

**PAK-TURKEY RELATIONS: On the Common Ties**

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After a decade of stagnant relations, Pakistan-Turkey relations seem to be improving in the right direction. Both countries have traditionally enjoyed close and cordial relations. The manifold commonalties between the two countries have been reinforced by the firm resolve of their leadership to further deepen mutual cooperation in all fields.

For over half century, Turkey and Pakistan remained close friends. Their multi-dimensional relationship showed the same spirit of brotherhood as prevailed during centuries-old ties between Indian Muslims and the Ottoman Empire, later the Republic of Turkey.<sup>1</sup> Ideologically, however, they were poles apart – Turkey, when it became a Republic, pursued secularism while Pakistan adhered to the Islamic ideology as the centrepiece of its nationhood. But these differences of ideology, with their corresponding reflections on their respective external outlook, never hampered the course of friendly bilateral ties.

In the last few years, the perceptions and interests of Turkey and Pakistan have started to converge on a number of important issues. The paper provides a brief historical overview of Pak-Turk relations and the various dimensions of the relationship in the present time. It will also attempt to draw attention to the areas of divergences and convergence that have surfaced between Pakistan and Turkey in the post-Cold War era and recommend new approaches to the future fostering of these ties. But before that, it is important to note the strategic importance of the two countries in the light of events that unfolded in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks on the US.

The geo-strategic location of both Pakistan and Turkey are unique and similar to a greater extent. Turkey's geo-strategic importance stems from its central location at the crossroads of the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, which were major regions of instability and conflict in the post-Cold War era.<sup>2</sup> With the war against Iraq,

Turkey was once again exposed to the grim realities of its geographic proximity with a large Iraqi Kurdish region adjacent to its own Kurd-inhabited areas. Turkey has a huge population of ethnic Kurds in its South East bordering Iraq, in view of which Ankara has been keen on checking any Kurdish fissiparous tendencies within Iraq. Similarly, Pakistan is geo-strategically placed at the crossroads of Central Asia, West Asia and South Asia, right next to Afghanistan that has faced decades of war, with ethnic affiliations on both sides of the Durand line. Post-9/11, Pakistan became the frontline state in the war against terrorism that brought the international community to Afghanistan. Both Pakistan and Turkey are playing important roles in their respective conflict-ridden regions, specifically in view of the fast changing developments in the post 9/11 international relations.

### **Political Ties**

The forging of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Turkey can be traced back to the time of British India before Pakistan was born but the Pakistan Movement was well underway. Until 1924, the symbol of universal Islamic unity for the Indian Muslims was the Sultan of Turkey in his capacity as the Khalifa of Islam, and the fate of Turkey, therefore, stirred the emotions of Muslims in India. During the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, religious services were held in the mosques in Calcutta and subscriptions were collected for the Turkish wounded. All subsequent Turkish causes similarly evoked Muslim sympathy in India. Notable amongst these were the wars against Greece (1897), Italy (1911), and the Balkan League (1912). During the Balkan War, the Muslims of India sent a medical mission to Turkey.<sup>3</sup> Money was subscribed more readily for the Turkish cause than for any proposal for the betterment of the Indian Muslims. After the First World War, in which Turkey had been on the losing side, the Muslims of India tried their utmost to ensure that the territorial and spiritual status of the Sultan should remain intact. Subhas Chandra Bose, a renowned Indian leader, notes 'about the middle of the 1920 anti-British feeling was stronger among the Muslims than among the rest of Indian population.'<sup>4</sup> A Khilafat movement was inaugurated in India by the Ali Brothers and Abul Kalam Azad, and two delegations, one led by Maulana Muhammad Ali and the other by the Agha Khan, to plead on behalf of the Sultan to British Prime Minister, George Lloyd.<sup>5</sup>

In 1924, the Turks themselves abolished the institution of Khilafat. The abolition of the Khilafat by Turkey formed a watershed in the evolution of Muslim politics in India, as Muslim hopes, having lost their focal point, turned inwards. The deep agony with which the Indian Muslims had viewed the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the demise of the Khilafat was transformed into admiration for the way the new Republic of Turkey emerged as a

vigorous, modern state from the ashes of the Sultanate.<sup>6</sup> Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father and the first Governor General of Pakistan, showed an immense appreciation for Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey. On the occasion of the presentation of credentials by the first Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan on March 4, 1948, Jinnah said, 'the exploits of your leaders in many a historic field of battle; the progress of your revolution; the rise and career of the great Ataturk, his revitalisation of your nation by his great statesmanship, courage and foresight, are well known to the people of Pakistan.'<sup>7</sup>

