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Volume 20, numéro 1, spring 2000

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/jcs20_01art07

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Éditeur(s)

The University of New Brunswick

ISSN

1198-8614 (imprimé)

1715-5673 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Criss, N. B. & Cetiner, Y. T. (2000). Terrorism and the Issue of International Cooperation. *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 20(1), 127–139.

Terrorism and the Issue of International Cooperation

by

Nur Bilge Criss and Yavuz Turan Çetiner

THE PROBLEM

The low-intensity war of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) against Turkey is a study of a conflict where foreign support for the terrorists - or at least a refusal to cooperate against them - had become a major aspect of a problem that, between 1984 and 1998, led to 10,284 deaths and 16,198 injuries.[1] The struggle cost Turkey an estimated US \$8 billion annually.[2]

In some cases, the cause of this behavior was a desire to destabilize Turkey. The low-intensity conflict continued in large part because of its international context. The PKK received support from Syria, Iran, Northern Iraq's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) faction and Greece; and whether through extortion or voluntary means, financial and moral support came from the Kurdish workers of Turkish citizenship in Europe. The PKK also financed its activities by international narcotic trafficking, as well as with illegal alien trafficking in Western Europe.[3]

Turkey's allies are to a large extent supportive of the fight against terrorism, seeing this conflict as part of the larger battle with political violence. Still, anti-Turkish lobbies are ready to take up the cause of the "oppressed Kurds"; and defining terrorism or accepting the insurgents' claims can influence the behavior of democratic states and major forces, with the motto that "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter."

It must be noted, however, that there is a wide discrepancy between European attitudes toward the PKK and diaspora Kurdish nationalism, and the attitudes of Syria, Iran, Iraq's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and Russia. While the issue was approached from the viewpoint of human rights and democratization in Europe,[4] it was used by the latter group of states/factions (in PUK's case) as a trump card against Turkey.

In the case of Syria, the objective was to coerce Turkey to allow more water to flow into Syria from the Euphrates River. Syria believes that the transboundary watercourse is being hampered by the Southeastern Anatolia Project which is comprised of several dams and hydroelectric plants. It was not a mere coincidence that the first attacks of the PKK came in 1984, the year when this project became operationalized. Attempts to destabilize Hatay (the former Ottoman sanjak of Alexandretta), which was joined to Turkey in 1939 from Syria-under-French mandate, was another objective, because Syria today, still refuses to recognize this loss of territory.

For Iran, supporting the PKK was a trump card against the alleged presence of the Mujahidin-i-Halq opposition in Turkey, as well as part of a policy to destabilize secular

Turkey for ideological reasons. Although Kurdish nationalism is a challenge to both Iran and Turkey, and collaboration against terrorism is a common official goal, accusations from Turkey of support to PKK and denials from Iran continue.

Following the 1991 Gulf War, the United Nations created a semi-autonomous region in northern Iraq by demarcating the 36th parallel as a no-fly zone for Iraq. The region houses two major tribal authorities competing for power, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). After 1991, the PKK also tried to bid for power in the region. This, in turn, resulted in several Turkish military incursions into the territory. These actions invited serious criticism from Baghdad, as well as the West.[5]

Turkey's relations with Russia were strained in the 1990s over support for the secessionist movements in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), namely Turkish mercenary support in Abkhazia and Chechnia. Some factions in the Duma retaliated by lending support to the PKK, and accommodating Abdullah ...calan, the PKK leader, on Russian territory after he became a fugitive from Syria in late 1998.

The problem has many international dimensions. Therefore, the objective of this article is to evaluate the role of the international actors and to differentiate the Kurdish/Southeastern issue from terrorism in Turkey. The causes of terrorism, diplomatic and military aspects of managing terrorism, post-modern dimensions of terrorism and its aftermath are discussed. Our first contention is that Kurdish nationalism can only be satisfied in a pluralistic society given that the physical, sectarian, linguistic and cultural divisions are marked by the Turkish, Syrian, Iraqi and Iranian borders. The second contention is that the Kurdish problem and terrorism are entirely different issues, and taking a categorical approach neither helps resolve the problems, nor does it help in the fight against political violence.

