

EU Membership Has Its Privileges, and Turkey Knows It

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As the European Union (EU) prepares to welcome 10 new countries in May 2004, large questions loom over the fate of Turkey's accession to Europe's elite club. Plagued by economic, political, and social problems, Turkey cannot afford to sit on the periphery of Europe. While austerity measures imposed by the Turkish government have assisted the nation in fulfilling many of the criteria for entrance into the EU, these reforms have not been enough to put them on a clear path to EU accession. The status quo on the island of Cyprus also threatens Turkey's chances of joining the Union, with Cyprus prepared to join in May 2004. Although the election of a moderate Islamic party led by controversial leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan raised new questions about Turkey's political situation, the party's pro-Western and pro-European stance indicates that Turkey is moving in the right direction. By continuing to adhere to the Copenhagen criteria, Turkey can fulfill its goal of EU membership—an accomplishment that would benefit Greece, Cyprus, the EU, the United States, and Turkey.

Emerging from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey became a modern republic in the 1920s and turned westward toward Europe under the charismatic leadership of Mustafa Kemal, also known as “Atatürk.”¹ In the years of Atatürk’s rule, Turkey embarked on a modernization movement that produced the Republic’s guiding principles of republicanism, secularism, populism, statism, nationalism, and revolutionism.² These guiding principles, collectively known as Kemalism, were intended to encourage social, political, and economic growth as well as to justify the political actions of Turkey’s leaders.³ At the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Turkey is a geostrategic power, bordering Europe on the west and the Middle East to the south and east. Turkey has been an important European partner and a vital U.S.

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ally during the Cold War, the Gulf War, and the current war on terrorism. It is an evolving democracy—unique in the Muslim world—that is also vying for membership into Europe’s exclusive European Union (EU).

Despite all of Turkey’s achievements since the founding of the modern republic, it still has a number of obstacles to overcome in its bid for membership to the EU. Turkey’s adoption of the reforms outlined in the *National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis* has been slow, steady, and controversial.⁴ EU accession can help Turkey improve its economy, encourage respect for human rights, and stabilize a democracy currently dominated by the military. The EU recently announced that it is ready to conclude accession negotiations with 10 central and eastern European states, including the Republic of Cyprus. With Turkey’s current occupation of northern Cyprus, Turkey’s accession to the EU becomes virtually impossible because Turkey would be violating the sovereignty of an EU state. This article will take a closer look at Turkish accession to the EU and the implications for Turkey, the EU, the United States, and regional stability with respect to Greece and Cyprus. It will conclude by analyzing potential developments and outlining a roadmap for Turkey to follow on its path to the EU. If Turkey fails to integrate into Europe, the consequences could be devastating for the EU, the United States, and most of all, Turkey.

Why Europe?

Turkey is the only country where democracy, secularism, and a market economy exist together with Islam.

—former President of Turkey, Suleyman Demirel⁵

In a lecture at The George Washington University, Turkish Professor Üstün Ergüder of Sabanci University stated that Turkey has an unprecedented opportunity to “clean her house” by joining Europe’s exclusive club.⁶ Citing Turkey’s need to adhere to the Copenhagen criteria for EU accession, Ergüder and other experts have concluded that Turkey can help its ailing economy, reform its antiquated and repressive political system, and resolve many of the country’s social problems by joining the EU. Briefly, the Copenhagen criteria requires candidate countries to fulfill the following standards:

- Political criteria: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities.
- Economic criteria: the existence of a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.
- Criterion for the implementation of the Union’s legislation known as the *National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis*: ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic, and monetary union.⁷

Specifically, the *acquis communautaire* (or simply *acquis*) is the entire body of European laws adopted on the basis of the EU's founding treaties in Rome, Maastricht, and Amsterdam.⁸ This also includes the regulations, directives, and other rules passed by the European institutions as well as judgments laid down by the Court of Justice.⁹ When a candidate country is in enlargement negotiations, these laws and rules are broken down into 31 chapters that each candidate country must implement in order to join the Union.

The Turkish government understands that comprehensive reforms are necessary to meet these criteria, and it is focusing on economic reforms first. Economic reforms are more concrete in nature and easier to implement than either social or political reforms. A Turkish diplomat analogized the delicate situation of Turkey's current political state to Europe coming out of the Middle Ages:

You in the West also had long periods of backwardness and intolerance.... You had dictatorships, civil wars, religious fanaticism, the Inquisition, all kinds of horror. Then, over a period of centuries, you climbed out of that hole. You had the Enlightenment.... Our Enlightenment only started seventy-five years ago. It is too soon to lift every restriction. The risk is too great. We could lose everything.¹⁰

The fear of inadvertently causing a revolution makes Turkish leaders wary of implementing political and social reforms, but the necessary economic reforms could help foster changes in these other areas.