The Turks have retained grateful memories of the support extended to them, in the beginning of the twentieth century, by the Muslims of British India. This contrasted with what the Turks regarded as betrayal by the Arabs during the First World War. Turkey was thus keen to establish a close relationship with another large non-Arab Muslim country like Pakistan following its independence in 1947. This fitted in well with Pakistan's policy vis-à-vis the Muslim world.<sup>8</sup> So relations with Turkey were cordial from one day one, foreshadowing the further friendly cooperation between the two countries, first in the Baghdad Pact, and later in the Regional Co-operation for Development (RCD), which then evolved into the current Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO). Accordingly, a joint communiqué released simultaneously in Karachi and Ankara, on February 19, 1954, declared that Pakistan and Turkey had agreed to study methods of closer collaboration in the political, economic, and cultural spheres, as well as ways 'of strengthening peace and security in their own interest as also in that of all peace-loving nations'.<sup>9</sup> The declaration of intent in the Turco-Pakistan communiqué of February 1954 was given concrete shape in an agreement signed on April 2, 1964 (See Annexure). Article IV, dealing with co-operation in defence, stated that this would cover exchange of information on technical experience and progress, endeavours to meet the requirements in production of arms and ammunition and co-operation under Article 51 of UN charter, against unprovoked attack.<sup>10</sup>

Turkey and Pakistan were also part of the Baghdad Pact that came into being in 1955. The Baghdad Pact provided for co-operation between members for their security and defence. It was designed to counter the long-standing Russian policy of expansion southwards in the direction of the Caspian and the Black Sea, and into Central Asia. Apart from Pakistan and Turkey, other members included Iraq, Iran, and Britain. The US never officially signed the Pact but participated in its work. When in 1959, Iraq relinquished her membership from the Pact; the name of the organisation was changed to Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO). CENTO did serve to increase the physical contacts, friendship, and mutual understanding between Pakistan, Turkey and Iran, already joined together by ties of culture, common

religion, and geography, and they put these assets to concrete use by founding a parallel organisation under the name of Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) in July 1964. RCD was a by-product of the growing disenchantment of Pakistan, Iran and Turkey with their ties with the Western countries. Immediately after the invasion of West Pakistan in 1965, Pakistan invoked CENTO. Though Britain and the US disclaimed responsibility under the Pact, Iran and Turkey, responded favourably to Pakistan's appeal for help. The Prime Minister of Turkey issued a statement that India's action in extending hostilities 'outside the area of dispute in Kashmir itself' had caused deep concern in Turkey, Pakistan's ally in CENTO.'<sup>11</sup>

With the Iranian revolution and the subsequent fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979, the RCD lost its fervour as its secretariat was based in Tehran. Later efforts were made by Pakistani President, General Zia-ul-Haq in the mid-1980s to revive the RCD, but to no effect. Another factor that hampered in the development of the RCD was the Afghan war of 1979-89. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the birth of Central Asian states, a new reality faced Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. Turkey's ever-present interest in the Central Asian region was revived; the new Central Asian states looked up to Turkey because of close Turkish connections. Following these developments and the infighting of Taliban supported by Pakistan and the factions of the Northern Alliance having the support of Turkey, relations between the two countries remained cold. After the recognition of the Taliban as the central government of Afghanistan by Pakistan, relations remained stagnant. As a result, the traditional emotional warmth of bilateral relations somewhat weakened in tone and content.

In the recent past, bilateral relations received a significant boost after President Musharraf became Pakistan's Head of State in October 1999. His profound admiration for Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey, whom he sees as a model statesman is on record.<sup>12</sup> A distinguishing feature of the growing close bilateral ties is the frequent exchanges of high-level visits. The President of Pakistan visited Turkey in November 1999. The visit was aimed at briefing the Turkish leadership about the political changes in Pakistan and enhancement of bilateral relations. Since then a number of high-level bilateral visits have taken place. It is important to note that unanimity of views on various regional and international issues have prevailed in all of these meetings. Turkish President, President Necdet Sezer, visited Pakistan in October 2001; foreign minister, Abdullah Gul visited in May 2003; and Turkish Prime Minister, Tayyip Recep Erdogan visited Islamabad in June 2003. The fact that the Turkish Prime Minister's entourage included 110 businessmen showed Turkey's desire to increase trade and economic cooperation with Pakistan. The two sides

signed three MoUs on road transport, drug trafficking and environment. The latest visit of President Musharraf that took place on January 19-21, 2004, was seen as a very significant visit in improving bilateral relations in important sectors. President Musharraf made the first ever address to the Turkish parliament by a Pakistani leader. Several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) covering cooperation in combating international terrorism and organised crime as well as in the health and banking sectors were signed. Specifically, according to the agreement on anti-terrorism, Ankara and Islamabad are to exchange experts and intelligence on terrorism and pursue a joint strategy, which evidently formalises a new level of political alignment.<sup>13</sup>