The Causes

Smug in the belief that Turks were the last peoples of the Ottoman Empire to have embraced nationalism, the Turkish Republican elite settled down to build a nation state. The Republic naturally reflected an ethnic mosaic because of the Ottoman heritage; the shrinking borders had brought in Muslim emigres of many different ethnic backgrounds. Kurdish nationalism was eschewed both deliberately and sub-consciously. One study traces the Kurdish question in state parlance as one of denial of Kurdishness, as well as referring to rebellions in terms of banditry, foreign provocation, anti-secularism or tribal resistance to central authority.[6] Since these categories involved half truths or imagined perceptions, nationalism, in the sense that the Republic defined it, was not to be appropriated to any particular ethnic group. The Republicans defined nationalism, not as one based on race, ethnicity or religion, but on a common culture of nationality, of being united during good times and bad. Nationalism, defined almost in marital terms, was not accepted by all Kurds all the time. Kurdish nationalism, although historically manifested differently in Iran, Iraq, Syria, the Ottoman Empire/Turkey, had a history of its own.[7] Perhaps that is why it would be difficult to integrate all Kurds into the Turkish polity. Denialism was to make it formidably difficult. Integrative approaches worked in the Empire as well as the Republic; but since these policies targeted the upper echelons of the

Kurdish society, it left out the economically deprived who were entrusted to the mercies of tribal chiefs and religious sheikhs. Even as late as the 1990s, although it was widely understood that the issue had ethnic and economic roots, giving a name to the problem was difficult. Emphasizing the latter, B'ylent Ecevit, leader of the Democratic Left Party and current prime minister, calls the problem "the Southeastern Question," emanating from an impoverished region. Groups, such as TOSAV (Foundation for the Research of Societal Problems), argue that the issue arises from the lack of pluralism and democracy. TOSAV and others argue that a blend of economic development and accommodation of Kurdish identities is needed. Foreign scholars advise Turkey to deal with the problem instead of procrastinating, denying and hiding behind the struggle against terrorism, especially now that the military has practically won the armed struggle.[8]

The ethnic situation in Turkey is not a clear division along a Turkish stratum versus the Kurds.[9] If anything, it is first and foremost a class struggle between the Kurds themselves.[10] The current integration of many Kurds into the Turkish society and into the business and political decision-making elite reflects a class distinction; the integrated Kurds are invariably big landowners and urbanites.[11] Rebellious elements though, have been the religious sheikhs[12] or those who rebel against dire poverty, as in PKK's case. Integrative policies were not introduced by the Republic, but by Sultan Abd'Ylhamid II (1876-1909) when "tribal schools" were established in Istanbul where the children of the Albanian and Kurdish tribal leaders were educated. The Sultan wanted to integrate the next generation of tribal leaders into the state apparatus, since these schools trained only civil and military personnel.[13] Kurdish nationalism was a factor nonetheless. One of the diplomat/intellectuals of Kurdish origin, the Ottoman Empire's ambassador to Stockholm in 1898, Serif Pasha, represented Kurdish nationalism par excellence.[14] However, the nationalist aspirations of the Kurds were frustrated in each country, whenever attempts were made to break away.[15]

Terrorism is an entirely different matter. Between 1965 and 1980, the Turkish state mostly struggled against Marxist-Leninist terrorist groups of mixed ethnic backgrounds, and managed to subdue them following the September 1980 military coup d'etat. In 1978, ...calan had formed the PKK along Maoist lines, in an attempt to carry out an armed insurrection from rural Turkey and to establish a communist Kurdish state. Whether the organization foresaw or got wind of the coming coup d'etat in 1980, ...calan had already moved the PKK to Syria and Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.[16]

Although ...calan defined his struggle as a separatist Kurdish nationalist movement in the beginning,[17] it was actually internationalist because of its ideological coloring. And it was not surprising that the PKK found much needed foreign support in Syria, a client of the USSR at that time. Since the PKK was totally comprised of Kurds, it increasingly became identified with the Kurdish issue in the minds of many. Over the years the PKK's demands changed from separatism to Islamic solidarity, and then to a call for a federation of Kurds and Turks, and later was followed by a demand that Kurdish cultural rights be recognized as part of human rights and democratization within Turkey. Meanwhile, during the last 15 years of its existence, the changing regional/global conjuncture caused

PKK terrorism to become internationalized, and it began courting assistance from the democratic countries of the West.

Domestic and Military Aspects of Managing Terrorism

As a case study of how a terrorist group courts democratic forces, one might examine the PKK's relationship with Germany. The large number of Kurdish/Turkish workers in Germany who contribute to the PKK implies that the group must maintain that country's goodwill. Thus, PKK leader Abdullah ...calan increasingly spoke of his aim as federalism "on the German model."