The Turkish Economy

Some areas of the Turkish economy resemble Denmark and others Bangladesh.

—Professor Üstün Ergüder¹¹

The Turkish economy has enormous economic potential in spite of the financial crises and other problems that have recently plagued the country. Turkey has many strong industries including agriculture, textiles and apparel, automotives, iron and steel, tourism, and construction.¹² Despite this economic activity, wealth is unevenly distributed. Additionally, the country has deep-rooted macroeconomic and structural problems, including a heavy debt burden, banking sector difficulties, and pervasive state involvement in the economy.

Turkey's macroeconomic indicators paint a similarly bleak picture. Turkey has battled high inflation since the 1980s, reaching 80 percent at times, most recently in the early 1990s.¹³ According to the *2002 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession*, Turkey's inflation rate in 2001 was projected at 57.3 percent, but its gross domestic product (GDP) declined by 7.4 percent, and unemployment reached 8.5 percent. GDP grew in the first quarter of 2002 at a rate of 2.3 percent, but unem-

ployment also grew to 9.6 percent.¹⁴ These economic indicators clearly demonstrate that the Turkish economy has been, and continues to be, volatile, despite the implementation of recent macroeconomic policies aimed at stabilizing the economy.¹⁵

The Turkish government introduced austerity measures to help push economic reform and stimulate the economy via its agreements with the EU, beginning with the Customs Union in 1995 and later with the *acquis*.¹⁶ Aid packages from the EU, the United States, and international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) helped Turkey begin to improve its economy.¹⁷ The *2001 Regular Report* outlined several areas in need of reform, such as significantly restructuring the banking, agriculture, and state-run sectors in order to improve economic competitiveness. Turkey made significant strides in many of these areas by reforming the banking and agriculture sectors, deregulating key markets such as tobacco, sugar, electricity, telecommunications, and gas.¹⁸

Although Turkey has made significant progress in many areas, it still has many obstacles to overcome. Progress in the freedom of movement for persons and capital, reforms in state aid policy, and improvements in financial controls and budgetary mechanisms are still necessary to help stabilize the economy and fulfill the economic criteria of the EU.¹⁹ By meeting just some of the Copenhagen criteria, Turkey has developed a functioning market economy that can handle competitive market forces, but it is still too unpredictable. As the *2002 Regular Report* suggests, the Turkish economy is not ready for the EU.

Nevertheless, Prime Minister Abdullah Gül and the ruling Justice and Development (AK) Party leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan intend to continue their reforms by accelerating the drive towards accession into the EU.²⁰

Turkey in a Political and Social Context

For years Turkish leaders have believed that the best way for them to show their love of democracy was to repress people, ideas, and movements that they consider anti-democratic. They can no longer do so and still claim to love “the Republic and democracy.”

—journalist Stephen Kinzer²¹

Turkey’s democracy is institutionally weak and dominated by the military.²² The EU is asking that Turkey forego its current “rigid, nationalist ideology and powerful, activist officer corps [to] ... totally revamp a constitution that institutionalizes the army’s dominant power and blocks any move toward democratization.”²³ From its birth under Atatürk, modern Turkey was designed to be a repressive regime enforcing a one party system, until Turkey was farther along on the “path to civilization.”²⁴ It would not be until 1950, when the first competitive elections were held, that Turks would be deemed as having *progressed* enough to participate in free elections.²⁵ However, despite free elections, the army still wields an enormous amount of political power:

Turkey has a diverse and often feisty Parliament that chooses a prime minister according to the outcome of free elections.... Ultimate power, however, rests with the National Security Council dominated by military commanders accountable only to each other.²⁶

Although a repressive regime helped Turkey progress on its path to development, that same repressive characteristic makes Turkey one of the worst human rights abusers in the world. As the system exists today, the military will intervene to keep the country on its secularist, Kemalist path if the Turkish voters fail to elect someone who will uphold its ideology. This behavior “encourages Turkish voters to remain permanently immature, like children who know they can keep throwing plates of food on the floor because their parents will always clean up the mess.”²⁷

Clearly, Turkey has room for improvement in the political and social realm. Turkey has enacted some political reforms and adopted 34 constitutional amendments that prevent torture, strengthen civilian authority, promote gender equality, and protect freedom of thought, expression, and association.²⁸ These reforms are extremely important in helping alleviate the tensions among the Turkish government, radical Islamist groups, and the many ethnic minorities in Turkey—including the Kurds in the Southeast, Greeks, Armenians, and Assyrians—whose social and cultural rights have been trampled. The EU has also persuaded the Turkish government to place a moratorium on the death penalty in line with the political criteria of the EU. This has been particularly significant in light of the high profile case of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan who was initially sentenced to death for his involvement with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a group considered to be a terrorist organization by the Turkish government. The PKK and Öcalan took up their rebel cause against the Turkish state in part because of the status of Kurds within Turkey as second-class citizens and to foment nationalism in the name of a Kurdish state in the mid-1970s.²⁹ Not imposing the death penalty was a major accomplishment and illustrates Turkey’s strong desire to conform to the standards of the EU. In an effort to begin to improve its human rights record, the Turkish government also recently lifted a 15-year state of emergency that had covered 11 war-torn, mainly Kurdish provinces in southeast Turkey.³⁰