President Pervez Musharraf's visit to Turkey sought to revive relations that had gone somewhat sour during Pakistan's support to extremist Taliban government in Afghanistan. Pakistan's war on the side of the Taliban had brought the Northern Alliance under pressure and there were times when the Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostam had to flee to Turkey. Turkey found itself aligned with a large number of states resisting the Taliban order in Afghanistan. Although relations with Pakistan were guarded from becoming overtly bitter, an undertow of offence was always to be felt. That phase is hopefully over with the President's visit and the signing of an anti-terrorism agreement opening channels of information on who's who in the international terror front. After a number of terrorist attacks in Pakistan and the suicide-bombings recently suffered by Saudi Arabia and Turkey, the category of 'extremist Muslims' has been accepted, who are the root cause for creating the misunderstanding that exists worldwide regarding Muslims. The move in Turkey should be a part of a larger strategy of repairing relations with Pakistan's neighbours. A restoration of old confidence in Ankara would have a positive fallout on the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, wherein the Uzbeks form an important faction.

According to the January 20, 2004 Agreement, Ankara and Islamabad would exchange 'experts and intelligence' on terrorism and pursue a joint strategy which reflects a new level of political alignment and a common determination regarding the fight against terror. Both Pakistan and Turkey have been faced with terrorist acts in the recent past specifically for playing important roles in the war against terrorism and both are striving for good relations with the West. There seems to be a growing commonality of interest and objectives. Pakistan is a key partner in the campaign against terrorism and has arrested over 500 terrorist suspects since September 11, 2001. The latest spate of terrorism faced by Turkey were the suicide bombings within a few days of each other, claimed by Jihadis, that killed 61 people in Istanbul in November 2003.<sup>14</sup> Pakistan seems keen to trace any possible links between radical

Turkish Islamic groups and al-Qaeda. Turkey, in return, is actively investigating possible ties between the perpetrators of the November Istanbul bombings and Pakistan-based terrorist cells. The intelligence services of Turkey and Pakistan are also co-operating closely with US agencies.

Pakistan and Turkey share perceptions on some of the most important current regional and international issues, as well as cooperate closely in multilateral fora including the UN, OIC, ECO and D-8. Both countries share similar perceptions on international issues such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Both countries also extended useful support to each other from time to time on the Kashmir and Cyprus issues. Pakistan and Turkey have been important founding members of the OIC, the ECO and D-8, which projects them as natural leaders of the Muslim world. The lowest ebb of bilateral relations was reached during the government of Turkish Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit, when he visited India in April 2000 and pointedly praised its democracy and endorsed the Indian position on 'cross-border terrorism' and India's draft UN convention on international terrorism.<sup>15</sup>

### **Economic Ties**

While the two countries have enjoyed excellent political relations for several decades now, what is surprising is that these historic ties have not translated into better trade and economic cooperation. For the past five years, trade between Pakistan and Turkey has hovered around \$160 million, which does not commensurate with the potential of this relationship or partnership.<sup>16</sup> Although some Turkish companies in the private sector have invested in Pakistan including Bayinder, Enka and Tekser, for various projects in the country but not many Pakistani companies are actively working in Turkey. There is hope that in keeping with the global trends, economic interaction will assume centre-stage in relations between Pakistan and Turkey.

The transportation facilities between Turkey and Pakistan are inadequate and there is a need to set up a joint cargo line/regular charter vessel services between Karachi and Istanbul. There is also a need to provide a permanent display centre of Pakistani products in Istanbul and to organise Single Country Exhibition by Pakistan in Istanbul and vice versa. There is enormous scope for enhancing cooperation in economy, trade, tourism and science and technology. The two countries are endowed with enormous natural resources and have pools of scientific and skilled work force. Yet, the volume of trade between the two stands at a negligible \$160 million. One reason for the low level of mutual trade is the existence of parallel economies in the two countries. Both countries trade in products such as cotton, rice,

leather and textiles. That their target markets are the same, however, does not mean they should not look for other levels of cooperation in trade and commerce.<sup>17</sup> Among other goods, Pakistan imports wheat from Turkey, and Turkey imports rice and textiles from Pakistan. For its part, Pakistan can import Turkish dairy products and refrigerators, washing machines, electronic goods, automobiles and other durable items, which are said to be qualitatively better and far cheaper than Western, Japanese or South Korean products. Despite various bilateral and regional efforts to achieve a direct maritime shipping link between Turkey and Pakistan, the handicap of transportation remains virtually intact. Air transport is costly and limited. An encouraging development in this context is the recent growth in trade among member-states of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) through the ECO Shipping Company as a viable alternative to expanding mutual trade.

