

Solution or Stalemate? Peace Process in Turkey, 2009-2013

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**SOLUTION
OR
STALEMATE?**

**Peace Process in Turkey
2009-2013**

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For everyone who has a strong desire for peace...

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Abbreviations

PKK – Kurdistan Workers’ Party

AKP – Justice and Development Party

IRA – Irish Republican Army

ETA – Basque Country and Freedom

TAK – Kurdistan Freedom Falcons

DTK – Democratic Society Congress

TESEV – Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation

BDP – Peace and Democracy Party (after became HDP)

HDP – People’s Democracy Party

CHP – Republican People’s Party

MHP – Nationalist Movement Party

MIT: National Intelligence Service (in Turkey)

EU – European Union

Introduction

The Kurdish question has a long history from the beginning of the late periods of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The issue is considered one of the biggest problems experienced by the Republic of Turkey since 1923.¹ From 1923 to the present, the Kurdish problem has not been able to be solved clearly and it has become one of the most important problems of the political, economic, social and cultural scenes of Turkey. The democratic deficit in dealing with the Kurdish question in Turkey has been discussed for many years by different academics, journalists and authors. Lerer states that: ‘The "Kurdish problem" has always been intimately related to Turkey's greater problems, such as its shaky democracy’.²

It should be clearly identified that the Kurdish question is a multi-dimensional issue which requires different perspectives such as socio-political, cultural and economic. It also deals with different problems in terms of terrorism and especially with the PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê—Kurdistan Workers’ Party). Therefore, while there is a socio-political dimension to the issue which also includes foreign influences, on the other hand, there is also the reality of terrorism.

There is considerable number of internal and external factors that create complexity in the Kurdish problem. The Kurdish question includes a complicated structure with the interaction of different Kurds in Iraq, Iran and Syria who also have a common history through Ottoman rule.³ It can be understood from past experiences that the period of establishing a nation-state in Turkey was not an easy process, and Turkey has experi-

¹ Hursid Deli, “Türkiye’de Kürt Sorunu ve Barışçıl Çözümü,” *Al Jazeera Turk*, December 5, 2013.

² Noam Lerer, “The Table of Peace: The Status of Kurds in Turkey,” *Harvard International Review* 26 (2004): 12.

³ Andrew Mango, “Turks and Kurds,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 30 (1994): 989.

enced significant number of problems in trying to create a common Turkish identity in a strong structured Turkish state. The problems regarding nationalism emerge with the establishment of a state, however not every state experiences the same problems in dealing with nationalism.⁴ Turkey sometimes found itself in discussions related to separatism or unification. For many years, the Kurdish problems have not been assessed in the shadow of different claims such as denying Kurdish identity, and Turkish government preferred not to discuss this issue too much.⁵ While all of these aspects were central to this discussion, there was also another effective actor—PKK. All of these are key concepts and actors that would open the secret box of the peace process in 2009.

While the conflicts between the state and the PKK terror organisation were beginning to increase in 1980s, the Kurdish question was also beginning to be discussed intensely step by step. In the 2000s, the problem was far from being resolved and began to increase with its socio-political structure. In 1999, a very important incident that included the capturing of the leader of the PKK—Abdullah Öcalan—occurred. When the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan, was captured by Turkey, terrorism began to lose its former popularity in Turkey.⁶ There was hope of ending the terrorism, anyway. However, this situation turned to intense conflict in a short time. The years between 2004 and 2006, had high levels of tension and considerable number of problems in terms of terrorism in Turkey. In 2004, the PKK continued its attacks. The years 2008 and 2009 should be considered not as something new but a continuation of the attacks took

⁴ Montserrat Guibernau and John Rex, *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997) 67.

⁵ Yeğen, “The Turkish State Discourse,” 226.

⁶ See Pınar Bilgin, “Making Turkey’s transformation possible: claiming ‘security-speak’—not desecuritisation!” *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 7 (2007): 555–571.

place in 1980s.⁷ Moreover, terrorism was increasing because of the lack of effective solutions.