The chief political problem at the root of these other human rights, ethnic, and religious conflicts is intervention by the military or the National Security Council in the name of Kemalism. Civilian control of the military is a key issue and something that underlies all EU states. While the EU has made every attempt to convey to Turkey that Kemalism is compatible with Turkish EU hopes, the military takes advantage of Kemalism to maintain control over the Turkish state. It is this exploitation of Kemalism by the military that needs to change in order for Turkey to move forward on its path to the EU. However, “even EU membership, the ultimate incentive, may not be enough to convince the Turkish military to relinquish its hold on the jugular of the modern Turkish state.”³¹

The EU, Greece, Cyprus, and The United States

Like Turkey, the EU has much to gain by granting Turkey membership. With a population of approximately 63.5 million people and a potential 85 million consumers in the future, the EU is eager to engage Turkey for economic and political reasons. Turkey currently conducts half of its trade with the EU, and it trades more with Germany than any other European nation.³² The EU also seeks good relations with Turkey as a member of NATO because it has an interest in enhancing regional stability in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean between Turkey and Greece, as well as with EU newcomer Cyprus.

The Cyprus Issue

When the Turkish army stormed into Cyprus in the summer of 1974, it put an end to the only period of independence of self-government, however qualified that the island ever enjoyed.

— author and journalist Christopher Hitchens³³

The one issue that will hinder, if not completely shatter, Turkey's chances of joining the EU is the Cyprus issue. While Greece strongly supports Turkish accession to the EU, Greece has stated that it "would not ratify EU enlargement to central and eastern Europe if the EU delayed Cypriot accession unduly."³⁴ The intent of this calculated threat forces Turkey to consider whether it is willing to jeopardize its own chances of joining the EU over its interests in Cyprus.³⁵ By allowing Turkey to participate in accession proceedings, the EU sought to push Turkey to deal not only with its internal problems, but also with its external problems, especially Turkish relations with Greece and Cyprus.

Cyprus has been at the forefront of Greek-Turkish relations since the demise of the Ottoman Empire. In 1974, following an invasion by the Turkish government, the island was partitioned, and Turkey still currently controls the northern 37 percent of the country. After the invasion and occupation by Turkish troops, Ankara began systematically colonizing the north, changing the demographic structure of the island in order to fulfill its goals of *taksim* (partition) and annexation of northern Cyprus.³⁶ Currently, the Republic of Cyprus, which is governed by the Greek Cypriot community in the south, is an internationally recognized government. An internationally unrecognized state, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), exists in the northern 37 percent and governs itself independently of the Republic of Cyprus.³⁷

It is tacitly acknowledged by the EU and the international community that Turkey directly administers the occupied areas of Cyprus through the guise of the TRNC.³⁸ The Turks and Turkish Cypriots have tried to mirror the relationship of the Greek and Greek Cypriots—two sovereign states with similar and coordinating domestic and foreign policies. This has failed because the international community, including the EU, will not legitimize the Turkish occupation of a sovereign country.

Turkey has tried to use the Cyprus issue in order to promote its agenda and ignore its problems within the EU; it has called the efforts of the EU disingenuous to the Turkish Cypriots and biased toward the Greek Cypriots.³⁹ The EU has remained undeterred by adhering to the *acquis*. Thus far, this EU policy has worked. Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash has negotiated the status of the island under the auspices of the UN, and he is working with his Greek Cypriot counterpart toward a solution that incorporates Turkish Cypriots into the EU process.

Recent developments following the elections in Turkey, show signs of promise that a solution to the Cyprus issue is progressing. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has put forth a plan for the resolution of the Cyprus issue. The Annan Proposal calls for a federal system based on the Swiss and Belgian models by which Cyprus will have two equal components, one Greek Cypriot and one Turkish Cypriot, but one single international identity.⁴⁰ Greeks and Turks from all three countries agree that the new UN plan is “an acceptable basis for negotiation” on the Cyprus issue.⁴¹ The EU and the UN hope that each side will accept an agreement by 28 February 2003 to allow for Cyprus’s entry as a united island. This may be possible given the recent change in Turkish policy on Cyprus. First, 30,000 Turkish Cypriots protested in occupied Cyprus for the resignation of Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash in a pro-EU rally. Then, Erdogan criticized Denktash for dragging his feet in the reunification talks, stating that the Cyprus issue was not “Mr. Denktash’s private matter.”⁴² Erdogan further stated, “I’m not in favor of the continuation of the policy that has been maintained in Cyprus over the past 30-40 years.”⁴³

Despite the progress, the possibility remains that Turkey may follow through on its threat to annex the territory it has occupied for almost 28 years. Needless to say, annexation of the territory of a sovereign state within the EU would eliminate any chances for Turkey to join the EU.

