sabri Ok, in Oslo, and their fourth meeting was leaked to the press. Interestingly, the head of MIT, Hakan Fidan, was participating in that fourth meeting and claiming he was there on behalf of the Prime Minister.[207] PKK's sixth so-called unilateral ceasefire decision could have been a consequential result of those covert meetings and the Democratic Opening, but the process backfired with the Habur show.

In April 2009, the Turkish Judicial Authorities and Turkish Police started detaining KCK members in different cities across Turkey. It was an unexpected and crucial blow for PKK's parallel structure, KCK. Authorities arrested 3,895 people for being members of the PKK by the end of 2011.[208] PKK's shadow structure on Turkey's soil was disrupted. Consequently, on August 13, 2010, KCK announced the PKK would stop its attacks for 40 days. Later, the period was extended until the 2011 elections, but by March the KCK claimed that due to AKP's denial and annihilation policies the PKK ended the process.[209] KCK trials weakened the structure of the PKK. Until then those trials had become another subject of bargaining for the PKK.

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[206] "Turkey: Ending The PKK Insurgency," 9, 10.

[207] "PKK Mit Gorusmeleri Tam Metin," [The PKK and MIT Negotiations Whole Draft,] *Taraf Gazetesi*, September 14, 2011, http://www.taraf.com.tr/haber-pkk-mit-gizli-gorusmeleri-tam-metin-78057/

[208] "KCK Operasyonlarının Başladığı Gün!" [The Starting Day of The KCK Operations!] *Yuksekovahaber,* April 14, 2013, http://www.yuksekovahaber.com/haber/kck-operasyonlarinin-basladigi-gun-98888.htm.

[209] Alper Atalay, "Ateşkes Girişimlerinin Muhatabı Kandil Değil Ankara," [The Negotiation Partner Is Not Kandil, But Ankara,] *Dicle Haber Ajansi,* June 6, 2013, http://www.ozgur-gundem.com/?haberID=41926&haberBaslik=Ateşkes%20girişimlerinin%20muhatabı%20Kandil%20değil%20Ankara&action=haber_detay&module=nuce.

During 2012, the PKK changed its strategy and aimed to gain control in some parts of Turkey. Consequently, in Semdinli, they had a lot of casualties because of the TAF's superiority in the field.[210] Most probably the PKK aimed to escalate the violence and reach a stalemate, not militarily but politically. The hunger strikes by some imprisoned PKK members due to the prison conditions of Ocalan after that hot summer in late 2012, and Ocalan's call for them to end those strikes, opened a new phase for the negotiations between the two sides.[211] Some people claimed this was a set up for presenting Ocalan as a palatable negotiation partner. The AKP government started overt dialogue this time with Ocalan. Prime Minister Erdogan said in one of his speeches that they started talks with Ocalan via MIT.[212] As a consequence the last announcement of Ocalan came in May 2013, asking PKK to withdraw to Northern Iraq.[213]

As a response to the public pressure for a moderate approach to government, a group of 63 people from every part of society—the academicians, artists, writers, etc.—formed a group of "smart men" (Akil Adamlar). This group started an information campaign about the Opening process and prepared a report for the government to consider some steps as milestones. At most of the places they visited they held public meetings, and they were heavily protested, especially in the western side of the country.[214]

Erdogan is currently serving his third and final term as prime minister according to their party's own internal regulation. As such, he will most likely be the party's candidate for the 2014 Presidential elections. But, perhaps precisely because the Presidency of Turkish Republic is a symbolic role, Erdogan has recently discussed the possibility of a new system with increased powers for the president. Meanwhile, all other major parties, especially the Republican People's

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[210] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 33.

[211] Tezcur," "Prospects For Resolution of The Kurdish Question," 75.

[212] Candar, "Dagdan Inis," 60.

[213] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 34.

[214] Pergolizzi, "An Uncertain Road to Peace," 3, 4, 9.

