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Effect of 12 September 1980 Coup on Turkish Foreign Policy

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the 12 September 1980 coup d'état in detail and to evaluate its impact on the Turkish foreign policy. Therefore, literature review method was utilized in this study. Firstly, the reasons leading to the 12 September 1980 coup d'état were mentioned and then, Turkey's relations with other countries after the 12 September 1980 coup d'état were analyzed. The impact of the 12 September 1980 coup d'état on the political relations between Turkey and other countries was evaluated and the effects and evaluations on Turkey's foreign policy were interpreted and expressed. In this context, evaluations were made by analyzing the newspaper archives and sources of the period. As a result of the research, it was determined that the 12 September 1980 coup d'état had significant effects on Turkish foreign policy. In the post-coup period, Turkey followed a more strict foreign policy, had problems with the Western countries, and adopted a tougher attitude towards the Soviet Union.

Keywords: Coup; 12 september 1980; military coup; foreign policy; Turkey

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INTRODUCTION

In the literature, the 12 September 1980 coup d'état and the foreign policy issues of that period were mentioned in the memoirs of the journalists of the period, articles in the magazines and mostly in the newspaper agendas rather than scientific publications.

Particularly, the Turkish foreign policy during the military regime, relations with America, Soviet Union and European countries and their perspectives on the coup d'état are mostly found in the newspaper headlines. In this context, an important source of information is the book series, which compiles Uğur Mumcu's articles in newspaper. He witnessed the anarchist environment and kept abreast of the agenda. Information from newspapers, such as Cumhuriyet, Milliyet and Hürriyet, which are still published, is also included. Many newspapers could not be published during the coup d'état; therefore, news was almost monopolized at that period. However, written sources of many people, such as Hasan Cemal, Alparslan Türkeş and Kenan Evren, who interpreted the events from different perspectives, were reached and we attempted to evaluate and analyze the period accordingly. The publications of Milliyet and Hürriyet newspapers, which were archived in some libraries, were obtained by photographing, and the archive of Cumhuriyet newspaper was accessed electronically. The articles reflect the situation of the Turkish people, whereas the headlines reveal Turkey through foreign eyes.

The 12 September 1980 coup d'état happened less than 50 years ago; therefore, it is a subject that has not been included in the scope of historical events. As there are lawsuits still pending and for some people, it is not yet finalized, this coup d'état is not considered worthwhile. In some places, sources written in line with non-objective opinions have been reached, but a common view has been included by scanning many sources for correct information.

While explaining the domestic political situation, the statements of military and politicians of the period, as Süleyman Demirel and Bülent Ecevit, Kenan Evren, were utilized. The subject was deepened by using the books of Mehmet Ali Birand, who has published his research on domestic politics, titled "*12 September 1980 at 04:00*" and "*12 September Turkey's Milestone*". Since 1978, many documentaries have been made about the coup d'état years. For this purpose, it will be better to hear firsthand the ideas and criticisms of the people who lived in that period. In theoretical terms, the coup

has a concept of anarchy. On this subject, realists and neorealists have different arguments. Realists indicate that if there is anarchy in a state and it has progressed enough to disrupt the order, the concept of anarchy definitely originates from the system. Hans Joachim Morgenthau was a realist. Neorealists suggest that anarchy is not a part of a country. The two opposing views create contradictory opinions about a coup, and while trying to explain the reasons that lead to a coup, they offer us alternatives. According to realism, the common feature of all states is that they all attach importance to economic and military values above all else. For this reason, it suggests that no state can cooperate with another state and will always keep its own interests in the foreground. Chaos due to World War II made realism rise because of these views. For the pioneers of neorealism, theory of Gottfried-Karl Kindermann, the theorist of the neorealist approach known as the Munich School, stand out. According to neorealists, the self-interested and destructive effect of anarchy in the state system has a large share in the relations between states. If the international system is accepted as a whole, Kindermann suggests that this system consists of smaller subsystems.

Attempts were made to ease the political climate after the 1971 Turkish military memorandum; however, they were in vain. İsmet İnönü stated that politicians were the reason for military interventions in Turkey and that the interventions would increase. İnönü said: *“Turkey sometimes enters restoration period. During such periods, the army intervenes and stays for a while. After some time, we, politicians, mess things up again, and the military intervenes again. This will continue, and these reconstruction periods will be more frequent”* (Birand, 1985: 13).

The 12 September 1980 Turkish coup d'état had several reasons, including political assassinations, political instability, anti-secular actions and discourses, ethnic and sectarian conflicts posing a risk for civil war, unemployment, and economic problems, such as the black market (Mücek, 2009: 118).

The media also played a crucial role during the coup d'état. Some newspapers were closed between 1970 and 1980, and the number of newspapers has declined in comparison to previous years. Despite the decline in the number of newspapers, magazines started increasing. Ideological magazines were published in addition to women's magazines (İnuğur, 1992: 469).

Media of the period might be divided into two categories in general. The first category

consisted of centrist, left centrist and left-leaning newspapers, such as Hürriyet, Milliyet, Günaydın, Cumhuriyet, Dünya, and Aydınlık, where as the second category consisted of right-leaning newspapers, such as Tercüman, Bayrak, YeniAsya, Son Havadis, Sabah, Milleti Orta Doğu, and Milli Gazete (Kabacalı, 1994:323).

According to Kabacalı, although it was considered as a newspaper in the first category, Hürriyet published expressions legitimizing and affirming army and intervention in the 1971 Turkish military memorandum and subsequent processes (Özerkan, 2009: 65).

RESULTS

There were many remarks that the Decisions of 24 January were effective and even the most important factor leading up to the 12 September coup d'état. The military intervention at the end of the three-year period, where the terrorist incidents had peaked, was considered to precede the economic measures, for the Decisions of January 24 to be implemented, a stable administration (many people considered this to be military administration) would be required.

The USA asked Turkey to accept IMF conditions unconditionally. The U.S. Secretary of State Edmund Muskie stated that Turkey should stop fighting the IMF and make a definitive agreement. "*Turkey should either accept the Free Market Economy or should not call the Western countries anymore*" said Muskie (Alatlı, 2002:486).

Despite all the efforts, the government could not resist any longer, and as a result of the negotiation with the IMF in Paris, started the multiple exchange rate system. The value of one dollar was determined as 47 Lira and 10 Kuruş. New price increases were applied to fuel, alcoholic beverages, iron and steel (Milliyet, 27 June 1979:8).