The United States

We’ve long believed ... that Turkey’s future is in Europe. It’s in the strategic interest of the United States ... that Turkey and the European Union build the closest possible relationship.

– State Department spokesman Richard Boucher.⁴⁴

In the long term, A Turkey within the EU, is in the best interest of the United States. Because of the Cold War and common concerns on issues related to Iraq, Iran, the Caucasus, oil in the Caspian, and Israel, “Turkey has occupied a special place in America’s foreign policy calculus,” according to John Tirman, a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Cyprus.⁴⁵ In pursuit of its interests, the United States and Turkey have been strategic allies, especially within the framework of NATO. More recently, the United States has supported Turkey’s accession to the EU, despite some of Turkey’s more unsavory characteristics. Citing that Turkey dwells in a “bad neighborhood,” at least to the south and east, the United States feels that this “necessitates its enormous

military and its sometimes distasteful actions.”⁴⁶

Because Turkey borders this very unstable region, Ankara can play the victim and use strategic leverage to win Washington’s support. Turkey has succeeded in doing with the United States what it has not been able to do with the EU—force the United States to ignore and overlook major problems in its domestic and foreign policies. This will continue in the short term, but will not work as a long-term strategy. Turkish membership to the EU is seen by the United States as a more viable option for maintaining stability as Turkey’s transgressions become more transparent and U.S. officials and Americans grow tired of supporting such a regime. In addition, the United States’ western European allies are becoming less tolerant of U.S. actions and see them as counteracting the strides the EU is trying to make in Turkey. By continuing to push for Turkish accession to the EU when Turkey is clearly not ready to meet its obligations as a member state, the United States is again looking at its narrow interests while ignoring the long-term prospects for all the actors involved. These tactics may backfire and delay a date for Turkish accession negotiations.

Through the EU, the United States is seeking, in the words of former UN Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, “the further development of a democratic, secular state with a prosperous economy” to serve U.S. and Turkish “shared security interests and intensive security cooperation.”⁴⁷ Helping Turkey contain its internal and external problems is not a permanent solution. Turkey’s entrance into the EU would help alleviate regional security issues for the United States since a Turkey within the EU incorporates it into another alliance with its rival, Greece. In addition, the United States, like the EU, would see Turkey’s interests in Cyprus as being served. Finally, a democratic and European Turkey will also serve as a model to other Muslim states in the Middle East, a region where the United States has an interest in promoting more stable governments.

While a Turkey within the EU will be less responsive to the United States’ wishes, the benefit of stability and an integrated Southeast Europe is worth the short-term cost. Turkey will likely continue to be a good ally and allow the United States to utilize its facilities to some extent in the event of a war against Iraq. The question that remains to be answered is whether the United States will abandon its pro-EU stance for Turkey if it better serves its interests in the Middle East.

The Road to the EU

In the eyes of Europe, Turkey has been making slow and gradual steps towards accession. The recent elections and the events that unfolded prior to the Copenhagen Conference indicate a renewed and immediate effort by the AK Party and its leadership to increase Turkey’s chances of joining the Union. Within weeks of winning the November 2002 election and before the AK Party officially took the reigns of government, AK Party leader Erdogan embarked on a tour of EU state capitals in an effort to garner support for Turkey’s EU bid. Once in power, the new

government submitted a package of reforms known as the “Copenhagen Package” to parliament in response to the *2002 Report* to prove to the EU that Turkey was serious about accession.⁴⁸ Despite these recent actions, Turkey warrants added attention because it is an extremely special case for the EU. Many Europeans consider it more Asian or Middle Eastern than European, and it is the only Muslim member of NATO and the Western community.

Despite the latest rejection in Copenhagen, Turkey must usher in reforms in order to fulfill the accession criteria. In Copenhagen, the EU acknowledged the determination of the new Turkish government to take further steps on the path of reform. Nevertheless, the EU stated that the Turkish government needs to address all remaining shortcomings in the field of the political criteria, not only with regard to legislation but also in particular with regard to implementation.⁴⁹ Turkey needs to accept the conclusions from the Copenhagen Conference and work with the Commission to revise its Accession Partnership documents. In accordance with the conclusions of the conference, the EC-Turkey Customs Union should be extended and deepened, with the Union significantly increasing its pre-accession financial assistance for Turkey.⁵⁰ In the meantime, Turkey can continue to make other reforms in the economic realm. The Turkish government has already started to take steps to enact the reforms outlined both in the *2002 Report* and in the IMF rescue program. As part of the \$16 billion IMF rescue program, Turkey must enact more privatization, significantly cut spending, downsize the overstaffed public sector, and reform the tax system.⁵¹