In 1997, in an effort to convince the Germans to lift the ban on the PKK, which they had imposed in 1993, ...calan publicly promised that the organization would no longer engage in violence in Germany. When the spokesperson of the German Ministry of the Interior announced that this was not probable, ...calan immediately threatened Germany by stating that the PKK was working with members of the Red Army fraction, a German terrorist organization.[\[18\]](#) This alternation between moderate appearances and a quick resort to threats of violence, when thwarted, is characteristic of terrorist groups. Likewise the September 1998 announcement of ...calan regarding a ceasefire, a discourse which was ornate with respect for human rights and Turkey's territorial integrity, stated that the PKK had no separatist claims. This again points to the fluidity of the terrorist approach.

The high priority on public relations is another area for exploitation. In Belgium, the PKK operated MED-TV, an international television channel, which was temporarily closed in 1997 when Turkish diplomats convinced the Belgian security forces that it was a money-laundering operation. Today the PKK still has studios in Brussels and England in which they use transponders to relay programs to a commercially owned satellite. By 1999, another temporary closure led to the establishment of yet another TV channel (CTV) through the same conduits, but now its discourse was changed from promoting terrorism to promoting human rights.

The G-7 Ottawa Ministerial meeting, Sharm al-Shaykh Summit, G-7 Lyon Summit (June 1996) and the Paris Ministerial Conference (July 1996) reflected the increasing importance attached to fighting terrorism on a multi-state basis. Turkey noted with pleasure that all these measures were close to its positions with regard to fighting terrorism. For example, the calls to prohibit the use of charitable, social or cultural associations by terrorists as a cover for their own activities, to take measures against terrorist fundraising and or extortion, and last but not least, efforts to prohibit the use of the political asylum process for persons implicated in terrorist activities, all corresponded to Turkey's position. In January 1997, the European Union defined terrorism by equating terrorism and violence. Accordingly, a resolution which passed in the European Parliament calls for diplomatic, political and economic sanctions against countries which support terrorism.[\[19\]](#)

Even the direct military aspects of fighting terrorism have taken on international dimensions as the PKK used both Iraq and Syria as safe havens. During a May 1997

offensive into northern Iraq, the Turkish military captured tons of food, arms and ammunition while inflicting heavy casualties on the PKK. Two Turkish helicopters were downed by SA-7B missiles. These latter arms were traced back to a 1991 smuggling operation through the Bosphorus which had caused a diplomatic crisis between Iran and Turkey. Tehran had declared that the unmarked military cargo, as well as the chemical, acetyl acid anhydride (legally used in tanning hide), belonged to Iran. The Istanbul State Security Court ruled that the captured ship, Cape Maleas, was being used for international arms and drug smuggling; but the Turkish Supreme Court of Appeal overruled that decision, and the cargo continued onto Iran. Six years later the same missiles, guns and acetyl acid anhydride (also used in making heroin from morphine) was discovered in the PKK camps of north Iraq by the Turkish military during the May 1997 cross-border security operation.[\[20\]](#)

The major difference in this latter military operation, when compared with the previous ones, was that neither Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, nor Jalal Talabani, of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan objected; however, all of the Arab countries and Iran did protest. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs tried to bring the KDP and PUK together in what was called the "Ankara Process." This was an attempt to stop their mini-wars and work toward stability in northern Iraq. In the process, Ankara seemed to have convinced the Kurdish leaders that if their territories should be cleansed of the PKK, Turkey could extend them meaningful economic support.[\[21\]](#) In contrast to the KDP, however, the PUK refused to fight the PKK. Later the PKK militants took refuge in PUK-controlled territory and, along with the PUK, launched attacks on the KDP fighters, as reported the the KDP spokesman in Ankara. Talabani's perplexing behavior may only be explained in terms of his using the PKK card against his KDP rivals, perhaps feeling threatened by the past cooperation between Ankara and the KDP. Turkish efforts continued, however, with help from the United States and Britain, to preserve peace among the Iraqi Kurdish factions and to ensure the exclusion of PKK from the territory they controlled.[\[22\]](#) In September 1998, the two Iraqi Kurdish factions were brought together in Washington, DC to be persuaded to end their civil war. Control of the PKK may have been only a byproduct of this meeting. However, since no Turkish official was invited to the meeting, it raised suspicion in Turkey as to whether the US supported an autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan, or worse yet, a Kurdish state. Suspicion lingered even though the US reiterated that this was not the case.