Party (CHP) and the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) oppose Erdogan's proposal, saying it could open the door to greater authoritarianism in the country. At the same time, the 1984 Constitution is subject to a major rewrite and political parties are still working on it. Therefore, in order to unlock the impasse, Erdogan may count on the support of 36 BDP parliamentarians.[215] Erdogan's open references to the province system[216] sound promising to the PKK. This political situation could be referred to as an enticing opportunity for both sides, with the promise of beneficial outcomes.

In politics, a new Kurdish party emerged in December 2012, The Free Cause Party (Hur Dava Partisi), which is said to be related to the Turkish Hizbulah that fought with the PKK in 2002. Huda-Par, an abbreviated form of the party name, means Party of God, and it is enjoying good relations with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. So it may be one major contender for the southeastern Kurdish vote in addition to AKP and BDP.[217] In the light of these converging interests and political calculations, both sides were pushed into an embrace.[218]

Table 3 presents the casualty numbers during the period of 2000 to 2012 between the state and the PKK.

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[215] Ibid., 3.

[216] Ibid.

[217] Ibid.,5.

[218] Ibid., 6.

Casualty Table Between 2000–2012			
	PKK	Civilians	Officials
2000	307	27	29
2001	157	11	20
2002	50	11	7
2003	101	10	31
2004	135	16	75
2005	193	18	105
2006	149	18	111
2007	**264**	**20**	**146**
2008	**227**	**29**	**171**
2009	68	18	62
2010	137	21	88
2011	211	17	99
2012	**973**	**6**	**144**

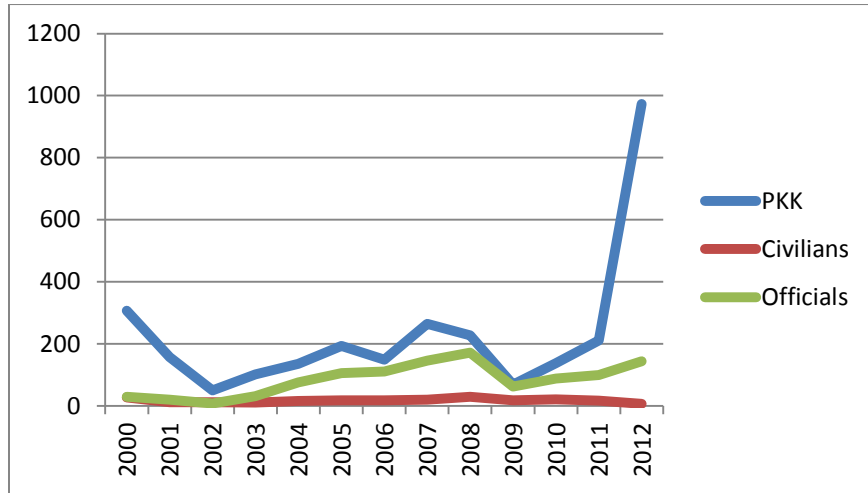Table 3.   Casualty Numbers of the State and PKK between 2000 and 2012.[219]

Figure 7.   Graph of Casualty Numbers of the State and PKK between 2000 and 2010.

  219 "Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Watch Commission, "Terör ve Şiddet Olayları Kapsamında Yaşam Hakkı İhlallerinin İncelenme Raporu," [Terror and Violence Events Report About Human Rights Violations,] February 13, 2013, 62; "1984'ten 2010 Yılına 26 Yılın Kanlı Bilançosu," 2010; "Son 10 Yılda Sehit Sayısı 20 Kat Arttı," [The Number Of Martyrs Has Increased 20 Times In The Last 10 Years,] *Milliyet Gazetesi,* December 9, 2012, http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/son-10-yilda-sehit-sayisi-20-kat-artti/siyaset/siyasetdetay/09.12.2012/1639265/default.htm.

It can be seen that there is a slight increase in the casualty numbers of terrorists and the state after 2004; the so-called unilateral ceasefires dropped the casualty numbers temporarily. The relatively high number of casualties in 2007 and 2008 explaining the 2009 call for a so-called unilateral ceasefire, but the most spectacular point is that the 2012 PKK strategy to control areas resulted in the escalation of the conflict and a rise in the PKK's casualty numbers to unmanageable levels. Although the PKK casualties were greatest in 2012, the numbers suggest that both sides would be able to continue the conflict. PKK most probably aimed to reach a political stalemate rather than a military one throughout the negotiation process, though the expectedly high losses suggests an illogical, suicidal move in the field that cost them more recruits than the previous eight years cumulative casualty numbers.