The titles of the Decisions of 24 January, which would cause many criticisms in terms of the determination process, IMF effect, explanation and implementation, were as follows: Daily exchange rate was introduced, and the Turkish Lira was devalued against the US Dollar. The value of the Turkish lira dropped by 2.7% (\$1=70 Lira).

DISCUSSION

Turkish-American relations have been shaped by various events throughout history and the 70s are considered to be one of the most turbulent periods of these relations. In particular, events such as the poppy crisis, the Cyprus Peace Operation and the arms embargo imposed by the United States on Turkey created tension in Turkish-American

relations. In addition to these, the pre-coup environment in Turkey, where public order could not be maintained, also led to a weakening of relations (Güldemir,1986:131).

Turkish-American relations entered a very tense period in the 70s due to these events. However, relations improved in the following years and the cooperation between the two countries was strengthened again. Nowadays, Turkey and the United States cooperate in many areas and maintain their relations in line with common interests (Oran, 2010:38).

After the September 12 coup d'état, the American belief that order and stability would return to Turkey led to a rapprochement in Turkish-American relations. During this period, Turkey's days of anarchy were a cause for concern for both Turkey and the United States. The 1979 Khomeini Revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of the same year marked an important turning point for America's Middle East strategy. These developments created uncertainties in the region that America could not have foreseen. Therefore, the importance of Turkey as an ally for the US has increased. America played an active role in reorganizing and stabilizing Turkey. In the same period, the foreign policy of Ronald Reagan, who became the US president, led to a rapprochement in Turkish-American relations. During this rapprochement process, military, economic and political cooperation between Turkey and the US increased. During this period, the US provided Turkey with financial and military aid. At the same time, it began to better understand Turkey's strategic importance (Balci, 2013:163).

Another indicator of the rapprochement in Turkish-American relations during this period was the increase in economic aid to Turkey. While Turkey was going through a difficult economic period in the early 1980s, the US supported the Turkish economy by providing economic aid to Turkey. This aid was an important source for Turkey's economic development. Moreover, Turkey's strategic location between East and West was an important factor for America's strategic interests in the Middle East and Asia. Therefore, the US tried to protect its interests in the region by strengthening its cooperation with Turkey. However, it should be noted that this rapprochement has also brought about some controversial issues in Turkish-American relations. In particular, issues such as human rights violations and post-coup arrests in Turkey have led to criticism of America's relations with Turkey. (Gönlübol and Kürkçüoğlu, 1986:605). During the Reagan administration, which succeeded Carter as president, the US tried to increase

Turkey's role in the Gulf policy. However, during the Demirel administration, which was the democratic administration of Turkey before the September 12 coup, the US request to facilitate the use of bases and infrastructure related to the Agile Force was met with a negative response. During the military administration established after the coup, Turkish-American relations gradually improved. During US Secretary of State Haig's visit to Turkey, it was confirmed that Turkey and the US would act together on Gulf policy. Greece, Cyprus, NATO and terrorist organizations were also discussed during the visit (Slany, 2011:543).

In conclusion, America's military presence in Turkey was important to protect strategic interests in the region and to take measures against potential threats such as the Soviet Union. Therefore, America's bases and airfields in Turkey served the US military presence in the Middle East.

It was indicated that Turkish-Greek relations faced difficulties after the coup d'état. It was also stated that Greece withdrew from NATO's military wing after the Cyprus Peace Operation and was uncomfortable with the transfer of its rights in the Aegean Sea to Turkey despite its NATO membership. Since Greece perceived Turkey as a threat, it made attempts to re-enter the military wing of NATO but could not achieve a positive result until 1979.

The statement on Turkish-Greek relations made at a press conference held by the members of the NSC following the 12 September 1980 coup d'état was mentioned. At the meeting, while responding to a question asked by a member of the foreign press about the future of Turkish-Greek relations, Kenan Evren stated that Turkey's relations with Greece had experienced some problems. However, Turkey would make every effort to overcome these obstacles and hoped that Greece would return to NATO.

In the meeting of 27 September 1980, during the announcement of the program of the Ulusu Government, it was stated that negotiation methods would be pursued through talks in order to reach fair solutions that would respect the rights and interests of the parties in Turkey-Greece relations. It was also emphasized that the rights and interests in the Aegean were of vital importance for Turkey, and that the status of the Aegean islands, which was determined by the treaties, should be respected and the treaties concerning the rights of the cognates in Western Thrace should be respected.

The Rogers Plan was a plan issued in 1979 and presented by US Secretary of State

William Rogers to find a solution to the Aegean conflict between Turkey and Greece. The main objective of the plan was to reach an agreement with Turkey for Greece to rejoin the NATO. The plan included a series of proposals, particularly on the sovereignty of islands in the Aegean Sea, airspace and how to share military command areas.

The most controversial aspect of the plan was that it included a statement that said Greece's claims to Turkey's sovereignty in the Aegean were unacceptable. Therefore, Turkey did not accept the plan, and this once again caused tensions in relations between the two countries.

The Rogers Plan was a solution plan proposed by the United States to resolve the disputes between Turkey and Greece and was subsequently accepted by the Turkish and Greek governments. The extent to which the promises made regarding the implementation of the plan were realized and whether these promises were directly reflected in the agreement have not been clearly stated.

After signing the treaty, Turkey gave up its veto power and Greece returned to NATO, causing Turkey to lose a political trump card. Moreover, the agreement resulted in a limitation of Turkey's rights in the Aegean Sea and an increase in Greece's sovereignty rights. This caused reactions in Turkish public and political circles and Turkey's relations with Greece remained strained for many years.

As a result of the dialogues between Ankara and Athens, tensions in the Aegean have eased, but the problems have not been completely resolved. The maritime jurisdiction, airspace and territorial waters of the islands in the Aegean were still unresolved. The Cyprus issue has also remained one of the most important problems in Turkish-Greek relations. However, with the return to the NATO, military cooperation between Turkey and Greece also began. In this process, various negotiations and agreements were signed between Turkey and Greece. For example, confidence-building measures were taken between the two countries with the “Agreement on Reducing Mutual Threat Perception and Enhancing Military Security” (KTA) signed in Istanbul in 1988. This agreement laid the foundation for military cooperation between the two countries. While Andreas Papandreou was Prime Minister, Turkish-Greek relations became quite tense. Papandreou's basing his election propaganda on the Turkish threat in the Aegean and his non-compromising attitude on issues concerning Turkey caused relations to reach a breaking point. Especially the Cyprus and Aegean issues remained unresolved

due to Papandreou's belief that he wanted to turn Turkey into an “uncompromising imperialist country”. This led to Turkey's weak position in the international arena in front of NATO, the EEC and the Council of Europe. However, relations improved in the following years with various negotiations between the parties.