As an answer to terrorism situation, which was deteriorating daily, and the effects of the unsolved Kurdish question, the Turkish state began to work on possible solutions to end the terror and chaotic situation caused mainly by the PKK. In 2002, the AKP took the majority of the votes. This affected the situation in Turkey surrounding terrorism and the Kurdish question. Therefore, a solution for the PKK and Kurdish question was discussed by the AKP. In 2009, clear steps which included different government policy changes, and some changes in the rule of law dealing with Kurdish language and broadcasting began to take place. In 2009 an important turning point began to occur known as ‘Kurdish Opening’, later known as the ‘Democratic Opening’ which included the peace process itself. The AKP government tried to solve the problem by talking with Öcalan, the leader of the PKK, making some changes in the law dealing with Kurds and their rights and establishing different committees which would play an important role by providing a connection between public opinion and the government itself.

AKP tried to solve the Kurdish problem by negotiating with Öcalan and the PKK as well as trying to implement some institutional and social reforms such as establishing the Wise Committee (Akil İnsanlar Heyeti) or changing the rule of law dealing with the rights of people whose mother tongue was Kurdish, rather than directly solving the problem in parliament. By establishing such a committee, the intention of the government was to have the support of every parts of society in solving the Kurdish question. The people on the committee included academics, authors, journalists. All of them were well-known people in their fields. They were expected to influence other people on the issue of the Kurdish question by showing their supports and keen interest in solving the prob-

⁷ André Barrinha, “The Political Importance of Labelling: Terrorism and Turkey’s Discourse on the PKK,” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 4 (2011), 164.

lem by investigation the case studies in the eastern part of Turkey. The negative side of this committee was that all of these people were already known to be close to the AKP government. There were not many people on the committee who had different thoughts or approaches to solving the Kurdish question. However, all of them did not make too much sense in this solution process because of inconsistent and abstract policies of AKP, and the effects of foreign factors on the issue. The ‘solution process’ began to experience significant problems along the way in political, social and cultural spheres. Thus, it became a crisis both on the political and social scene.

This research will explore the reasons for Turkey’s failure in the peace process, which include the Kurdish question and the end of PKK terrorism, and then it will give the reasons of this failure. In the first chapter, the research will explain what kind of solution process took place in Turkey and which developments occurred during this process. These developments will be analysed for two different time frames: before 2009, and after 2009. The research will take the year of 2009 as a turning point because negotiations in the context of the peace process to solve the PKK problem and Kurdish question began in the year 2009. In the first chapter the main incidents which shaped the Kurdish question and PKK terrorism will be identified briefly and these incidents will be interpreted in the context of the failure of the process. The second chapter will answer why the peace process could not be achieved. Moreover, in the second chapter, the reasons for the failure will be analysed from two perspectives. One of these perspectives will argue that the failure of the peace process occurred due to abstract and inconclusive policies in the government. The other perspective is that the Kurdish question has included foreign difficulties for many decades and so this has played an important role in the failure of the process. The research argues that even though there was some effort to seek a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question, the result was a failure for Turkey because of inconclusive and abstract steps in policies and foreign difficulties. As a result of these

negative developments, the research will argue that the process should be called a ‘stalemate’ rather than a ‘peace process’.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative methodology in order to have a more interpretative and comprehensive approach. The first chapter of the research is more descriptive to be able to understand the basic concepts on Kurdish Question. Moreover, the second part includes interpretative approach on the issue by comprehending the basic information of the first part.

In addition to this, even though this research is not a comparative study, some comparative analyses were made to explain the current situation and relevant discussions on Kurdish questions in Turkey as well. For instance, to understand the peace process in Turkey, other samples such as the ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna—Basque Country and Freedom) and the IRA (Irish Republican Army) were discussed with regard to whether the issue of the PKK could be solved by following examples such as the IRA and ETA. However, this research will not include a deep comparative analysis between the ETA and IRA and PKK. It is a fact that the peace process in Turkey was not the only one and there is a need to benefit from other main illustrations which may bring light to the case of the PKK, especially in discussions of autonomy, self-determination rights of the nations or separation. By doing comparative analysis, the research seeks to find the possible reasons the peace process failed. As the research will argue, such discussions were also an important part of the problem due to causing some degree of delay for a solution.