The Turkish economy, in dire need of assistance, needs to be closely scrutinized to ensure funds are being spent appropriately. Because of Turkey’s strategic relationship with the United States, it has been able to repeatedly secure bailouts during periods of economic crisis, especially from the IMF and the World Bank. If the United States continues to ignore the root causes behind Turkey’s economic instability, Turkey will never become accountable for bad management of its economy. If the United States wants to see Turkey join the EU, it should lobby to discontinue the practice of bailing out Turkey in times of economic crisis and work with the EU to create an economically sound democratic state, as has been done in Greece and Spain.

In the political and social realms, where Turkey has much room for improvement, European principles must be ingrained into the Turkish psyche. The necessary reforms, outlined in the *2002 Report*, will help lessen dangerous radical Islamist sentiment and ethnic and religious conflict by satisfying some of the interests of those groups currently repressed by the Turkish government. While a number of reform packages have been passed, further reforms are still necessary in the areas of freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and freedom of association and peaceful assembly. Political and social reforms will greatly enhance economic, social, and cultural freedoms that will translate into a more content populous and decrease the appeal of radicalism. This is especially true with the Kurds in southeastern Turkey who

have started to regain the minority rights they have been seeking for more than a decade. The Turkish government will hopefully see that further engagement with the Kurds and other minorities rather than repressing them will help heal resolve many of the country's internal conflicts.

In time, once Turkey sees the benefits from political and social change, it will be able to engage other controversial issues that it has sought to minimize in the past like the Armenian Genocide of 1915.⁵² While the Turkish government denies that genocide occurred, it is widely acknowledged that the Ottoman Turks were responsible for the extermination of nearly 1.5 million Armenians.⁵³ The Turkish government believes that acknowledging issues like the Armenian Genocide will divide the multiethnic state. Once Turkey is more secure as a political entity, it will be able to move beyond such issues, possibly even apologizing for the mistakes of its Ottoman predecessor. Turkey must face its history, “not to please Armenians but to become a complete nation, to emerge from its cocoon of insecurity and accept what is bad as well as what is good in that history.”⁵⁴ This is a far-reaching goal, but if Turkey stays on the European course, this scenario is entirely possible.

Civilian control of the military is another far-reaching goal, but a potential result of political reforms. A mature Turkish electorate will no longer need the military to intervene to correct electoral results, and the military's political power would decline.⁵⁵ However, the change to civilian control of the military will be a difficult task. Turks trust the military and know that the generals will “not allow anything to go too badly wrong.”⁵⁶ Unfortunately, Turks will have to grow up politically and learn to trust themselves and live with the political decisions they make.

Beyond helping Turkey adhere to the Copenhagen criteria, the EU needs to ignore the negative publicity put forth by anti-EU elites within Turkey and the EU and those who claim the EU is anti-Muslim. Some Turks believe that the EU has never had the intention to allow a Muslim country into its Christian club. Comments like “the EU's offer of membership is largely viewed as a clever ploy designed to disguise Europe's continued rejection of Turkey,” and that it is a “carrot” to facilitate resolutions to issues of concern to the Europeans, are rampant in Turkey and in the EU.⁵⁷ Because Turkey has been fully integrated in the Customs Union since 1995 and because of strong trade ties with the EU, many claim that the EU's goal for access to Turkish markets has been largely achieved. Because market access has been achieved, the EU has what it wants and as with other candidate states, it has placed the burden on Turkey to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria, knowing full well that Turkey would have difficulty fulfilling the criteria. Such speculation will continue to exist, especially if the EU and the Turkish government fail to make progress on accession negotiations.

The EU should market the benefits of Turkish accession and engage not only the Turkish elites who run the government and military, but also the greater population. Turks are swayed by ideological movements, as best exemplified by Kemalism, and the EU must use this to its advantage and promote the benefits and opportunities of

Europeanism and push for fulfillment of the criteria for membership. The EU, along with Turkey's leaders, needs to show the Turkish people that Europeanism (the belief in a unified democratic and economically sound Europe) is compatible with Kemalism (the belief in a nationalistic Turkey). This public relations effort will also serve as a counterweight to comments like those of former French president and the man drafting the current EU constitution, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. Giscard has been quoted as saying that a Turkey within Europe would mean "the end of Europe" given that "its capital is not in Europe" and that "95 percent of its population lives outside Europe."⁵⁸ While this reasoning is not new, the EU as a whole supports Turkey's bid to join the Union. As the foreign minister of Greece George Papandreou eloquently argued, "an enlarged Europe [is] grounded less in geography and more in values" and if Turkey adopts those values, it deserves the prize.⁵⁹

With Greece and Cyprus having adopted the European outlook for Turkey with its caveats, they too must continue to promote Turkish accession to secure stability in the region. Greece has actively engaged Turkey, making Greece a more credible actor in this complex relationship. Cyprus has agreed to a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation where Turkish Cypriots would control the northern part of the island, which, prior to the Turkish invasion of 1974, was also majority Greek.⁶⁰ Clear support from the EU, Greek engagement with Turkey, and a Cyprus that is willing to continue to compromise will collectively demonstrate the EU's desire for a European Turkey and also promote necessary reforms in Turkey.