One other calculation for the AKP government could be the Arab uprising in the Middle East and its repercussions in Syria. Turkey overtly took a position against Assad's government that used chemicals on its own population. The Syrian Kurds' uprising and search for autonomy, their fight against the Al-Qaeda recruits, and the PKK members' participation in this fight in support of PYD could be some other side elements of the de-escalation of the conflict in Turkey.

For the last three so-called unilateral ceasefire decisions, it can be claimed that they were the result of enticing opportunities for both sides in the continuum of the conflict. First, from the perspective of the ruling party, AKP, they increased their domestic power during the nonviolent periods and gained support from the southeastern part of the country in the elections (in which the AKP and BDP shared the majority of the votes). However, the 2009 Habur incident increased the anger of the population in the western parts of the country and the process stopped for a time. Second, a new constitution is promising for both sides for their desired outcomes. Third, for Ocalan and arrested KCK members and the disrupted PKK, the only hope is the negotiation processes. Erdogan's leadership and Ocalan's changed attitude promise hope for a solution to the problem with those emerging opportunities.

IV.   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The PKK case provides deep insight for both models with its past and continuing events. The 1990s present partial examples of the classic ripeness model with evidence of a mutually hurting stalemate, whereas the 2000s presents examples of mutually enticing opportunities. In fact these two timeframes could be considered as the evolution of the problem from zero sum to a win-win proposition for both sides with its mutually enticing opportunities. From Turkey's standpoint, the costly expenditures and some internal unrest could be alleviated by the solution to the PKK problem, whereas from the PKK point of view, the organization has been destroyed and reconciliation increasingly looked like the best outcome. Additionally, another checkmate is probable. For Ocalan, if he misses the chance he got from Turkish authorities, he will most likely never have another opportunity to be a part of the negotiation. In this concluding section a comparison of the two periods may help to illustrate the implication of the theory to the case.

For the 1990s, after completing its capacity building, the PKK strategically aimed to escalate the violence with armed attacks against state institutions. In addition, the PKK also aimed to spread its terror activities to the western part of the country, especially in the tourism areas, but the latter strategy caused international reaction and negatively affected the organization. Moreover, PKK's urban strategy was limited in scope and easy to monitor so that it could not produce the desired outcomes. On the other hand, during the same period the state reorganized itself according to needs of the low intensity conflict, and technology, personnel and organizational restructuring gave the initiative to the state. The VGS system hindered PKK's narrative. From the perspective of the state, one major shortcoming was that the conduct of the counterterrorism effort was only by military means. The reforms necessary to address the grievances of PKK's target population were missing. Therefore, the PKK always found space to

maneuver even though it was alienating its target population with the use of violence.

A significant reason for the shortcomings of the state might be the limited political spectrum of ruling parties. In those years, governments were coalition governments. Terrorism was generally considered a security problem, and though the military leaders called for wider approaches such as economic and social reforms, the struggle was stuck in the military dimension and lacked a political approach. From PKK's point of view, the main actor was Ocalan. According to the PKK side, he is still the sole and final decision maker of the organization, and the realization of a negotiated outcome is likely to happen only if Ocalan plays a role in the process.[220] This means that one important part of the negotiation will be his jail conditions or release. Ocalan's calls for peace in the 1990s were tactical rather than sincere. There was a tendency to call for peace only when PKK was in a difficult situation because of the TAF's superiority on the field. Therefore, Ocalan's calls for so-called unilateral ceasefires in the 1990s could be considered playing for time to reorganize. The PKK tried to make each ceasefire appear bilateral rather than unilateral. According to the PKK, the 1993 so-called unilateral ceasefire was linked with President Turgut Ozal; the 1996 so-called unilateral ceasefire was linked with Prime Minister Erbakan, and the 1998 and 1999 so-called unilateral ceasefires were speculatively linked with the military.[221] These claims are not substantiated and are sourced only to terrorists, so they are not convincing. Most probably, even if they were real, these attempts were aimed at giving a way out for the PKK. Every call for peace by the state demanded the PKK to disarm and demobilize without any preconditions.