Throughout the research, secondary sources such as books, book chapters, journal publications and newspaper articles were used. Newspaper articles were used to explain more recent developments in Turkey and, international organisations or NGOs websites were analysed for the de-

tailed perspectives.⁸ The sources which were used in this research were mainly in English, however Turkish newspapers articles were also used. By researching both Turkish and English resources, this research aimed to examine it from both the internal perspective of Turkish newspapers and the external perspective of other writers. This led to have more objective point of view while writing the dissertation.

The other method which was used in this research was interviewing. The interviews, as primary sources that contribute to the originality of my research, provided me with practical insight and cross-verification of the secondary sources. Two interviews were conducted with a journalist from *Cumhuriyet (The Republic)* newspaper, and a retired Turkish ambassador and later one of the MPs in parliament at the same time who had a deep knowledge of the Kurdish question and the PKK. Işık Kansu, whom I interviewed, is an experienced journalist in the *Cumhuriyet (The Republic)* newspaper in Turkey who has written considerable number of articles concerning the Kurdish question and the PKK, as well as the peace process. I wanted to interview him because he was also very familiar with recent developments in the solution processes. Other interview was conducted with Osman Taney Korutürk who had worked as the Turkish ambassador in Paris, Berlin, Oslo and Tehran at different times before and later became an MP in the Republican People's Party (CHP). Korutürk was also very important to my research since he had the ability to combine diplomatic and political knowledge with recent developments on the Kurdish issue, PKK and solution process.

Literature Review

The topic of this dissertation is important not only for Turkey but also for every minority who tries to act in the context of separating/uniting a specific country and who experiences the problems of terrorism through the social and cultural problems which spread along with their problematic situation in a state. There is significant number of research that has

⁸ see International Crisis Group. "Saving the Peace Process."

explored the historical or anthropological and sociological fields of the Kurdish problem and Kurdology,⁹ and there is also different research which has been conducted concerning the PKK for 30 years.

Martin van Bruinessen,¹⁰ was good starting point for my research due to his historical perspectives to the issue by giving many important background information on Kurdish question (Bruinessen also focused on the sociological dimensions of the issue, such as the identity of Kurds, their lifestyles and etc.). Even though learning the history and the essence of the problem is important, this research did not aim to conduct a very historical research. Due to the topic of this research, the research combined recent developments and history by establishing a certain theoretical framework. Therefore, there was a need to use Turkish newspapers, such as *Hurriyet*, *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet*, which covered the period between 2000 and 2013. There are also some authors and journalists who have been studying the Kurdish question for a long time such as Kadri Gürsel¹¹ and Enver Aysever.¹² Their articles and books were very helpful in understanding recent developments in Turkey. The research also used the main news channels such as BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera, Al-Monitor to learn about the recent developments between 2000 and 2013.

Guibernau's¹³ works were used in this research, especially in the construction of theory and understanding the essence of the problems concerning ethnicity and nationalism. His works helped to establish the theoretical framework of this research as well. Uğur Mumcu¹⁴ also enlight-

⁹ Martin van Bruinessen, *Kürdolojinin Bahçesinde* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2012).

¹⁰ Martin van Bruinessen, *Agah, Shaikh and State* (London: Zed Books, 1992).

¹¹ Kadri Gürsel, "Turkey Cannot Solve PKK Problem Without Solving Kurdish Problem," *Al-Monitor*, January 25, 2015.

¹² Enver , "Kürt Sorunu ve Özyönetim," January 13, 2016.

¹³ Guibernau and Rex, *The Ethnicity Reader*.

¹⁴ Uğur Mumcu, *Kürt Dosyası* (Istanbul: Araştırmacı Gazetecilik Vakfı, 2015).

ened and improved the point of view of this research with his books and researches which see the Kurdish problem as an important part of imperialism and significant problems of foreign influences.