Turkey's territorial interests in Cyprus must be abandoned. If it does not give up on this interest, it will and should mean the end of Turkey's EU bid. Instead, focusing on protecting the rights of the Turkish Cypriots on the island and gracefully withdrawing Turkish troops must be pursued. Turkey's military withdrawal will be the first step to securing a better life for Turkish Cypriots, who have suffered economic, political, and social hardships as a result of the Turkish occupation. With the assistance of the UN, which will help to provide for the physical protection of Turks and Greeks on the island, the EU can help Turkey overcome this most challenging obstacle to its accession to the Union.

The details of the Turkish withdrawal from the island must be carefully decided upon and implemented due to the sensitive nature of the issue to the Turks and the Turkish government. Turkey needs to recognize that a workable solution is in its and the Turkish Cypriots' best interests and that a withdrawal would not be a loss to the Turks and a victory for the Greeks. Strategic marketing by the EU is perhaps the most effective way to create this perception. The reunification of Cyprus must be seen as highly advantageous to the Turkish Cypriots, who will prosper as members of the EU. Although the EU has not directly linked Turkey's accession to the Cyprus issue, formally linking it to Turkey's bid will create more impetus for a resolution. Once a solution to the island's political problem is reached, the governments of Greece and Turkey will need to strike a delicate balance on the amount of influence each state

can have within Cyprus. During the reunification and reconciliation process, Greek and Turkish Cypriots will have to cooperate more, and Greece and Turkey will need to cooperate as well. Resolving the Cyprus issue will help continue the rapprochement that began after the earthquakes that rocked both Turkey and Greece in 1999.

As the main actor outside of the EU, the United States must actively push Turkey towards the EU for American long-term interests to be served. While the United States has pursued this policy, it must allow Europe to make the decision of when to accept Turkey into the EU. Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who hosted the Copenhagen Conference, made this clear to President Bush by stating, “I will not be pressured, but of course I listen carefully to those who offer me good advice. President Bush is well aware of the fact that this is a European decision.”⁶¹ The United States had much to gain if Turkey had been given a firm date for negotiations in Copenhagen. However, its insistence for a firm date may have been the last straw for Europe, which has grown tired of U.S. hegemony. Therefore, the United States could be seeing one of the first backlashes against its foreign policy agenda. If the United States will let the EU decide for itself on the status of Turkey, it will have better relations with Europe in general coupled with greater overall regional stability. It is imperative that it overlooks its short-term interests and looks at the road ahead.

Membership Will Have Its Privileges

The European Union has promised Turkey a brilliant prize if it can complete its march to modernity.

—*Stephen Kinzer*⁶²

If it occurs, Turkish accession to the EU will be a seminal moment in the history of the EU. Turkey has an opportunity to fulfill its lifelong goal of Europeanization, improve its economic, political, and social situation, and better its relations with Greece and Cyprus. All the states involved must pursue active engagement to achieve a more stable Turkey, greater regional stability, and a stronger EU.

Turkey has the most to lose if it decides that the necessary reforms are too much to handle. Many of the Turkish complaints regarding its bid to join the Union have more to do with the fact that Turkey is accustomed to getting its way, because of its relationship with the United States. If Turkey wants to be a fully functioning member of Europe, then it should start behaving like one. Saying it deserves to be part of the EU is easy, but like every other state in the Union, Turkey needs to start proving it. Passing legislative reforms is easy, but implementing them is another matter.

Like its Ottoman predecessor, Turkey will once again become the “Sick Man of Europe” if it does not work to join the European family. This realization should help push Turkey on the track to EU accession. When the Ottoman Turks refused to recognize this fact, the Ottoman Empire crumbled. To avoid a similar demise, Turkey should learn from its past and use the EU to redefine itself before it meets the same fate as its Ottoman brothers and sisters.

NOTES

¹ Because Mustafa Kemal was so respected for establishing the modern Republic, he was dubbed “Atatürk,” or “father of the Turks.”

² Paul Kubicek, “Turkish-European Relations,” *Middle East Policy* 4, no. 4 (June 1999): 158.

³ Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States*. (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2000), 4 at <http://brookings.nap.edu/books/0815750234/html/index.html>. 25 October 2002.