Papandreou's attitude also caused debates within NATO. While some NATO countries had difficulty in understanding Greece's attitude, Turkey considered Papandreou's move as “provocative” and evaluated it as an attempt to increase the tension in Turkish-Greek relations. These debates within NATO further increased the tension in Turkish-Greek relations. However, afterwards, NATO acted as a mediator to prevent a direct clash between Turkish and Greek soldiers and tried to defuse the tension.

These events led to tensions between Greece and Turkey regarding the protection of the rights of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace. Turkey has repeatedly warned Greece about the protection of the rights of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace and stated that Greece should act in accordance with international law. Moreover, Turkey took diplomatic initiatives to protect the rights of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace and frequently criticized Greece on international platforms. These events added further tension to the already tense atmosphere of Turkish-Greek relations.

This joint declaration marked a turning point in Turkish-Greek relations. This step taken to reduce tensions between the two countries and to restore friendly relations paved the way for a successful Foreign Ministers' meeting in Ottawa. At this meeting, Turkey and Greece signed agreements on a number of issues. These included the demarcation of land and maritime borders, the status and demilitarization of islands in the Aegean Sea, and the flight routes of aircraft. These agreements marked a turning point in the relations between the two countries and contributed to the development of relations in the following years.

Ilter Turkmen and Yannis Haralambopoulos, who met in Montreal on the promised date, “agreed to discuss the procedure as well as the method of negotiations on the problems between the two countries and to submit their recommendations to their Governments” and decided to meet in Brussels in December. The meeting of the officials who came together at the NATO meeting held in Brussels on December 1-2, 1982, turned into a duel. Greek Prime Minister Papandreou accused Turkey of violating Greek airspace in the Aegean with the pamphlets he distributed at the meeting and also argued that Limni Island could be armed. In the face of these allegations, NATO Commander-in-Chief Rogers, Secretary General Luns and Admiral Falls agreed that Greece was not fulfilling its responsibilities in the region.

He stated that a decision taken by NATO could not be implemented and that the activities of Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou in Western Thrace continue. After visiting Xanthi, Papandreou took action to give the pasture in the region to Greek citizens. This caused the reaction of the Turkish villagers in the region and incidents flared up again. Gendarmes intervened to disperse the Turkish villagers.

This statement demonstrated the ethnic tensions and conflicts in Western Thrace. Western Thrace was a region in northern Greece where the Turkish minority lived. The Turks living in the region claimed that they were under the domination of the Greek minority and conflicts arose from time to time for this reason.

Failure to implement NATO's decision could undermine confidence in international efforts to resolve the conflict in Western Thrace. However, solving this problem would require the joint efforts of the international community and local leaders.

The negotiations between Turkey and Greece for the solution of problems between the two countries and the Cyprus problem were also mentioned. The officials of the two countries met first in Paris and then in Ankara and decided to cooperate. However, it was decided to hold another meeting in Athens for a solution and this process would take place after the end of the term of office of the Uluşu Government. For the Cyprus problem, the United Nations General Assembly decided in 1979 that the situation on the island should be resolved between the two communities. Negotiations were held between Turkish and Greek Cypriot officials, but Greek Cypriot Leader Kyprianou declared that they would not accept a bizonal solution. Turkey, on the other hand, proposed the establishment of a bi-communal and bi-zonal federal state in Cyprus.

The Turkish Federated State of Cyprus was declared in 1983 and recognized by Turkey. However, this step created more tension than contributing to the solution to the Cyprus problem. The United Nations Security Council also adopted resolutions condemning this step. The Cyprus problem has also been an ongoing bone of contention internationally. In 1985, Greek Cypriot Leader Spyros Kyprianou was replaced by Yeorgios Vasiliou and attempts to find a solution between Turkey and Cyprus increased. In 1988, the “Framework Document” prepared by the Special Representative Diego Cordovez, appointed by the UN Secretary-General, was accepted by the Turks; however, rejected by the Greeks.

In the 1990s, the Cyprus problem remained unresolved and conflicts between the parties continued. In 2004, Greek Cypriots voted yes, and Turkish Cypriots voted no in the referendum on the establishment of a united federal state in Cyprus. This was not a step towards a solution to the problem. Information is given about the situation and events of the Cyprus problem between 1981 and 1983. The events mentioned are as follows: On August 5, 1981, the Turkish Cypriots submitted their proposals to the Greek Cypriot side regarding the borders of the island and Varosha. Greek Cypriot leader Spyros Kyprianou did not respond to this proposal and remained silent.

The Cyprus problem could not be resolved, and the silence of the Greek Cypriot leader and the harsh attitude of Andreas Papandreou, who won the elections in Greece on October 18, 1981, made the problem even more complicated. Papandreou's stance in Turkey-Greece relations was also valid in the Cyprus problem and he advocated the idea that the Cyprus problem should be solved by UN resolutions and the international community. On February 13, 1983, Spyros Kyprianou won the Greek Cypriot presidential election. This election was an important step in the globalization of the Cyprus problem. Information was also provided on the rejection of the resolution by Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot community following its adoption at the 37th UN General Assembly and the call by Rauf Denktaş, the leader of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, for a referendum on the declaration of independence. Other events mentioned in the text are as follows:

Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot community rejected the UN resolution by considering it “unbalanced and unilateral”.

Rauf Denktaş, the leader of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, announced that they

would apply for a referendum to declare independence in Cyprus due to the UN resolution.

On June 17, 1983, the Turkish Cypriot community adopted the law on self-determination with the decision taken by the Assembly of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus. This decision has been considered an important step towards independence for the Turkish Cypriot community. These developments indicated a new era for the settlement of the Cyprus problem. However, negotiations continued between Turkey and the Greek Cypriots to declare independence in Cyprus and to take the necessary steps for the solution to the Cyprus problem.

The Turkish Cypriots declared the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on November 15, 1983, a step that was supported by Turkey. While the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was considered an unrecognized state in the international arena, it was recognized and supported by Turkey. However, this step made the solution of the Cyprus problem more difficult, and Turkey was subjected to international pressure. It also affected Turkey's position in NATO.