The Turkish army made clear that a solely military success was impossible. An end to the conflict required resolving the southeast's socioeconomic ills to reduce support and recruitment for the PKK. During the 1996-97 Welfare and True Path party coalition, Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan counted on the magic of religion to prevent terrorism. His deputy, Tansu ,iller discounted every solution except that of a military triumph, to the point that the general staff military executives publicly announced the military had already done its part. Given a coalition mired in religious fundamentalism, corruption and scandals, a proactive stance awaited the new ANASOL-D coalition (Motherland Party and Democratic Left Party and Democratic Turkey Party) in 1998. But the major scandal that had erupted in 1996, named after the location where it took place, Susurluk, implicated the then-Prime Minister Tansu ,iller directly in covert operations against the

PKK and its sympathizers. Some operatives and high level bureaucrats were definitely involved in the PKK's lucrative drug trafficking, as they had received kickbacks. Diversions may happen in any covert operation, but ,iller had not even assumed plausible deniability.

Further, she not only had chosen the makeshift counterterrorism operatives from among former ultra-rightist terrorists and drug dealers, but also stood by them in the aftermath of the scandal that erupted after Susurluk. Currently, some other operatives are in jail and/or are being tried in court for many unsolved murders of PKK sympathizers and of underworld bosses who allegedly contributed money to the PKK.

Post-Modern Dimensions of Terrorism

In November 1996, the Susurluk scandal erupted in Turkey following this single traffic accident. In the crashed car were a member of parliament, the Kurdish leader of a pro-state tribe from the southeast, the only survivor, a former Istanbul police chief, and a right-wing terrorist wanted both by Interpol and the Turkish security apparatus. The latter was a member of the underworld of ultra-nationalists, gangsters and drug traffickers. As Walter Laqueur wrote, it is sometimes becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between politically motivated terrorism and crime.[23]

Major political figures in the state, from the minister of the interior to the prime minister, were also implicated. The situation was compounded when a German State Criminal Court judge pointed to a high-level (female) Turkish minister as the "godmother of drug smugglers." [24] What had begun as a 1993 National Security Council decision to cut the PKK's financial resources, to which narco-smuggling alone brought about US \$2 million, resulted in suggestions that the government was linked to drug smuggling. Counterterrorism received a serious blow, because the efforts of honest officials, who tried to combat the problem, were ignored.

Security sources had seized tons of heroin and other drugs and had arrested 511 PKK members allegedly involved in drug trafficking, the Anatolia News Agency reported. The Security Department's Smuggling and Organized Crime Division stated that since 1984, security forces had conducted 129 operations against narcotic smugglers directly linked with the PKK, seizing more than 2 tons of heroin, 13 tons of hashish, 4 tons and morphine and 22 tons of acetic acid anhydride, which is used to produce heroin.[25]

Thus, terrorism overlapped with crime; and at times it drew into it the very state which was supposed to fight against it. International support, whether overtly or otherwise, would have paled against the incumbent government's incompetence, had it not been for frequently changing coalition governments and the capture of PKK's leader ...calan in February 1999.[26]

The Aftermath

By Autumn 1998, Turkey decided that the time for an international showdown was proper and pressed Syria to extradite ...calan. At that time there were no Israeli-Syrian negotiations going on. The Turkish military had been successful in suppressing the PKK. Syria was still on the United States' Department of State list of terrorist states. Lastly, Turkey had run out of patience with Syrian denials of harboring PKK and ...calan.

Faced with a possible military threat, Syria complied and ...calan's saga as a fugitive seeking protection and asylum in sympathetic countries began. This period also marked the peak of what was perceived in Turkey as European support for diaspora Kurdish nationalism and for the PKK. ...calan first flew to the Russian Federation and was accommodated, while the Russian government denied the existence of a person under that name until the Israeli press confirmed ...calan's whereabouts. Then sympathetic Italian communist deputies escorted him to Italy, through Greece.

The Italians put him under house arrest, but refused to extradite him to Turkey because of the capital punishment that he might face, although no one sentenced to death had been executed since 1984. Germany did not arrest ...calan, although there was a warrant for his arrest in Germany for having ordered certain murders that had been committed on German soil. After seeking and being denied accommodation in the Netherlands, ...calan flew back to Italy and then on to Greece in a rented airplane. He was at long last apprehended in Kenya, while leaving the Greek ambassador's residence, and was turned over to Turkish security officials in February 1999. Nairobi promptly requested that the Greek ambassador be recalled for having compromised Kenya, and for having lost his credibility. The Greek ambassador had hidden the real identity of ...calan when he had entered Kenya under the auspices of Greek security officers.