To explain the structure of the peace process in theory, the studies of Vicenç Fisas¹⁵ are very helpful; however, he was analysing only limited peace processes, and was not focusing on the Kurdish question too much. This research preferred to use his studies on the theoretical parts of the peace process and adapted his theoretical framework especially by identifying actors of the peace process in the Kurdish question and by giving some statistical data for the rates of peace process in the context of reaching success and failure. The research also interpreted the Kurdish case with these tables and data which were in the studies of Vicenç Fisas.

Looking at the incidents that involve terrorism and ethnicity problems without referencing the politics and social dimensions of the issue are not enough to explain such complicated problems. However, there is also not enough research which covers the latest developments on the PKK and Kurdish question in Turkey in the context of the failure of the peace process and its potential reasons. This question is partly covered by some newspaper articles and a few books.¹⁶

The previous researches' approaches were different from each other mainly due to the multidimensional structure of the issue. This research will focus on both internal failures in policies and foreign influences on the problem. I believe that this research is more comprehensive and objective by combining different factors while analysing the Kurdish question.

¹⁵ Vicenç Fisas, *Dünyada Barış Süreçleri* (Istanbul: Agora Kitaplığı, 2010).

¹⁶ See Saygı Öztürk, *Kırmızı Klasör* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2015); Ezgi Başaran, *Barış: Bir Varmış Bir Yokmuş* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2015).

In the first part, the research follows a more historical and chronological approach in telling the reasons for the failure stage by stage. In the second part, it details what the reasons for the failure are, so the research had to conduct more recent research such as from newspaper articles and journals. My perspective on this research was that even though the Kurdish question is a multidimensional problem, there are some main push factors that have given way to it effectively. These push factors are the internal policy which Turkey had and the international influences which affected Kurdish question in the framework of the US, EU and the Middle East.

CHAPTER 1: HOW DID SOLUTION PROCESS GET STARTED AND DEVELOP?

In this chapter, the methods of the solution process between 2005 and 2009, and after 2009 will be explained in detail. The significant developments and procedures which shaped the policies in the solution process will be analysed.

Before explaining these stages of the peace process it is necessary to summarise what the peace process means for the Kurdish question and PKK. The peace process aims to end violence by a specific agreement using the mediation of third parties; therefore, a peace process should include both negotiations and mediation.¹⁷ In 2009, AKP tried to solve the PKK problem and Kurdish question by a variety of negotiations. Even though the peace process could not be solved easily in the short term, the Kurdish question and PKK problem had different scopes because of the long history and complicated social and political structure.

To understand the beginning of the solution process, two recent time periods should be analysed carefully. The first period is between 2005 and 2009 during which the PKK increased its terror actions in Turkey dramatically. The second period is after 2009 during which the first steps of the solution process began to be taken by multiple negotiations and talks. However before beginning to explain the incidents of these time periods, the 2000s should also be looked at in the context of the AKP beginning to rise as a strong political party in Turkey.

In 2002, the AKP government came to power with its conservative views, winning the majority of votes in the election in Turkey. Turkey began to be involved in a different process with the AKP government since 2002 with the adoption of different ideological perspectives and an Islamist framework in its political culture.

¹⁷ Fisas, *Dünyada Barış Süreçleri*, 3–4.

Within the framework of the Kurdish question some reforms began to occur in 2002 under the leadership of the AKP government. It is stated that some educational reforms were made by allowing Kurdish language classes in August 2002.¹⁸ The considerable number of Kurdish festivals and organisations were held in Diyarbakir.¹⁹ In addition to this, some reforms dealing with Kurdish language were prepared with the support of relevant regulations in the rule of law. Law No. 4963 was passed by Turkish parliament in September 2003 and this led to the legalisation of Kurdish being learned and taught as a dialect. New training centres for teaching Kurdish were opened and new Kurdish broadcastings were established.²⁰