Towards the end of the 1980s, relations between Turkey and Bulgaria improved significantly. One of the most important reasons for this development was the regime changes in Eastern European countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the democratic reforms in Bulgaria. During this period, the volume of trade between Turkey and Bulgaria also increased. Moreover, another factor that had a positive impact on relations between the two countries was the enlargement of the European Union. Bulgaria made efforts to join the EU and Turkey negotiated for EU membership. In the process, political and economic cooperation between the two countries further developed. During the visit between February 24-27, 1982, Turkish President Kenan Evren and Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov signed several agreements to improve relations between the two countries. These agreements included increasing trade between Turkey and Bulgaria, enhancing tourism activities and increasing cultural interaction.

The migrant problem between Turkey and Bulgaria was also discussed. During the visit, agreements were made for the migration of Turks living in Bulgaria to Turkey. Due to these agreements, facilitating measures were taken for Turks migrating to Turkey.

However, with the end of the agreements on migrants, families have been left behind. This problem has occasionally caused tensions in relations between Turkey and Bulgaria. However, in recent years, relations between the two countries have improved significantly. These developments have helped to increase cooperation between Turkey and Bulgaria and to solve the migrant problem.

Turkey's complete disallowance of migration was not only about preventing the entry of communist ideas and agents. For many years, Turkey had been struggling with high unemployment rates while at the same time implementing various policies aimed at changing the economic and social structure of the country. As part of these policies, the aim was not to increase the number of ethnic minorities in the country. Therefore, the number of immigrants from countries such as Turkey and Bulgaria was limited. However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989, a large number of Turks from Bulgaria migrated to Turkey.

Due to Kenan Evren's refusal to allow all Bulgarian Turks to migrate to Turkey, great propaganda started in Bulgaria and with this propaganda, which lasted until 1989, Turks were tried to be assimilated. In this direction, the Bulgarian government changed the names of Turks, forbade them to speak Turkish, prevented them from practicing their religion and caused them to be tortured in police stations. This was a very difficult period for the Bulgarian Turks. Subjected to this propaganda, Turks struggled to preserve their identity and culture. In this process, Turks living in Turkey and other countries supported the Turks in Bulgaria and defended their rights. In 1989, a new government came to power in Bulgaria and started working to protect the rights of Turks. In this process, Turks were freed to take their names and speak Turkish again, were allowed to practice their religion freely and human rights violations such as torture were ended.

Today, despite the fact that the living conditions of Turks are better in Bulgaria, they still face some problems and difficulties. However, the presence and culture of Turks in Bulgaria is one of the riches of the country and it is important that this culture is preserved and supported. After Kenan Evren visited Bulgaria, Turkish-Bulgarian relations took an economic step forward. Foreign Minister İlder Türkmen, who visited Bulgaria on February 9-11, 1983, held talks on the security of the Balkan peninsula, industry, industry, economic, commercial, transportation and cultural cooperation. In addition, Todor Zhivkov, who visited Turkey on June 6-9, 1983, at the invitation of

Evren, made contacts for cooperation on various issues and took initiatives for the reunification of the broken Turkish families living in Bulgaria. During his visit, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Petir Mladenov mentioned that Evren's constant use of the term "*our compatriots*" when referring to "Bulgarian citizens of Turkish consciousness" disturbed Zhivkov.

Kenan Evren accepted Ceaușescu's invitation on April 5-8, 1982. During Evren's visit, economic issues such as the development of bilateral trade relations to 500 million dollars and cooperation in mining and oil exploration were discussed. In this context, the "Agreement on the Establishment of Direct Connections between Turkish and Romanian Ports on the Black Sea" was signed and the development of maritime trade between the two countries was envisaged.

Ceaușescu visited Kenan Evren on May 20-23, 1983. During this visit, issues such as the renovation of Karabük Iron and Steel Facilities, the opening of the Ro-Ro Line, the use of coal resources in thermonuclear power plants, the latest status of the Central Anatolian Refinery and cooperation in the establishment of the Kapulukaya Hydroelectric Power Plant were discussed.

Turkish relations with the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia also demonstrated that there was cooperation between the two countries during this period. In particular, both Turkey and the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia shared the same views on the peaceful resolution of the Iraq-Iran war and the establishment of a state for the Palestinian people. Moreover, the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia gave one of the biggest reactions to Armenian terrorism, which organized attacks on Turkish embassies all over the world and killed ambassadors. When Turkish Ambassador in Belgrade Galip Balkar was assassinated by Armenian terrorists on March 9, 1983, Yugoslavia was at the forefront of investigating the situation and initiated activities to stop terrorism all over the world.

Turkey tried to establish a close relationship with the USA after the coups d'états before September 12, thus the relations with the Soviet Union, one of the biggest global competitors of the USA, were adversely affected during these periods. The September 12 government had a similar approach, though not exactly the same. After the 12 September 1980 coup d'état, the Soviets were not satisfied with the fact that leftist ideas, which had spread rapidly in Turkey before September 12, were discouraged and even

banned after the coup d'état. However, as NSC adopted a multilateral policy in foreign policy, and it would not be wrong to say more moderate relations were established between Turkey and the Soviets during this period of military rule compared to the previous periods.

Especially the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 reinforced the position of Turkey in the Middle East policy. Furthermore, the fact that Afghan refugees seeking asylum in Turkey did not pose a problem in relations between the two countries provided an advantage for the soldiers who would take over the government almost a year later (Oran, 2010:34).

The government program announced by the Ulusu Government at the meeting on September 27, 1980, explained the relations with the Soviet Union as follows:

"Our government would like to establish friendly relations and close cooperation with all our neighbors. Within this context, special attention will be paid to the development of our friendly relations with the Soviet Union."

The foreign policy studies on the Ulusu Government period generally emphasized that Turkish-Soviet relations had become stagnant. However, Ilter Turkmen, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the period, disagreed with this view, and in a panel discussion with Fahir Armaoğlu and Mehmet Ali Birand, the popular journalists of the period, he said: *"I would like to emphasize that we attach great importance to our relations with the Soviet Union. The stable development of good neighborly relations with the Soviet Union is also in Turkey's interest and our relations with the Soviet Union are always evaluated. It is impossible to establish a parallelism between bilateral relations and views on international issues. If such parallelism is established, the bilateral relations of many countries would suffer great damage."*(Armaoğlu, 2019:287).

The other political relationship between the two countries was realized after the United Nations General Assembly in September 1981. On September 30, 1981, following this meeting, Turkmen first had a meeting with US Secretary of State Haig and then had a 35-minute meeting with Andrei Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister (Milliyet, 01.10.1981; Cumhuriyet, 01.10.1981).