Lastly and more importantly, private business in Turkey needs to set its priorities right. Presently, it maintains a Euro-centric outlook. It is true that, politically, the East does not have much to offer to Turkey. It is full of grave problems of poverty, ethnic strife, uncertainty, rivalry, war and undemocratic regimes. But, at the same time, a mass of humanity lives in the East, with potentially a huge consumer population. The expanding business sector in Turkey has to take cognisance of this reality. It must rethink its obsession with Europe and re-orient its products to Eastern markets. For private business interests in Turkey, there exist tremendous opportunities to introduce their products in big consumer markets such as that of Pakistan with a population of over 140 million. Currently, Japan, China, South Korea and Western countries monopolise such markets.

### **Defence Ties**

Presently, the High-Level Military Dialogue (HLMDG) is the forum for defence co-operation between Pakistan and Turkey. The HLMDG was set up in June 2003, when after coming into power Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Erdogan visited Pakistan. The HLMDG meets twice a year and the last meeting was held in Islamabad in May 2004.<sup>18</sup> Earlier, the Pakistan-Turkey Military Consultative Group (MCG) formed in 1988 worked on extending cooperation and exchange experiences in the fields of military training and defence production between the two countries and to review geo-political environment of the region.<sup>19</sup> Historically, both countries were bound in the defence field under the Turco-Pakistan Treaty of 1954. Article IV of the Treaty, dealing with co-operation in defence, stated that this would cover exchange of information on technical experience and progress, production of arms and ammunition and co-operation under Article 51 of UN Charter, against unprovoked attack.<sup>20</sup> Defence relations

have encouraged cooperation in defence and training including developing joint defence industrial projects, as well as providing training for each other's armed forces personnel. Currently, a number of officers from both sides are receiving training in each other's institutions. Various possibilities for co-production need to be explored. The Pakistan ordinance production facilities have won contracts from the Turkish Armed Forces. The establishment of High-Level Military Dialogue (HLMDG) should play an effective role in improving bilateral defence ties. There is a need to highlight the areas for future defence cooperation.

### **Cultural Ties**

The Agreement for Cultural Cooperation signed in 1953 is being implemented through cultural Exchange Programmes. The current programme for cultural exchanges will expire in December 2006. A number of Pakistani students avail the scholarships but the ratio of Turkish students coming to Pakistan is very low. There is a need for educational institutions to establish linkages. The Institute of Strategic Studies, (ISS) Islamabad and Centre for Strategic Research (CSR), Ankara, signed a landmark agreement in this regard in May 2003, which is a building block for establishing other institutional linkages. There is also a need to increase people-to-people contacts by exchange of cultural groups from both sides as well as encouraging the tourism industry to take the initiative in this regard. The Turkish Embassy in Islamabad has intensified visits of Turkish cultural troupes to Pakistan. There is a need to send similar Pakistani groups to Turkey.

### **Areas of Divergence**

Afghanistan, Israel, nuclear proliferation and, democracy were the four areas where the perceptions and interests of Turkey and Pakistan diverged and for a short while during the tenure of Prime Minister Ecevit, the issue of Kashmir was also an area of divergence. While in the case of Israel and nuclear proliferation, the two countries seemed to understand each other's compulsions, by far the most important area of divergence in relations between Turkey and Pakistan was Afghanistan. The historical synchronisation of Pakistan-Turkey policies on regional issues came under strain on the question of a post-Soviet settlement in Afghanistan. Ethnic attachments and an intrinsic distrust of ultra-Islamic forces accounted for Ankara's reluctance to endorse the Taliban's bid for supremacy.<sup>21</sup>

Also since Turkey had economic and political stakes in Central Asia, it did not like the growing influence in Afghanistan of the Taliban, which threatened to cause a spill over of