Much international advice followed that a public and fair trial must be held in Turkey. The government refused suggestions that Europeans be allowed to send observers, but agreed to allow foreign listeners, as well as foreign journalists, to attend the court proceedings. Toward the end of the hearings, the State Security Court recalled the only military judge, thus making the body of judges all civilian; this had previously been a sensitive issue with the Europeans.

In his lengthy defense, ...calan apologized, admitted that he had been wrong in resorting to armed insurrection, described the phases PKK had gone through regarding its objectives, and concluded that at the present time he wanted Kurdish-Turkish relations to be reformulated through further democratization. His emphasis was on peace and democracy, as well as cultural rights for the Kurds.^[27] The court did not find him sincere or convincing, and refuted his peaceful intentions and ceasefire declarations by exposing tape recorded wireless orders to the contrary (...calan can only speak Turkish). He was convicted and sentenced to death on charges of treason. Whether his execution will stay after the appeals processes both at home and abroad is not clear. ...calan's lawyers have stated that they will take the case to the European Human Rights Court, if necessary.

Pro-PKK riots had followed in Europe as soon as ...calan was arrested because of what Newsweek termed "a sense of betrayal."[\[28\]](#) But the European streets were silent after the court verdict. "With Mr. Ocalan out of the picture," wrote The Economist, "and the PKK inevitably in disarray, Mr. Ecevit could try to cut a deal with the Kurds from a position of strength."[\[29\]](#)

"Cutting deals" is not a very realistic expectation, not only because there is consensus among the state elite to solve the problems (legal, administrative, social and economic) within a national perspective,[\[30\]](#) but also because there is a myriad of contenders claiming to represent Kurdish interests. Among these are the PKK, several diaspora Kurdish groups/parties, and HADEP (People's Democracy Party) in Turkey. A new group established by PKK's political wing in Europe (the Peace and Democratic Resolution Group) arrived in Turkey on 29 October 1999. Their aim was to obtain political recognition from the state, but they were immediately arrested on charges of membership in a terrorist organization.[\[31\]](#) Most Kurdish activists in Europe, even if they are pacifists like Kemal Burkay, the leader of the Kurdish Socialist platform, are *personae non gratae* in Turkey for having been involved in leftist terrorism prior to 1980. HADEP, on the other hand, is a legitimate political party. It did not win enough votes to carry representatives to the Grand National Assembly in the 1999 general elections, plausibly because there was state intimidation against party rallies. But the local elections brought seven HADEP mayors to power in southeastern Turkey. In October 1999, President Şeyman Demirel gave an audience to the HADEP mayors, signifying that they were accepted at the highest echelons of the state apparatus. The charges that HADEP had faced, which might have resulted in the party's closure, were dropped. Both the president and the judiciary signalled that representing Kurdish interests should no longer be associated with being a dissident. An amnesty law, which will be extended to PKK members who were not directly involved in killings, may soon pass, if the coalition partners reach consensus. And, there has been a tangible ease in tensions between Turkey and Europe, although a recent Italian court decision extended the right of political asylum to ...calan, after his verdict was passed in Turkey.

CONCLUSIONS

...calan's departure from Syria and his eventual capture became a turning point in Turkey's foreign relations on the issue of terrorism. Most of Turkey's allies and Russia had cooperated by not granting asylum to ...calan. The Greek Foreign Minister, Theodoros Pangalos, the Interior Minister Alekos Papadopoulos and Public Order Minister Philipos Petsalnikos, had all resigned at the request of Prime Minister Costas Simitis. The Foreign Minister "Pangalos was in charge of the attempt to hide Ocalan at the Greek ambassador's residence in Nairobi, Kenya, and find him political asylum."[\[32\]](#) The new Foreign Minister, Yorgos Papandreu, seems open to pursue a dialogue with Turkey, starting with cooperation on softer issues such as the environment, trade, tourism and terrorism. And after the disastrous earthquakes which shook both countries in summer 1999, collaboration and mutual assistance for disaster relief was added. Only if these confidence building measures between the two states succeed may the larger problems concerning the Aegean Sea, no fly-zones and Cyprus be tackled.

Although the media and leftist parties in the West interpreted the violent demonstrations following ...calan's capture as universal Kurdish support for him,

the actual size of demonstrations, however, suggest a carefully coordinated attempt by a small group bent on publicity. The following figures are taken from pro-PKK internet sources: In Berlin there were 150 protesters, including children; in Frankfurt 50, and in Bonn between 20 and 30 - all in a country with half a million immigrants of Kurdish origin . . .[33]

The numbers were similar elsewhere in Europe.