As a result of the improving relations, Ilter Turkmen, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, went to Moscow on November 27-December 3, 1982, with the invitation of the USSR.

Turkmen was welcomed in Moscow by Andrey Nikolayevich Tikhonov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and by Andrei Gromyko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR (Cumhuriyet, 29.11.1982). A joint statement was issued after the negotiations in which it was stated that the USSR and Turkey would cooperate on equality, independence, territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs. They also discussed the developments in the Middle East, namely the Israeli occupation of Lebanon and the Israeli action against the Palestinian camps. It was stated that both states did not approve of this and that these problems could be solved by Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories it had occupied since 1967 And the establishment of a state by the Palestinian Arabs.

Another issue discussed during the negotiations was the proposal of NATO member states not to use force in accordance with the disarmament proposal of the member countries of the Warsaw Pact. İlder Türkmen stated that Kornienko's suggestion was based on the fact that *"Turkey had always regarded disarmament initiatives positively and found the Prague proposals of the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact to be concise and worthy of examination"*(Cumhuriyet, 05.03.1983).

The government program announced by the Ulusu Government at the meeting held on September 27, 1980, explained how relations with the Middle Eastern countries would be established and what kind of foreign policy would be adopted as follows:

"Efforts will be made to strengthen our relations with Islamic countries, with whom we have deep-rooted historical and traditional ties, with a close friendship and brotherhood. The relations with the Arab countries, Iran and Pakistan will be carried out with an understanding in line with the requirements of the neighborhood and geographical proximity in addition to these strong ties. Turkey's approach to the conflicts in the region will be based on the principles of justice and equity, self-determination of every nation, and rejection of annexation of territory by force. We will resolutely continue our attitude towards the Middle East problem and our support for the just cause of the Palestinian people within the framework of these principles."

Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that Turkey's attitude towards rapprochement with the Middle East between 1980-1983 was the result of the Ulusu Government's policies regarding the US and especially the Wohlstetter Doctrine. Kenan Evren's statement *"Turkey can do without the Western countries"* confirmed the process of

Turkey's rapprochement with the Middle East in this period (Güldemir, 1986:96).

The aforementioned Wohlstetter Doctrine should be emphasized since it laid the foundation for many of Turkey's relations in the Middle East. The United States, wishing to prevent Soviet and especially communist expansionism in the Middle East under the influence of the Cold War period, aimed to keep the southern part of the Soviet Union together from China to Turkey, including Pakistan, through a project called "Green Belt". Served as the Chairman of the National Security Council until 1981, Zbigniew Kazimierz Brzezinski had emphasized the necessity of this strategy, and the common characteristics of the states included in this strategy were that they were not governed by democracy and that they were allies of the United States.

Having started to establish good relations with the Green Belt countries as a result of its relations with the US, Turkey's relations with the Gulf countries in the Middle East were shaped in line with its relations with the US. Turkey has acted with the policy of "the defense of the Gulf countries belongs to the Gulf countries" since the 1960s, especially with regard to the defense of the Gulf countries (Oran, 2010:124). However, the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the US and Turkey on November 29, 1982, shows that this policy has changed. The US agreed to construct airfields in Eastern Anatolia, which it considered to be a key point for Gulf defense, which would allow it to intervene immediately in a crisis in the Middle East and Gulf countries and was authorized to use these airfields if it received permission (Milliyet, 30.11.1982).

After the September 12 coup d'état, Turkey started to establish good relations with the Green Belt countries with the encouragement of the US, and the best relationship Turkey established under military rule was with Pakistan. Pakistani President Ziaul Haq and Kenan Evren visited each other many times. After the September 12 coup d'état, Ziaul Haq was the first president to visit Turkey and he visited between January 12-14, 1981 at the official invitation of Kenan Evren (Milliyet, 12.01.1981). The two leaders met in Ankara and exchanged views on the Iran-Iraq war that started in September 1980, developments following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and US-Pakistan relations (Evren, 1981:194-198).

Gaining new momentum, Turkey-Pakistan relations were strengthened with the "Agreement on Judicial Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters" signed between the two countries on June 23, 1981, and the "Technical and Industrial Cooperation

Agreement" signed on November 12, 1981. Afterward, Kenan Evren visited Pakistan between November 22-27, 1981 in order to repay the visit of Zia al-Haq. This was Evren's first visit abroad after becoming president. Evren was warmly welcomed by both the people and the state officials and Zia-ul-Haq gave him the highest civilian award in Pakistan, the Nishan-e-Pakistan. During his visit, Evren also visited the camp of refugees who fled Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion and took refuge in Pakistan. Seeing the Turkmen and Kyrgyz refugees among the refugees, who were in a very difficult situation, Evren stated that up to 4,000 refugees could be taken to Turkey (Evren, 1981:459-461).

After his visit to Pakistan, Evren authorized the establishment of a committee to resettle the families of Turkish descent among the refugees on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in Turkey. This committee's efforts to identify the families to be taken to Turkey achieved a concrete result with the law adopted on March 17, 1982.

Hence, Turkey both lessened Pakistan's obligations to some extent and prevented the Turkish descendants on the border with Afghanistan from being abandoned to die. A large part of the migrants settled in the province of Tokat with the volunteering of the province (Evren, 1981:254). Turkey's relations with Saudi Arabia, one of the countries in the Green Belt, continued at the same level after the September 12 coup d'état. Following the 12 September 1980 coup d'état, which ended democratic life in Turkey, Saudi King Kenan Khalid was one of the first people to send a message to President Kenan Evren. (Güldemir, 1986:78 ; Oran, 2010:125).

The most remarkable issue in Saudi Arabia-Turkey relations during the military government period was the Muslim World League. Founded in Meccan in 1962, the organization attempted to impose the principles of Sharia on all Muslim countries and paid the salaries of Turkish imams, who served abroad from 1982 to 1984, worth \$1100, pursuant to an agreement signed between the military government and Saudi Arabia. The most interesting fact about the 12 September government, which never stopped talking about Kemalism, secretly carried out relations with this organization, which published the insulting book "Er-Racülüs-Sanem" (The Magnificent Man" about Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (Mumcu, 1993:172).

After the oppressive 12 September regime was replaced by democracy, journalist Uğur Mumcu began to focus on this issue. In his first article published on February 10, 1987,

under the title "Reformist Hodja (!)...", Mumcu explained the organization's stance against the September 12 period and democracy through the accounts of names within the organization, and in his subsequent articles, he wrote about the organization's economic influence on the communities in Turkey (Cumhuriyet, 10.02.1987). Having been revealed to have made an agreement with a Sharia organization, Evren initially denied these allegations, but then said, "Every government has chosen this path, which is the lesser of two evils," and stated that he would sign the Rabita Agreement again if he had to do it all over again (Cumhuriyet, 28.03.1987; Mumcu, 1993:306).