According to the resource concept, although the PKK exhausted much of its resources in 1990s, with its high casualties and great financial needs, it was successful at least in recouping its huge casualty numbers with new recruits. The PKK also benefited from the safe havens with which it had been provided. Syria's

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[220] Candar, "Dagdan Inis," 59, 60.

[221] Ibid., 59.

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state sponsorship and Northern Iraq's failed governance after the Gulf War provided the PKK with use of both countries for logistical purposes, as well as operational purposes. At the same time, the PKK controlled entrance routes into Europe for drug trafficking, and its links with the Kurdish Mafia enabled the terrorist organization to convert itself into a transnational criminal organization over time. European front organizations also provided the PKK with generous income for years.[222] On the other hand, Turkey's economy was not very strong in the 1990s. For instance, the 1994 economic crises could be linked to the increased costs from the counterterrorism efforts and incursions into Northern Iraq.

In summary, the beginning of the 1990s was more likely a MHS since there was high tension caused by violence and no foreseeable outcome for either side. The long duration of conflict was causing weariness. The public was frustrated by the hit and run tactics of the PKK. But Turkey's determination to go on fighting with the PKK left the PKK and Ocalan without an option, and in the end Ocalan was captured. The 1998 and 1999 calls of Ocalan for so-called unilateral ceasefires were due to his realization of his and PKK's impending defeat. Consequently, the PKK withdrew to Northern Iraq.

In contrast, the reincarnation of PKK in the early part of this century changed the nature of the conflict. The PKK was much weaker than it had been in the 1990s; external developments such as 9/11 put the PKK in a more difficult situation. Its criminal facet started to attract attention and the global War on Terror isolated it.[223]

Strategically, the PKK followed a hybrid strategy: in addition to its armed campaign, PKK aimed to politicize the conflict. It started to reshape its political wing as a covert shadow structure—the KCK—that was positioned as an

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[222] Habib Ozdemir and Ilker Pekgozlu, "Where Do Terror Organizations Get Their Money? A Case Study: Financial Resources of the PKK," *Uluslararası Güvenlik ve Terörizm Dergisi*, no 3 (2) (2012): 86.

[223] "Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK)," 30–31.

alternative to the state, especially in the southeastern parts of the country. In the 2000s PKK attacks were limited to a few specific cases. Similar to their situation in the 1990s they could not expand their attacks to the western side of the country. But the PKK-affiliated civil obedience; street protests and Nevrouz displays were increasing. A PKK-linked political party is also one of the major rivals of the governing party in the southeastern side of the country. In the last local elections AKP and BDP almost shared all the provinces of the region. Although it is a well-known fact that PKK intimidates people in the region for their votes, in one way, the dual share of the votes could also be considered as the region's people supporting the negotiations.

From a political point of view, AKP has the self-sufficiency for some kind of approach to address the PKK issue. The AKP has its chairs in the Assembly, and the 2014 presidential elections and a new constitution appear as mutually enticing opportunities for AKP and BDP to cooperate. Prime Minister Erdogan put his political career at stake by negotiating with PKK for a solution to the problem. A non-declared cooperation will likely follow for the 2014 presidential election and a new constitutional study. The AKP and Erdogan need the BDP's support in the election; on the other hand, a new constitution with expanded cultural rights motivates the BDP to cooperate with the AKP. From the point of view of Ocalan, he is not the same person as he was in the 1990s. He has been in prison on Imrali Island for 15 years and the opportunity for negotiation may be his last resort. As his thoughts and understandings have changed from his limited communist standpoint to a wider democratic view, his goals are subject to change on behalf of his future.[224]

Turkey in the 2000s is more powerful economically; the average per capita income has increased from $3000 in the 1990s to $10,500 in 2012.[225] Turkey's economy may further improve with a solution to the PKK problem. The increasing

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[224] Michael Gunter, "The Continuing Kurdish Problem in Turkey After Ocalan's Capture," *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 5 (2000): 854, 855.