Islamic extremism into the Central Asian region. Because of their common ethnic origins, the countries of Central Asia are regarded by Turkey as a kind of exclusive preserve. The Central Asian countries, saw the Taliban in Afghanistan as a threat to the stability of their own regimes. Turkey had thus tended to make a common cause with the Central Asian countries against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Ankara's inclination towards anti-Taliban forces was clear from the fact that the Afghan-Uzbek leader, Rashid Dostum, after being ditched by General Abdul Malik from his own faction, Jumbish-e-Milli, in June 1997, took refuge in Istanbul. His Tadjik partner in the Northern Alliance against Taliban, Commander Ahmad Shah Masood, visited Ankara in April 1998. Turkey recognised the government of Burhanuddin Rabbani as the only legitimate representative of Afghanistan.

Ankara wants a broad-based settlement in Afghanistan, which should include all ethnic factions. As Turkey's former Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem, observed during his visit to Islamabad in April 1998: 'We want all sides to get together and form a transitional government consisting of all ethnic groups in order to create conditions which are conducive for a broad-based settlement of the issue.'<sup>22</sup>

In terms of Pakistan's economic future, perhaps the greatest loss for its backing of Taliban is that the Turkmen-Pakistan gas pipeline project has been put on hold. The government of former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, which had signed an agreement on the project with Turkmenistan in 1997, was relying on stability in Afghanistan resulting from the Taliban's hold over Afghanistan, including the territory through which the pipeline had to pass. First, Afghanistan failed to gain stability. Second, the Turkmen authorities maintained serious reservations regarding the Taliban. Eventually, the key Western financier of the project, Unocal, withdrew from the project in 1998.<sup>23</sup> As far as the Turkmen-Pakistan pipeline project was concerned, Turkey did not see Pakistan as a rival because the aim of this venture and other potential pipeline projects bringing oil from the Central Asian-Caspian sea region to Pakistan's port of Gwadar was to ship it to South East Asian and Far Eastern regions. Post-September 11, realpolitik forced the Pakistani leadership to change their policies vis-à-vis Afghanistan, which helped to improve bilateral relations with Turkey and other Central Asian Republics.<sup>24</sup> The shift in Pakistan's Afghan policy, the coming in power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey has led to a revival of relations that had gone sour during Pakistan's support of the Taliban government in Afghanistan. This is seen as a part of a larger strategy of repairing relations with Pakistan's neighbours. A restoration of old confidence in Ankara would have positive impact on the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan where the Uzbeks form an important faction.

### *Kashmir*

Turkey has traditionally supported Pakistan's official standpoint on Kashmir, which says that a free and fair plebiscite in Kashmir under the supervision of the UN should take place, as specified in the UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir. Ankara still supports the UN option for a Kashmir settlement, but over the last few years, it has started to stress the importance of India-Pakistan bilateral talks in settling the issue. The difference of perceptions between the leaders of Pakistan and Turkey over Kashmir became manifest during former Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit's visit to India in March-April 2000. Although Ecevit did not mention the Kashmir issue specifically but he made references to cross-border terrorism and emphasised that Turkey and India shared similar problems of cross-border terrorism and endorsed New Delhi's proposal for a global convention on terrorism.<sup>25</sup> The Indian connotation of cross border terrorism is in the context of the Kashmir issue whereby India holds Pakistan responsible for the cross-border terrorism. Giving such statements on the Indian soil led to a deep criticism in the Pakistani media, which interpreted Ecevit's reference to cross-border terrorism as a dilution of Turkey's official stance on Kashmiri peoples right of self-determination.

During his latest visit, Turkish Prime Minister, Erdogan supported the normalisation moves under way between India and Pakistan and said his government stood for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue.<sup>26</sup> Earlier in October 2001, Turkish President, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, maintained a consistent support to Pakistan and called for a solution in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir and on the basis of international law.<sup>27</sup> These details highlight the fact that Turkish position on the issue of Kashmir has been unanimous throughout our bilateral relationship except on one occasion.

### *Israel*

Turkey's growing ties with Israel is another area where the approaches of Pakistan and Turkey differ. However, over the years, these differences have not negatively affected the friendly nature of mutual ties. Pakistan does not recognise Israel and yet it has never expressed any cause of concern against the Turkish-Israeli connection. In other words, it understands Turkey's compulsions and recognises its interest in fostering ties with Tel Aviv. Nevertheless, at the same time, Pakistan is very wary of the Indo-Israeli strategic nexus. For Pakistan, the cause of concern has been the Israeli arms sales to India like the Phalcon radar system, unmanned ariel vehicles, and arrow anti-missile technology, and ship-based surface-to-air missiles.<sup>28</sup> Such sales would definitely accentuate the strategic imbalance in South Asia.