The September 12 coup d'état was immediately followed by the Iran-Iraq War when Iraq abrogated the Algiers Agreement and attacked Iran. As Turkey had borders with both Iran and Iraq, it adopted a neutral foreign policy by deciding not to sell weapons and war materials to either country and not to allow the transfer of ammunition through its airspace (Evren, 1981:165-166).

The adoption of a neutral policy was undoubtedly influenced by neighborly relations as well as common interests. Such reasons as the absence of serious conflicts between Turkey and Iraq until this period, the fact that the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline was an important economic leverage for both Turkey and Iraq, and the fact that both countries were struggling with the PKK pestilence made it easier to find common ground (Hale, 2014:179).

The situation was different for Iran. The political and ideological differences between Iran and Turkey have caused conflicts between the two countries. For example, on 10 November, the Iranian delegation visiting Turkey refused to visit Anıtkabir and did not allow the Iranian flag to be flown at half-mast (Türkmen, 2010:21).

This initiative initiated by Evren for a ceasefire continued with the visit of Prime Minister Bülent Ulusu and Foreign Minister İlder Türkmen to Iran. After Iran regained its lost territories, Iraqi First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan visited Turkey on February 17, 1983. Assessing Iran's course in the war, Taha Yasin claimed that Iran became stronger in the war because the United States supplied Iran with weapons. Evren, who had very close relations with the US at the time, told Taha Yasin that this claim was unfounded. However, with the "Iran-Contra" affair that broke out in 1986, it was revealed that the US had supplied arms to Iran, and Evren wrote in his memoirs that he was disappointed by this attitude of the US (Evren, 1981:97-98).

Pursuant to the agreement between the two countries, Turkey agreed to advance a maximum of 5 kilometers from the Iraqi border and to conduct a 72-hour operation and the operation started on May 27, 1983 (Evren, 1981:206-207). In the operation organized pursuant to the agreement, one person was killed and Turkish forces withdrew from the region after the successful operation on June 2, 1983. Afterwards, Iraq shot down an Iraqi airplane that was flying over the border. Turkey sent a delegation to Iraq on September 27, 1983, to discuss the situation and as a result of the contacts, the Special Representative of the President of Iraq came to Turkey on October 6, 1983. During this meeting, it was concluded that the plane had crossed the Iraqi border and was shot down because its nationality could not be determined. The two countries decided to cooperate in investigating the situation of our soldiers who parachuted from the plane that was shot down (Cumhuriyet, 27.10.1983-28.10.1983).

After the war escalated and Iraq's bombings on the Iranian border, Lavasani, the Director of Political Affairs at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, visited Turkey. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that during the meeting between Lavasani and Turkmen, mutual relations and the situation of the war were discussed, and also said that "*Turkey's mediation to stop the war is out of the question at this stage*". Thus, after the Islamic Peace Committee, Turkey's attempts to mediate failed.

During this period under the shadow of the war, Turkey gained good momentum with its economic initiatives. Furthermore, with the agreement signed with Iraq in 1981, the capacity of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık Oil Pipeline was increased and a step was taken that would make a great economic contribution (Türkmen, 2010:19). Moreover, an agreement for the construction of a new line parallel to the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık line, which would enable Iraq to transport liquefied petroleum gas to the Mediterranean Sea, was signed on October 19, 1983.

Israel's declaration of Jerusalem as its capital a few weeks before the coup caused the September 12 government's relations with Israel to be formed in an unhealthy environment from the beginning (Milliyet, 25.07.1980).

Turkey's good relations with the Arab states between 1980 and 1983 also played a significant role in the deterioration of relations. After Israel's declaration of Jerusalem as its capital, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, of which Turkey was a member, emphasized that Turkey should take a stance in its bilateral relations with

Israel. Upon this request, state officials came together on October 28, 1980, and the situation was evaluated. At the meeting, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in compliance with the request of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, found it appropriate to suspend relations with Israel. However, Kenan Evren, who always had the last word in foreign policy during this period, said that this decision was excessive and decided to downgrade the ambassadorial relations to the level of second secretary (Evren, 1981:132-133). This decision was implemented on November 26, 1980, and Turkey started to establish diplomatic relations with Israel at the level of second secretary (Armaoğlu, 2019:639).

Israel continued its attacks in the Middle East and its next target was the Golan Heights in Syria. On December 14, 1981, the Golan Heights was annexed by a resolution approved by the Israeli Parliament. After Syria considered this move as a declaration of war, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a statement saying that “Israel is solely responsible for the increasing tension in the region” and that it did not recognize this annexation (Milliyet, 15.12.1981-16.12.1981).

On April 11, 1981, an Israeli attacker bombed the Omar Mosque, one of the holy sanctuaries in Jerusalem, injuring 15 people and killing 2 people. The attack caused protests throughout the Islamic world. Following this hideous incident, nine Arab countries suspended their operations and closed their airports. On behalf of Turkey, Foreign Minister Turkmen organized an invitation to the ambassadors of Islamic countries in Ankara and expressed Turkey's grief for this Israeli attack (Milliyet, 12.04.1982).

Despite Turkey's poor relations with Israel between 1980 and 1983, the two countries cooperated in the activities of Armenian terrorist organizations. During the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, Israel seized documents related to the attacks of Armenian terrorist organizations in Beirut camps. These documents were handed over to Turkey by the Israeli government. The fact that Turkey received the documents related to the Armenian terrorist organizations, which had been assassinating Turkish diplomats and attacking various institutions for some time, helped to stop the Armenian terror to some extent during this period (Armaoğlu, 2019:725).

Having received evidence of Armenian terrorism, Evren wrote a letter to Emin Cemayel, the President of Lebanon, containing extremely bitter words (Evren,

1981:124). The letter was delivered by Foreign Minister Turkmen during his visit to Lebanon. Turkmen met with President Emin Cemayel and Prime Minister Şefik Wazzan and discussed the measures to be taken against the Armenian terrorists raised in the camps and the development of Turkish-Lebanese relations. The Lebanese authorities stated that “Lebanon is the country that has suffered the most from terrorism and anarchy in recent history and that it is determined to never tolerate terrorism and subversive activities” and that they would pay attention to the issue.