[225] Turkish Ministry of Economics, "Ekonomik Buyume," [Economic Growth,] PowerPoint Presentation, March 2014, www.ekonomi.gov.tr/files/Ekonomik_Gorunum.ppt

mutual economic relations with KRG are expected to continue, and those relations should force the PKK to be positioned on the side of the solution or else they will become more isolated.

Overall, the PKK is estimated to have lost around 22,101 members. On the other hand, from the state's perspective, PKK terror has caused many civilian killings throughout its history—5,557 civilians have lost their lives. In addition to that, combatant losses reach 7,918.[226] Material losses and the economic burden of the problem have cost Turkey $300 billion. The most promising reward is the end of bloodshed.

Although the negotiation process continues back and forth, progress seems likely after the 2015 general elections. An election and five-year window for the AKP might produce some steps forward in the process for both sides.

This thesis aimed to test under which conditions in terrorism cases sides feel themselves in stalemates. A historical case study of Turkey and the PKK terrorist organization was used to test a hypothesis. William Zartman's Theory of Ripeness handles this question using the mutual hurting stalemate phenomenon as a condition of ripeness and one of the direct reasons for a decision to negotiate. While exploring the theory, the writer also came up with the idea of importing Mitchell and Crocker's mutually enticing opportunities to model as a condition of ripeness for both sides. Although Zartman imported the same concept as an independent variable of a successful negotiation decision for both sides, this thesis used it as an internal ripeness condition and located it as a third ripeness element.

Zartman's original independent variables of ripeness, the objective elements and persuasion, respectively, referred differently to cost benefit analysis of resources, strategies, and political will and external developments. The optimistic or pessimistic way of evaluation pointed to the psychological

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[226] Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Watch Commission, "Terör ve Şiddet Olayları Kapsamında Yaşam Hakkı İhlallerinin İncelenme Raporu," [Terror and Violence Events Report About Human Rights Violations,] February 13, 2013, 60–65.

dimension of interaction between the adversaries. As in this case study, pessimism may lead each side to perceive an MHS, while optimism may lead them to perceive MEOs conditionally.

The reinterpreted model of the Ripeness Theory sounds promising; however, more empirical studies are required for testing the theory itself. Since conflicts evolve, a theory also needs to be developed. The PKK case with its three decades long continuum provides instances of perceived stalemates. The first period cases examined are closer to the original model concept, whereas the second period cases are closer to the reinterpreted model.

The independent variables show that the cost-benefit analyses of adversaries during prolonged conflicts affect the future of the conflicts. Since terrorism cases are typically sustained for long times, sides first have to apply the correct strategy for success. From a state's point of view, it should seek not only a military but also political strategy against the terrorists. On the other hand, for terrorists the most promising strategy is to work towards reachable goals, and to try to sustain the conflict as long as possible. Time works for terrorists, and even though they experience difficulties by high casualties, in the end they can reach some concessions simply by persisting.

Resources are the tangible assets that show both sides the objective outcome of the conflicts. Adversaries perceive turning points as their resources change, and they can decide to change their approaches to the problem accordingly.

Regional developments such as the Gulf War, Iraq War, and Arab Spring had crucial consequences for the outcome and direction of the conflict. Adversaries' cost benefit analyses were heavily affected by those developments, and an MHS or MEOs may arise as consequences of these developments.

The political will of the contending sides is also subject to change over time with the change in public opinion and the individuals in power during the conflict.

A future study about how states break the impasse against terrorism may provide a broader understanding of success in the context of these prolonged conflicts. The hypotheses discussed in this thesis provide meaningful ways to handle the problem of stalemates. A broader strategic-level accord may lead states to break the stalemates. Also technological innovations in weapons are likely to change the information asymmetry in favor of states. The usage of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), such as predator drones, may change the course of events and break the stalemates in favor of states.

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