The Indian moves for encircling Pakistan through its presence in Afghanistan and Central Asia are also cause of concern to Pakistan. Presently, India maintains a military base in Farkhore (Tajikistan) and five diplomatic missions in Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup> With India on its Eastern border, and Afghanistan to its West, Pakistan feels that India has been trying to contain it by setting up these consulates specifically in areas bordering Pakistan, which maybe used to incur insecurity within Pakistan.

In Pakistan, there is a realisation regarding the compulsions of Turkey vis-à-vis Israel and India, but there is also a need for understanding from the Turkish side, of the regional politics of South Asia. Picking and choosing one or the other has not been the Turkish approach in South Asia unlike the Arab countries and there is hope that it remains so.

### *Democracy and Secularism*

Until October 1999, one similarity in Turkish-Pakistan relations and pre-Partition ties between Indian Muslims and the Turks under the Ottomans and Ataturk, was that they remained unaffected by political, ideological or leadership changes in the two countries. Both countries experienced military coups, but their relations were not clouded by such events. On President Musharraf's first visit to Ankara in 1999, President Ecevit conveyed his desire for Pakistan's return to civilian rule.<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, Mr Ecevit's decision to bypass Pakistan during his South Asian sojourn in April 2000 was motivated by his desire to signal to the Pakistani leadership Turkey's disapproval of military rule and desire for a quick return to democracy in Pakistan.<sup>31</sup> During a press conference, when Prime Minister Ecevit was asked by Indian journalist about his decision to pay an official visit to India and not including Pakistan, the Turkish Prime Minister emphasised he didn't want to confuse issues as India and Turkey had much in common particularly in their shared values of democracy and secularism.<sup>32</sup> However, more significant was the statement he issued in New Delhi against 'international terrorism'; which, in fact, signifies another shift in Turkey's approach vis-à-vis Pakistan. Although since independence, the two countries have chosen two different ideological destinies, secularism and Islam, their leaders had tried hard not to let these domestic compulsions affect their mutually conducive relations.

### **Areas of Convergence**

Trade, business, investment, defence production, tourism, educational and cultural co-operation are all areas where the perceptions and interests of Turkey and Pakistan converge. However, over the years, the two countries have failed to exploit the tremendous potential for

mutual cooperation existing in all of these areas. As far as trade is concerned, both countries have realised that the current trade volume is too small and are striving to increase it to \$1 billion by 2005. There are more economic avenues, which can be exploration within this bilateral framework.

#### *Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)*

Pakistan has been fully supportive of Turkey's stance vis-à-vis TRNC. In fact, Pakistan was the only country in the world to support Turkey on its military intervention in Northern Cyprus in 1974.<sup>33</sup> The position of Pakistan on the recent UN outlined plan for the settlement of the Cyprus issue, which unfortunately failed, was made clear when President Pervez Musharraf added the note to his speech on his recent trip to Turkey, 'Pakistan fully supports the Turkish Cypriots struggle for their just cause.' This made clear how much importance Pakistan gives to its brotherly state of Turkey with whom Pakistan has always had cordial ties. It also highlighted that Pakistan has not forgotten the problems faced by Turkish Cypriots. TRNC has representation in the form of either consulates or representative offices in London, Abu Dhabi, Washington DC, Brussels, Islamabad, and United Nations.

#### *Private Investment*

Since the start of the 1990s, Turkish private businesses have also invested in Pakistan. Three of Turkey's leading construction companies, Bayinder, STFA and Tekser, are engaged in building the country's infrastructure and communication network, including the construction of major roads, a motorway, harbour and canal projects. The total volume of private Turkish investment in Pakistan currently stands at around \$1.5 billion. The urgent need for undertaking such crucial bilateral measures aside, Pakistan and Turkey should also continue to strive to build a community of common regional interests, as this will affect their own mutual ties positively. The ECO is the best forum for this purpose. Other organisations, such as the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and Developing Eight (D-8), can also be used for the purpose, even if they have thus far proved to be ineffective institutions for regional cooperation.