The Middle East relations of the Ulusu Government were not limited to the above-mentioned countries, but cooperation was ensured through various agreements with other Middle Eastern countries. For example, Evren visited Kuwait between March 20-25, 1982, and signed an Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation Agreement with Kuwait. Kenan Evren's visit to Kuwait gave him the title of being the first Turkish head of state to visit Kuwait in history (Yankı, 29 March-4April1982, p. 574, p. 16).

Another country that Turkey cooperated with during this period was the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Kemal Cantürk, Minister of Trade, visited Jordan between March 27 and April 3, 1982 and signed a Protocol on Commercial and Economic Cooperation in Amman at the end of this visit. In addition, Prince Hasan, the Jordanian Crown Prince, who visited between July 7-11, 1982 to meet with Ilter Turkmen, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, exchanged views on the current situation in the Middle East. (Güldemir, 1986:79). As a result of this meeting, a Labor Agreement was signed between the two countries. To improve relations with Tunisia, the two statesmen have visited each other many times. On September 29, 1981, the two countries first signed a Long-Term Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation Agreement, thereby advancing economic relations. Afterwards, Beji Caid Essebsi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia, who came to Turkey on May 5, 1982, upon the invitation of Ilter Türkmen, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, held discussions with the aim of developing economic cooperation. After this visit, Tunisia and Turkey signed "Air Transport Agreement, Consular Agreement, Convention on Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters and Extradition of Criminals and Convention on Judicial Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters (Güldemir, 1986:79).

During the 12 September government, Turkey's relations with Islamic states improved considerably, but relations with Syria became very tense. The main reasons for these

tense relations between Turkey and Syria were smuggling, terrorism and the PKK. In addition, Syria's national policy of reclaiming Hatay and hosting terrorists who organized attacks on the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline also led to strained relations (Yankı, 29 March-4 April 1982, p.574, p. 17; Hale, 2014:181).

The issue of smuggling was also discussed during the visit of İltis Turkmen, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Syria between March 23-30, 1983. Turkmen stated that the rate of smuggling had decreased to a certain extent with the joint action of the two countries and that Syria and Turkey had decided to act to solve this problem fundamentally through economic and social cooperation (Türkmen, 2010:341-342).

The main reason for the tension between Turkey and Syria was that Syria hosted Armenian terrorists and the terrorist organization called PKK. The PKK played an active role in Syria in July 1979 when Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the terrorist organization, entered Syria and established relations there (Hale, 2014:181). The Greater Syria policy adopted by Hafez al-Assad, a Syrian statesman, when he took over the state in 1971 was considered to be related to this issue of hosting the PKK. Assad, who wanted to create Greater Syria rather than a policy of Arab nationalism, had close relations with terrorist organizations in order to lower the guard of the countries he considered as his rivals. Therefore, he placed the PKK, led by Öcalan, in the Bekaa Valley in order to disturb Turkey. The PKK terrorists, who received various training in the Bekaa Valley, organized a conference for the first time on July 15-26, 1981, and decided to prepare militarily to return to "Turkish Kurdistan (Oran, 2010:130-132).

Having been informed about these terror-related developments, Turkey wanted to use the Convention on Extradition and Mutual Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters with Syria, calling on Damascus to extradite the terrorists, but the answer was "there are no terrorists on Syrian territory, and the Turkish nationals who do exist are political refugees". Meanwhile, the PKK continued to expand and operate in many countries such as Iran, Iraq and Lebanon. To ensure its own security, Turkey signed the Border Security and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq in 1983 (Türkmen, 2010:20).

After the September 12 coup d'état, the soldiers, who expressed that they would adopt a peaceful and multilateral policy in foreign policy at every opportunity, carried out their activities in this direction. The Asian countries which Turkey established the best relations with during the Ulusu government were Pakistan and China. The relations with

Pakistan were mostly related to the Middle East policy and were explained in the previous section. It would be fair to say that the development of relations with China during this period was realized with the encouragement of the United States (Güldemir, 1986:70). Hence, relations between the two countries, which had been engaged since 1971, improved from 1980 forward. Li Xiannian, the President of the People's Republic of China, described the developing relations as “China and Turkey are countries belonging to the emerging world. They shared the same destiny in the past and have the same goal for the future: To maintain their independence. Therefore, they have common interests.”

Another contact between the two countries was established between 15-23 December 1981 through the visit of İlder Türkmen, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his delegation to Beijing. At a dinner organized by Huang Hua, the Chinese Foreign Minister, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's birth and the 10th anniversary of Turkish-Chinese relations, the officials discussed the Iran-Iraq War, the situation in Afghanistan and the Cyprus issue (Türkmen, 2010:219-221). Furthermore, Turkey and China signed a 130 million dollar "Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation Agreement" at the end of this visit (Milliyet, 19.12.1981).

Turkey's military relations with China reached a peak with Evren's visit to the Far Eastern countries between December 12-26, 1982 (Güldemir, 1986:128). The People's Republic of China was the first country on the visit program. Therefore, Evren visited the People's Republic of China between December 13-17, 1982, and became the first Turkish President to visit China. Evren was accompanied by Zhao Ziyang, the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China, and they discussed Cambodia, Afghanistan, Soviet troops on the border with China and nuclear weapons. After Kenan Evren's visit to China, Turkey-China relations showed a major improvement (Evren, 1981:45-46).

After Ozal's visit to Japan, Japanese-Turkish relations continued with the visit of Japanese Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe, who came to Turkey on August 8-9, 1983. The main purpose of the visit was to grant a 65-million-dollar loan to Turkey by the Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) for the Altinkaya Dam and Hydroelectric Power Plant project, the construction of which had begun in Turkey. This loan was granted to Turkey at 4.25% interest, with the condition of repayment over 19 years after a 7-year interval (Türkmen, 2010:388). Shintaro Abe also met with Kenan

Evren to discuss the Iran-Iraq War. Shintaro Abe stated that Japan would face a fuel shortage if the war continued, and expressed his wish that Evren's mediation attempts to end the Iran-Iraq War would end positively (Evren, 1981:291).