The US supported Turkey in its fight against terrorism throughout these years, only stating every now and then that human rights should be handled with more care. In fact, the US stood out among many of Turkey's allies by identifying the PKK as a terrorist organization. "The U.S. government deserves bouquets for its effective pursuit of Ocalan and for standing alone among Western nations in supporting Turkey," wrote Alan Makovsky, "Washington behaved appropriately in tracking Ocalan and tipping off the Turks." [34]

It is quite possible that Iran, although not under nearly as much pressure from Turkey as Syria was, may become reluctant to support the PKK because of its pan-Kurdish claims.[35] However, there is another terrorist organization in eastern Turkey, Hezbollah, which comprises the pro-Shari'a Kurds that Iran may support, if it is not already doing so, because of ideological reasons.

The Russian Federation and Turkey concluded an agreement in November 1999, following Prime Minister BÝlent Ecevit's visit, on cooperation against terrorism. This may yet nullify efforts to use the ethnic card against each other. In Russia's case, this involves the support extended to the PKK by the Duma; and in Turkey's case, any unofficial support for the Chechens. Naturally, no names were mentioned in the agreement text. Ecevit's visit was a controversial one because it occurred while Russia was bombing Chechen territory, and as many as 350,000 civilians had become refugees. While the Turkish prime minister conveyed concern about the plight of these civilians, the agreement was indicative that innocent civilians do not fare well in realpolitik.

A revealing analysis came from an Italian expert on strategy. He offered an explanation as to why Europe refused to differentiate between the Kurdish or southeastern issue and terrorism. The cause of the strain between the European Union (EU) and Turkey may be competition between the EU and US in terms of having a voice in Middle Eastern affairs, and the misplaced tactics of the Europeans. It had been a mistake to equate PKK and ...calan with the Kurdish issue. The bigger picture rested on the European desire to acquire political/diplomatic weight in Turkey and the Middle East in proportion to its geographical proximity and interests. Currently the US, Turkey and Israel seem to carry exclusive influence in the area.[36] If this were the case, the timing could not have been more unfortunate. After the 1997 Luxembourg and 1998 Cardiff meeting resolutions, which did not mention Turkey as a candidate for EU membership, Turkey had stopped all

political dialogue with the EU. Therefore, no European country had any leverage over Turkey. Even if Turkey had been declared a candidate state, and the Europeans had political leverage, it would still be unrealistic to expect that Turkey would ease up against what is defined as international terrorism and what the Europeans saw as a human rights issue.

Whatever the reasons for support of or non-cooperation against terrorism abroad, challenges to Turkey are far from over. In September 1999, the PKK declared that it would abolish the Kurdish parliament-in-exile so that it could join the Kurdistan National Congress (KNC), another platform established by the PKK in Amsterdam. KNC is to open offices in the US, England and Scandinavia.[\[37\]](#)

Support for diaspora Kurdish nationalism in the West may continue to strain Turkey's foreign relations. However, since the KNC is a pan-Kurdish medium, it may keep the West from making excessively bold gestures. Pan-Kurdism involves more than just Turkey. Kurds of different Middle Eastern citizenship may reject Kurdish-Turks' leadership in this movement; and the concept itself is loaded with unpredictable consequences.

In conclusion, perceptions and misperceptions abound. Turkey is overly sensitive about disintegration, commonly diagnosed as the Sevres syndrome (named after the Sevres Treaty of 1920, which not only dissolved the Ottoman Empire, but also attempted to disintegrate the Anatolian heartland). Western Europeans, especially during the last decade, believe that they have reached the highest level of political, economic and humanitarian systems possible. They do not want disruption of law and order instigated by Kurdish dissidents in reaction to Turkey. Turkey is certainly lucky not to have paid the price that Europe has had to pay to reach its level of development, after not only one but two disastrous world wars. Turkey only had to deal with the dissolution of an empire, the repercussions of which still challenge the state in the form of Kurdish or other ethnic/emigre nationalism. Turkey desperately needs to synchronize its free market economy with liberal democracy, albeit without compromising the unitary system of state. Much fine tuning is required between political/legislative synchronization and management of terrorism in Turkey and the world.

Endnotes

A preliminary version of this article was presented to the Conference on Middle East Terrorism, BESA Center for Strategic Studies, 26-27 May 1997, Bar Ilan University, Tel-Aviv, Israel.

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