⁴ Once a country becomes a candidate for membership to the EU, the *National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis* becomes the candidate country’s guiding document that states the criteria it must fulfill to become a full member of the Union.

⁵ Miron Varouhakis, “Former Turkish President Says Turkey ‘Fully Committed’ to EU path,” *The Associated Press Worldstream*, 30 November 2002, International News. [Lexis-Nexus Academic, 9 December 2002.]

⁶ Üstün Ergüder, “Enforced Secularism: Is the Turkish Model Viable for the Islamic World?” (lecture given at The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., 3 April 2002). Professor Ergüder is the Welling Visiting Professor at GWU and the Director, Istanbul Policy Center, Sabanci University.

⁷ Commission of the European Communities, *Towards the Enlarged Union: Strategy Paper and Report of the European Commission on the Progress Towards Accession by Each of the Candidate Countries*, (Brussels: European Commission, 9 October 2002), 8 at http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/strategy_en.pdf. 11 October 2002.

⁸ “Negotiations,” from the EU’s Web site on enlargement at <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/index.htm>. 10 January 2003.

⁹ “Acquis Communautaire,” from the BBC News In Depth Euro-glossary website of 30 April 2001 at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/europe/euro-glossary/1216329.stm. 20 November 2002.

¹⁰ Stephen Kinzer, *Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 18.

¹¹ Ergüder.

¹² Commission of the European Communities, *Turkey Profile* (Brussels: European Commission, March 2001) at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/networks/eic/pdf/profile-turkey.pdf>. 29 March 2002.

¹³ Aysen Hiç Gencer, “Political and Economic Challenges Facing the New Turkish Government.” *Stifting Wissenschaft und Politik: Forschungsinstitut Für Internationale Politik und Sicherheit*, (January 1998), 20. (Class handout, The Mediterranean Region and U.S. Security, Spring 2002, The George Washington University.)

¹⁴ Commission on the European Communities, *2002 Regular Report on Turkey’s Progress Toward Accession* (Brussels: European Commission, 9 October 2002), 49 at http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/tu_en.pdf. 11 October 2002.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ The Customs Union between Turkey and the EU has been beneficial to both sides. For Turkey, it helped boost total imports from 1.7 percent in 1997 to 1.9 percent in 1999. Total exports also increased from 2.3 percent in 1995 to 2.7 percent in 1999. Furthermore, Turkey is the EU’s seventh biggest export destination and thirteenth biggest exporter to the EU. While the Custom Union was also intended to assist Turkey to harmonize Turkish Law with the Union’s

acquis, further integration is necessary. From “Relations with Turkey” from the EU’s Web site on enlargement at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/turkey/index.htm#customs>.

¹⁷ International Monetary Fund, “IMF Managing Director Sees Impressive Commitment by Turkey to Economic Reforms; Executive Board Approves US\$16 Billion Stand-By Credit,” press release no. 02/7, 4 February 2002 at <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2002/pr0207.htm>. 5 April 2002.

¹⁸ Commission on the European Communities, *2002 Regular Report*, 55.

¹⁹ Commission on the European Communities, *2001 Regular Report on Turkey’s Progress Toward Accession*, (Brussels: European Commission, 13 November 2001), 97-99 at http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2001/tu_en.pdf. 5 April 2002. The *2002 Report* confirmed that Turkey still needs to make significant reforms in these and other areas.

²⁰ “Erdogan Triumphs—With Plenty of Help from His Enemies,” *Economist*, 7 November 2002 at http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displayStory.cfm?story_id=1433284.

²¹ Kinzer, 234.

²² Paul Kubicek, “Turkish-European Relations.” *Middle East Policy* 4, no. 4 (June 1999): 166.

²³ Eric Rouleau, “Turkey’s Dream of Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 6 (November/December 2000): 105.

²⁴ Kinzer, 62.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 67-68.

²⁸ Commission on the European Communities, *2002 Regular Report*, 49.

²⁹ Kinzer, 111.

³⁰ “Turkey Ends 15-year-long State of Emergency in Kurdish Regions,” *Agence France Presse*, 30 November 2002. [Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe Online, 9 December 2002].

³¹ *Ibid.*, 102.

³² Tim Allen, “Turkey and the EU,” part of *Statistics in Focus* by Eurostat (May 2000): 2, at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/Public/datashop/print-product/EN?catalogue=Eurostat&product=KS-NO-00-005-EN-I-EN&mode=download>. 5 February 2003.

³³ Christopher Hitchens. *Hostage to History: Cyprus from the Ottomans to Kissinger*. (New York: Verso, 1998), 29.

³⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report December 2002: Greece* (Dartford, Kent, U.K.: Patersons Dartford, December 2002), 2.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ “Turkey Threatens to Annex the Northern Part of Cyprus,” from the Web site of the Republic of Cyprus, 25 February 2002 at <http://www.cyprus.gov.cy/cyphome/GovHome.nsf/NewsLookupIDeng/C194221C0B6752A0C2256B6B002285DB?OpenDocument&languageNo=1>.