The relations of Turkey with other Asian countries between 1980-1983 were shaped within the framework of Evren's visit to the Far East between December 12-26, 1982. As mentioned before, the first stop of the tour was the People's Republic of China, between December 13-17, 1982. After the People's Republic of China, Evren's visited Indonesia. In Jakarta, a meeting was held with the delegation led by President Suharto and the two countries signed an Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement that would last for 5 years. Pursuant to this agreement signed on December 18, 1982, Turkey undertook to sell wheat, cotton yarn, carpets, raisins, figs, hazelnuts and various ceramic goods to Indonesia, while Indonesia undertook to sell products such as pepper, coffee, rubber and coconut to Turkey, thus establishing economic ties between the two countries. South Korea was the third stop of the tour, between December 20-23, 1982. Welcomed by President Chun Doo Hwan in South Korea, Evren visited the factories producing various technological devices in Seoul. Evren said that the factories he saw there were at a level to compete with Japan and asked for technological cooperation with South Korea. In the following months, Choong Hoon Cho, President of the Air Industry and KAL of the Republic of Korea, visited Turkey to discuss cooperation in the aircraft industry.

During the 12 September government period, Bangladesh was another Asian country that Turkey was in contact with. Ilter Turkmen, Minister of Foreign Affairs, traveled to Bangladesh on March 9-10, 1981 and was authorized to sign the Agreement on Military Training Cooperation between Turkey and Bangladesh.

Furthermore, during this tour, Kenan Evren visited Bangladesh between December 23-24, 1982. In his memoirs, Evren mentioned the poverty and the pathetic situation in Bangladesh and added that there was a close bond between Bangladesh and Turkey (Oran, 1989:128; Evren, 1981:57-61). Bangladesh was the first country to recognize the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus after Turkey, proving the close bond Evren mentioned in his memoirs. However, Bangladesh could not withstand the pressure that followed this decision and abandoned its recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus after a while.

CONCLUSION

The military interventions in the political arena have been quite frequent in Turkey's political history and the 12 September 1980 coup d'état was one of the most important of the interventions. After the coup d'état, Turkey's foreign policy also underwent a series of changes.

Post-coup Turkish foreign policy was shaped under the military regime. The military regime led by Kenan Evren controlled Turkish foreign policy both at domestic and international level. During this period, Turkey stood by its Western allies and, as a member of NATO, occupied an important strategic position, especially against the Soviet Union.

However, Turkey's relations with some Western countries were strained during the military regime. Especially, Turkey's relations with the EU weakened due to the suspension of the European Convention on Human Rights, human rights violations and arrests. Moreover, relations between the US and Turkey were also strained, notably due to the arms embargo imposed by the US on Turkey after the 1974 Cyprus Peace Operation.

These interventions interrupted the democratic process and undermined human rights and freedoms. They have also increased political instability and slowed economic development. The frequent interruption of democracy by military interventions means a violation of fundamental values such as the rule of law and the protection of human rights and has a negative impact on the international community. Therefore, democracy in Turkey needs to be strengthened, the rule of law upheld and human rights more effectively protected. The 12 September 1980 coup d'état is considered one of the darkest periods in Turkish history. Following the coup d'état, thousands of people were arrested, tortured, and even killed. The country had to struggle with violations of democracy and human rights for a long time.

There are many factors that are believed to have contributed to the coup d'état. Some of these are political polarization, economic crises, and terrorist incidents. It is also believed that the organization called Counter-Guerrilla played a role in the coup. Counter-Guerrilla is a secret organization fighting against leftist organizations in Turkey and was effective in carrying out the coup d'état.

The relationship between the coup d'état and the United States has also been widely debated. Some researchers believe that the coup was supported by the United States. Tahsin Şahinkaya, who returned to Turkey the day before the coup, and Haydar Saltık, the spokesperson of the National Security Council established after the coup, were alleged to have connections with the United States. However, these allegations have not been fully proven. The aftermath of the coup has caused concern among western allies of Turkey. In particular, human rights violations were criticized by countries, such as the United States and the European Union. However, Turkey remained a NATO member after the coup and its relations with the United States continued.

It is true that after the 12 September 1980 coup d'état, Turkey became closer to the United States. During this period, Turkey's NATO membership continued and the strategic importance of the US to Turkey did not change. Moreover, the fact that Turkey was an important buffer against the Eastern Bloc countries increased the US interest in Turkey.

The Green Belt Project and the Agile Force Project also played an important role in Turkey's rapprochement with the United States. The Green Belt Project was a project initiated by the US to combat radical movements that were destabilizing the Middle East and the Caucasus. Turkey was included in the project and worked in close cooperation with the US. The Agile Force Project was a US-backed project to modernize Turkey's internal security forces.

However, Turkey's rapprochement with the United States cannot be considered as a situation that occurred only due to the 12 September 1980 coup d'état, as there was no such period in which the relations with the United States were completely problematic. US-Turkey relations had experienced various problems in various periods before the coup. For example, during the Cyprus Peace Operation in 1974, the US imposed an arms embargo on Turkey, which strained relations.

Due to these projects, the military government also established good relations with the Middle Eastern states. Previous military interventions in the history of the Republic of Turkey have been followed by a policy of turning its back on the Middle East and Islamic states. However, after September 12, 1980, this policy was reversed. Developments such as Turkey's participation in the committee established to end the Iran-Iraq war in the period between 1980-1983 and the participation of both Bülent

Ulus, the Prime Minister, and İler Türkmen, the Foreign Minister, in the Islamic Conference Summit prove this. Moreover, during this period, Turkey established good relations with Islamic states, and downgraded its relations with Israel to the level of second secretary as a natural consequence of this policy. Firstly, in the post-coup period, Turkish foreign policy was harder. In the pre-coup period, Turkey was pursuing a policy that supported peace and stability in the region. However, in the post-coup period, Turkey started to intervene more aggressively in regional events due to the instability at the domestic level. This has led to Turkey's perception as a regional power and increased claims of regional leadership. Secondly, in the post-coup period, Turkey's relations with the Western countries have experienced a series of problems. In particular, allegations that the United States of America supported the coup led to a strain in Turkish-American relations. Moreover, Turkey's problems with democracy and human rights have also created problems in its relations with Western countries. Thirdly, it is noteworthy that in the post-coup period, Turkey adopted a tougher stance towards the Soviet Union in its foreign policy. Turkey perceived the Soviet Union as a threat in the region and therefore adopted a tougher stance in its relations with the Soviet Union. In the post-coup period, this attitude hardened and Turkey started to act more actively against the Soviet Union. In conclusion, the 12 September 1980 coup d'état had significant effects on Turkish foreign policy. In the post-coup period, Turkey pursued a tougher foreign policy, experienced problems in its relations with the Western countries and adopted a tougher stance against the Soviet Union.

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NOTE: This preprint reports new research that has not been certified by peer review and should not be used as established information without consulting multiple experts in the field.

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