The points of views of the Kurds in terms their desires should also be refereed to understand the Kurdish question. However, it is not very easy to determine the aims of the Kurds because they are very heterogeneous. According to Marcus, the main demand of Kurds was to establish a separate state and it has been seen that PKK was the only tool that could be used by them to achieve their aims.²¹ According to Kansu, it was not Kurds but the people who use the Kurdish question in a different manner who sometimes supported federalism, sometimes separation or sometimes autonomy; so it is difficult to say that every Kurd wants this or that.²²

In 2004, PKK began to be organised effectively again by regrouping its forces. The PKK unilaterally ceased fire in 1998, however it was declared that PKK wanted to end this ceasefire in 2004. The cancellation of the ceasefire by the PKK in 2004 inflamed a conflict between security

¹⁸ Aliza Marcus, "Turkey's PKK: Rise Fall, Rise Again?" *World Policy Journal* 24 (2007): 82.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Mustafa Çoşar Ünal, *Counterterrorism in Turkey: Policy Choices and Policy Effects and Toward the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK)* (Oxford: Routledge, 2012) 78.

²¹ Marcus, "Turkey's PKK," 82.

²² Interview with Işık Kansu, August 10, 2016.

forces and terrorists in 2004 and onwards. The PKK ended the ceasefire in 2004, believing that the state would attack against itself soon.²³ The ceasefire was ended by Öcalan because he was trying to show the necessity of the PKK existing by benefiting from the frustration which was caused by the lack of communication between the state and Kurdish question.²⁴

In the triangle of PKK, AKP and the Kurdish question, both the military actions and the desires of the negotiations have to be considered together. Until 2006, both sides had significant number of deaths and the reasons for the conflict were Ankara's political inaction and the factor of Iraq.²⁵ The multidimensional and international structure of the Kurdish question led to a more complicated situation. Some possible formulas for a solution were tried by AKP, however the replies to the methods for these solutions by the PKK were usually very harsh. The situation was getting worse for Turkey and society was becoming more open as a target for terrorism. Between 2005 and 2009, the situation would be worse than the previous decade.

²³ Paul Joseph White, *The PKK: Coming Down from the Mountains* (London: Zed Books, 2015), 44.

²⁴ Aliza Marcus, "The Kurds' Evolving Strategy: The Struggle Goes Political in Turkey," *World Affairs* 175 (2012): 392.

²⁵ Marcus, "Turkey's PKK," 75.

Strategy of Terrorist Groups

There are many different types of terrorist groups, and they each employ unique tactics, despite sharing some of the basic principles that determine their goals and actions. Some groups arise from religious roots, such as Islamist jihadist terror organization, Al-Qaeda, whereas others have their origins in ethnic identity, such as PKK. All terror organizations base their actions on strategies; however, uncovering and defining these is not always easy.

To begin our assessment, it is necessary to introduce and evaluate the main strategies and approaches known to be employed by terrorist groups. Therefore, it is necessary to define the notion and general strategies informing terrorism clearly, it is not possible to offer an all-encompassing definition that includes all terrorist organizations. Generally, we can assert that many terrorist groups aim to influence or change their target's behavior to realize a political objective through the use of terror tactics. Importantly, it should be mentioned that it is challenging to determine the overriding strategies of terrorist groups, because they often comprise a dynamic dimension, which permits changes and evolutions in both objectives and structures. Thus, in many cases the ultimately rationality of terrorist organizations' actions might be questioned.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to attempt to understand the structure and strategies of such organizations, because Governments need to be able to understand them to respond to their actions. Although some uncertainty and changeability informs the tactics of terror organizations, according to Crenshaw (1987, 14), there are two main approaches to terrorism, an 'instrumental approach' and an 'organizational approach'. Crenshaw (1987, 13) explains:

"The first explanation (instrumental approach) is based on the assumption that the act of terrorism is a deliberate choice by a political actor. The organization, as a unit, acts to achieve collective values, which involve radical changes in political and social conditions. Terrorism is interpreted as a response to external stimuli, particularly government actions."