The European Union (EU) is Pakistan's biggest export market and a major source of financial aid. Because of that, Turkey's entry in the EU as a full member would benefit Pakistan's economy considerably. Even now, Ankara participates actively in EU affairs. Turkey became an associate member of the EEC in 1963 and has been in the EU Customs Union since January 1996. Turkey's EU connection provides another motivation for

Islamabad to make a concerted effort to remove snags in its ties with Ankara. In addition, given Turkey's deep engagement in Central Asia, Islamabad should try to coordinate closely with Ankara, bilaterally as well as through the ECO framework, to make its long-cherished Central Asian dream come true.

### *Terrorism*

Turkey and Pakistan are two Muslim countries marred by terrorism related violence and are both striving for good relations with the West. There seems to be commonality of interest and objective to fight terrorism and establish better relations with the West. It is heartening to see that today most of the irritants in bilateral relations between Pakistan and Turkey have subsided. Democracy has been restored in Pakistan and that is no more a concern of Turkey. Both Pakistan and Turkey have converging views on Afghanistan. The Turkish position on Afghanistan is that Afghanistan should have a broad-based government representing all sections of the population, and as the largest ethnic group and that, the Pashtuns must obviously be there along with the ethnic minorities.<sup>34</sup> As far as Israel is concerned, its non-recognition by Pakistan has been based on its principled stance on the right of the Palestinians, which in turn affects Pakistan's stance on the issue of Kashmir. Otherwise, there is no point of difference with Israel and the Pakistani decision-makers fully understand the close Turkish-Israeli ties, but the Indo-Israeli ties complicate the whole situation.

## **Future Recommendations**

### *Role in the Muslim World*

Turkey and Pakistan have been important founding members of the OIC, the Developing-8 (D-8) and the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO). They can cooperate in taking the lead in projecting and dispensing a moderate view of Islam. Both can contribute in cleansing away the stereotype view of 'extremist Islam'. Both Pakistan and Turkey have made efforts to bridge the gap between the Muslim world and the West. In this context, President Musharraf presented the concept of 'enlightened moderation' to overcome the civilisational gap between Islam and the West at the 10th OIC Summit held in October 2003 at Putrajaya, Malaysia.<sup>35</sup> The two-pronged theory on the one hand called upon the Muslim world to reject extremism and on the other to go for socio-economic development. On the other, he called upon the West, the United States and UN to move forward for socio-economic emancipation of the Islamic world by resolving political disputes involving Muslims.<sup>36</sup> Earlier in February 2002, Turkey called for and hosted a joint conference of the EU-OIC to discuss dialogue among

civilisations. The EU-OIC joint forum is one of the avenues that needs to be expanded through interaction. Such initiatives have to continue to close the worldwide gaps of understanding specifically related to Islam. Being close allies on the War Against Terror and having close contacts with the Muslim world, Pakistan and Turkey can collectively make this effort to bring them closer together to fight the common enemy of terrorism. The leadership of both countries have time and again condemned terrorism.

The sad fact in the wider Middle Eastern context is that the regional countries have failed to play any meaningful role in preserving peace and stability in the region and in safeguarding their collective interests. In the Iraqi crisis, the Muslim and Arab governments were more fearful than assertive in their action and reaction. Even more startling was the passivity of the two Arab and Muslim groupings - the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Conference, both of which looked the other way as the Iraqi crisis unfolded till it reached its dreadful denouement in recent times.

#### *Enlarged Euro-Asian Market*

Great opportunities exist for Turkey and Pakistan to make joint efforts to realise the trade and economic potential for mutual benefit in an enlarged Euro-Asia market. Turkey is linked to Europe and Central Asia while Pakistan can serve as a gateway to Central Asia. With the advantage of their strategic locations, the two countries could take the initiative for the development of a vast market which can even be enlarged to take in North Africa and Southern China. This area could later on be expanded to include the rest of South Asia and the Far East. So, a vast market between Casablanca and Seoul could be established for the benefit of a large number of countries, most of which are at present in a state of under-development because, with the exception of a few, none of them belong to any prosperous economic or trade grouping. It is in the interest of Turkey and Pakistan to come together and try to translate the vision of an enlarged Euro-Asia market into a reality.

- Better economic relations are a key to the future of these bilateral relations. Pakistan needs to look deeper into the opportunity of exploring the prospects of Turkey as a gateway to Europe, while Pakistan is an outlet to the Indian Ocean and China and Far East. They can protect each others interests specifically in the economical sphere in Europe and Asia.
- In the recent past, Pakistan has made efforts to normalise relations with Afghanistan, by contributing \$100 million for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan at the Donors Conference in Bonn in January 2001. Due to close Turk-Afghan

relations, Turkey can play its role by acting as a bridge for a trilateral arrangement in which all three countries are involved in issues of interest.