³⁷ Turkey is the only state in the international community that recognizes the existence of the TRNC.

³⁸ Commission on the European Communities, *2001 Regular Report*, 31. In this report, the EU diplomatically states that Turkey needs to encourage Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash back to the negotiating table. This is a clear indication of Turkey’s control of Denktash and the Turkish Cypriots.

³⁹ Paul Kubicek, “Turkish-European Relations.” *Middle East Policy* 4, no. 4, (June 1999), 167.

⁴⁰ Kofi Annan, *Basis for an Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Prob-*

lem, presented to Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Greece, and Turkey, 11 November 2002, from the Web site of the Republic of Cyprus at <http://www.pio.gov.cy/other/unplan.pdf>, 8. This agreement, called the Annan Plan, is being used as the basis for negotiations but has not been accepted as the document that will reunite the island of Cyprus.

⁴¹ "Turkey's Government: So Far So Good," *Economist*, 23-29 November 2002, 49.

⁴² "Turkey Signals Policy Change on Cyprus: Turkish Leader Opposes Country's Long-Standing Hardline Policy on Cyprus," *The Associated Press Worldstream*, 2 January 2002, International News. [Lexis-Nexus Academic, 5 January 2003.]

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Richard Boucher, "Daily Press Briefing," from the U.S. Department on State Press and Public Affairs, 9 October 2002, Washington, DC at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2002/14249.htm>.

⁴⁵ John Tirman, "Improving Turkey's 'Bad Neighborhood': Pressing Ankara for Rights and Democracy," *World Policy Journal* (Spring 1998), 60.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 60.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 61.

⁴⁸ "Turkey-EU Relations: Post Helsinki Phase," from the Web site of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs at <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ad/adc/latest.htm>. 28 December 2002.

⁴⁹ Copenhagen European Council, *Presidency Conclusions* (Copenhagen: Copenhagen European Council 12-13 December 2002), 4 at <http://ue.eu.int/pressData/en/ec/73842.pdf>. 15 December 2002.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 5.

⁵¹ Western Policy Center, "Economic Plan Given High Profile in Reform Agenda," *The Strategic Regional Report: Turkey*, November 2002 at <http://www.westernpolicy.org/SRR/TU-7-8.asp>. 13 December 2002.

⁵² The Armenian Genocide, or as many states like the U.S. refer to it, the Armenian Massacre (to appease Turkey), was a response by the Ottoman Turks to uprisings by Armenians, supported by Russia, in eastern Anatolia. Starting out as a deportation of Armenians, hatred between the Ottoman Turks and Armenians escalated into what Kinzer describes as an "orgy of ethnic violence" (Kinzer, 88).

⁵³ George W. Bush, "President's Message on Armenian Massacre," from the Office of the Press Secretary of the President of the United States press release of 24 April 2002 at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020424-4.html>. 11 December 2002. President Bush as well as his predecessors has acknowledged the bloodshed and the dramatic loss of life in the Armenian community as a result of the Ottoman pogroms of 1915.

⁵⁴ Kinzer, 93.

⁵⁵ Recalling the comments by Professor Ergüder, Atatürk did not trust the Turkish public when the republic emerged early on and therefore was reluctant to give the people real power to vote and choose its representatives because they were "backwards." The intended goal was to change this as the public became more educated and informed to make better decisions. EU accession is going to be a test for the Turkish public.

⁵⁶ Kinzer, 16.

⁵⁷ Ersel Aydinli and Dov Waxman, "A Dream Become Nightmare? Turkey Knocking on Europe's Door," *Current History* 100, no. 649 (November 2001): 384.

⁵⁸ Elaine Sciolino, "Ex-French President Snubs Turks on EU Bid," *New York Times*, 9 November 2002, A6.

⁵⁹ George A. Papandreou, "Join the Club," *Wall Street Journal*, 11 December 2002, A18.

⁶⁰ "Turkey Threatens to Annex the Northern Part of Cyprus," from the Web site of the Republic of Cyprus, 25 February 2002 at <http://www.cyprus.gov.cy/cyphome/GovHome.nsf/NewsLookupIDeng/C194221C0B6752A0C2256B6B002285DB?OpenDocument&languageNo=1>. 13 December 2002. According to Greek Cypriot government sources, in occupying the north of the island, Turkey forcibly expelled Greek Cypriots who constituted about 80 percent of the indigenous population.

⁶¹ Paul Taylor and Gareth Jones, "Bush Lobbies EU on Turkey Talks, Cyprus Hopes Dim," *Reuters*, 11 December 2002 at <http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=topNews&storyID=1892478>. 13 December 2002.

⁶² Kinzer, 240.