In addition to this, according to Crenshaw (1987, 19), states, some terror organizations must strive to survive as strong political actors in competitive environments, and therefore apply organizational process theory to strengthen or enhance their position in the political environment.

To achieve their aims terrorist organizations employ known tactics for their survival, Neumann and Smith (2008) have characterized these in three stages; i.e. disorientation and alienation from society, responding to the actions of a target, and legitimate decision-making. Neumann and Smith (2008) attribute these stages to the terrorist organizations themselves; however, sometimes government responses against certain sectors of society contribute to the first two stages, by creating angry masses and heightening their alienation (Neumann and Smith 2008). According to Neumann and Smith (2008, 46) terror campaigns do not ultimately achieve victory by alienating individuals and tarnishing governments' images, but by 'gaining legitimacy' as a result of strategic organized management within terrorist groups. Achieving this final stage is not always easy for a terror organization; however, gaining legitimacy is essential if it is to be recognized by a government or achieve status in the minds of the people.

When terrorist groups seek legitimacy in society, governments typically respond with a variety of actions. These can involve retaliation against the actions of terror organizations, or may involve negotiation to resolve a specific situation. Therefore, it is through the actions of governments, political parties, and government officials, that terror organizations are first recognized and taken seriously. Moreover, a terror organization might also interact to increase its popularity by stating their demands to the population at large or people in authority. As part of the legitimization process, terror organizations use diverse tactics to influence society, to disseminate knowledge of their aims, and attract people's interest, and desire to transform different aspects of society to fit their ideologies. According to Neumann and Smith (2008, 47), terror organizations apply three main influential methods to exert an effect on society, to realize their aims. The first tactic involves terror organizations utilizing the media to spread different information to members of society, possibly trying to influence public opinion by controlling media tools and threatening the existing regime (Neumann and Smith 2008). Secondly, terror organizations frequently use the internet to communicate their own stories and thoughts by preparing audio or visual items distributed via websites. Thirdly, they can seek to establish 'political agitation' by forming organizations to assist terrorist groups by providing materials, tools such as intelligence, shelters or food (Neumann and Smith 2008, 49-50). Crenshaw (1981, 379-399) summarizes the basic aims of terror organizations similarly, as advertising, provocation, and damaging the political power of the government.

Moreover, Price (1977, 54-58) states that terror organizations try to delegitimize the governing regime, through assassinations, advertising and provocation.

It is important to understand before continuing that: ‘Terrorist organizations almost always are weaker than the governments they target and, as a result, are vulnerable to government retaliation’ (Kydd, Walter 2006, 61). This means terrorist organizations typically employ brutal tactics, which can result in the deaths of many innocent people to balance their comparative weakness relative to governments. PKK, which has been one of the most effective terror organizations to date, since 1980, stated two specific aims in terms of target response and gaining legitimacy. According to Basaran (2015); while the founder of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan’s initial aim was to establish an independent Kurdish state, this goal changed to include demands for democratic confederalism within the borders of Turkey. So even though there were different aims at the beginning of the establishment process of PKK, there are different opinions nowadays about whether PKK wants to have independent Kurdish state or autonomy nor not. However, it should not be underestimated that terror organizations select strategies according to their aims, but they might use different tactics or have different declarations to reach their aims without possibility of struggling with any difficulties that might be created by the government or the society.

While some terror organizations use suicide bombs, others choose to incite regional violence, and others to attack big cities or strategic points in specific locations. Pape links aims and strategies as follows: ‘Suicide terrorism is more likely to be employed against states with democratic political systems than authoritarian governments for several reasons’ (Pape 2003, 349). Pape further, saying: ‘Since terrorists can inflict only moderate damage in comparison to even small interstate wars, terrorism can be expected to coerce only if the target state is viewed as especially vulnerable to punishment’ (Pape 2003, 349). According to Pape, even though Iraq is known to act more oppressively toward the Kurds than Turkey, many Kurdish groups chose to attack to democratic Turkey, rather than authoritarian Iraq (Pape 2003, 350). When the case of PKK is evaluated, it is apparent that it used different tactics in different periods. PKK has been very influential for a considerable length of time in eastern parts of Turkey.