- Pakistan can learn a lot from Turkey in terms of improving its tourism industry. Turkey is one of the top ten destinations for tourists in the developed countries. Tourism can contribute to improving the Pakistani economy to a great extent. The prospects of joint projects can also be explored in this regard. Like other avenues of cooperation, we have an agreement on cooperation in tourism but the implementation of agreement is required.
- Possibility of employment opportunities for Pakistani professionals and technical manpower such as doctors, architects and software developers.
- Bilateral trade can be enhanced in coal, minerals, copper, cotton and textile, leather, ceramics and steel as potential sectors in which trade between the two countries could be enhanced. There is a need for collaboration in banking, pharmaceuticals, construction, transportation, housing, financial service and education sectors.<sup>37</sup> There is also the need to put up display centers in Pakistan and Turkey for each other's products.
- There is also a need for Turkey to act and contribute more towards becoming an Asian power rather than only a European one.
- Establishing institutional linkages whether it is political, economic or cultural.
- Improved military ties that encompass not only training of servicemen but also conducting joint military exercises as well as joint production of weapons can improve bilateral defence ties.

The Pak-Turk relations as well as Pakistan's relations with the rest of the Muslim world had been taken for granted. Pakistan realises the need to maintain close ties with Turkey given that both sides have a similarity of vision for the Muslim world, and can also bring the West and the Muslim world together. Bilateral economic relations would also help both countries overcome their economic problems in the future, and use these relations to play a leading role in organisations such as the UN, OIC and ECO.

## NOTES

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## **Annexure**

### **Pakistan-Turkish Agreement, Karachi, April 2, 1954**

#### **Preamble**

Reaffirming their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their determination always to endeavour to apply and give effect to these purposes and principles; desirous of promoting the benefits of greater mutual cooperation deriving from the sincere friendship happily existing between them; recognising the need for consultation and cooperation between them in every field for the purpose of promoting the well-being and security of their peoples; and being convinced that such cooperation would be in the interest of all peace-loving nations and in particular of nations in the region of the contracting parties, and would consequently serve to ensure peace and security which are both indivisible; the two countries have, therefore, decided to conclude this Agreement for friendly cooperation and for this purpose, have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries: For Pakistan: Mohammad Zafrullah Khan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. For Turkey: His Excellency Monsieur Selahattin Refet Arbel, Ambassador of Turkey who, after presentation of their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows:

#### **Article 1**

The contracting parties undertake to refrain from intervening in any way in the internal affairs of each other and from participating in any alliance or activities directed against the other.

#### **Article 2**

The contracting parties will consult on international matters of mutual interest and, taking into account international requirements and conditions, cooperate between them to the maximum extent.

### *Article 3*

The contracting parties will develop the cooperation, already established between them in the cultural field under a separate Agreement, in the economic and technical fields if necessary, by concluding other agreements.

### *Article 4*

The consultation and cooperation between the contracting parties in the field of the defence shall cover the following points:

(a) exchange of information for the purpose of deriving benefit jointly from technical experience and progress;

(b) endeavours to meet, as far as possible, the requirements of the Parties in the production of arms and ammunition;

(c) studies and determination of the manners and extent of cooperation which might be effected between them in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, should an unprovoked attack occur against them from outside.

### *Article 5*

Each contracting party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any third State is in conflict with the provisions of this Agreement and that this Agreement shall not affect, nor can it be interpreted so as to affect, the aforesaid engagements, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Agreement.

### *Article 6*

Any State, whose participation is considered by the contracting parties useful for achieving the purposes of the present Agreement, may accede to the present Agreement under the same conditions, and with the same obligations as the contracting parties.

Any accession shall have legal effect, after the instrument of accession is duly deposited with the Government of Turkey from the date of an official notification by the Government of Turkey to the Government of Pakistan.

### *Article 7*

This Agreement of which the English text is authentic, shall be ratified by the contracting parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes, and shall enter into force on the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification in Ankara.

In case no formal notice of denunciation is given by either of the contracting parties to the other, one year before the termination of a period of five years from the date of its entry into force, the present Agreement shall automatically continue in force for a further period of five years, and the same procedure will apply for subsequent periods thereafter.

In Witness whereof, the above-mentioned plenipotentiaries have signed the present Agreement. Done in two copies at Karachi the second day of April one thousand nine hundred and fifty-four.

**Source:** Sangat Singh, *Pakistan's Foreign policy: An Appraisal*, Asia Publishing House, 1970, p.196-198.