Neumann and Smith (2007, 50) mentions that: ‘When support for a specific terror organization is concentrated into a certain region, ‘no go’ areas in which there is life and security risk might emerge, these promote ‘political agitation’. This tactic has been used by PKK frequently in the past, and was still being used in 2015. PKK tried to establish ‘no go’ areas by controlling eastern parts of Turkey through assassinations and widespread suicide bombing. As many people feared to live in this insecure environment, some of them began to migrate to different regions in Turkey hoping for better living conditions. PKK also employed an instrumental approach to pursue its aims especially in Turkey. Because PKK aimed to establish an independent and sovereign Kurdish State within the borders of Turkey, its influence began to be felt strongly in certain regions of Turkey, where it carried out attacks and bombings to bring it into conflict with the Turkish government.

Regardless of the disparate aims of different terrorist groups, it is broadly acknowledged that terrorism has been and continues to be a very serious problem for humanity. Indeed, the criticality of implementing effective counterterrorism methods increase daily. In the case of PKK and Al-Qaida, governments should have more serious preventions by trying to understand their organizations’ structure not only by having a war with them but also using different political methods that includes negotiation or bargaining process. Terrorism cannot be defined as a problem experienced by a particular region or country, but is an important threat to governments globally, and international organizations. Despite the peculiar local political and social dynamics that create a huge diversity of problems, which emphasize the need to tackle terrorism in specific regions, terrorist groups themselves are not necessarily bound by geographical location. Such organizations can target different places, by employing communication strategies that enable them to threaten more than one country, using media or technology to create more powerful effects and gain legitimacy. The increasing in disoriented and alienated of certain parts of society might cause to violent reactions that includes the possibility to turn into terrorist action. Gunaratna and Oreg (2010, 1044) reference an integration among individuals, society and groups in terrorism studies, and that studies of terrorism should not be necessarily arise from the political and social contexts of the society from which they emerged, but also from the internal dynamics of the terrorist groups themselves.

To understand terrorism itself efficiently and find solutions against the effects of actions of terrorist organizations, the strategies and structure of terrorist groups should be identified clearly, without underestimating the various instrumental and organizational approaches and diverse tactics of terrorist groups.

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1.1. Between 2005 and 2009

In the years between 2005 and 2009, Turkey experienced considerable number of terror attacks. This part will first focus on what kind of policy reforms were made by AKP and second, on what the main actions of PKK were in terms of escalation of the terrorism.

The question dealing with the breakdown of harmony in society and the Kurdish question was even more important in the foreign policy of Turkey and the accession process to the EU. If Turkey wanted to be modern, democratic, and have a sustainable economy with effective foreign policies, it had to solve this problem immediately.²⁶ This idea began to occupy the government and public more than ever. Moreover, the Kurdish question was affecting Turkey politically, economically, culturally and socially, intensely. The stigmatisation of Kurds, polarisation among the people in the society, difficulties for distinguishing where the terrorism began and where Kurds finished were the main topics upon which the discussions during the 2000s chiefly focussed. Every Kurds began to be stigmatised as a symbol of the problem and terrorism, and this led to increased social stratification in Turkish society.

In terms of the policy-making process and declaration by AKP in dealing with the Kurdish question, at the beginning of 2005 there was a common sense that Erdoğan had a strong desire to solve the PKK and Kurdish problem. In the third year of AKP government, Erdoğan gave a speech in Diyarbakir saying that the Kurdish problem was also his problem.²⁷ It was felt by both the Turkish public and the international community that there were strong demands and some plans for seeking a solution to the Kurdish question and ending the PKK terror by the AKP government.

²⁶ Fuat E. Keyman, "Rethinking the Kurdish Question in Turkey: Modernity, citizenship and democracy," *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 38 (2012): 1

²⁷ Gonca Şenay, "Kürt Sorununda 12 Yıllın Karnesi," *Al Jazeera Turk*, June 2, 2015.