

QATAR UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

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**The Evolution of the Turkish-Qatari Relations from 2002 to 2013:
Convergence of Policies, Identities and Interests**

A Thesis in
the Gulf Studies Master's Program

by
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the Degree of Master of Arts

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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person or institution, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree in any university or other institution.

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Abstract

This study investigates the dynamics that shaped the Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 to 2013. First, through a rigorous survey of the literature, it probes the Turkish-Gulf Arab relations from late 1970s until 2000s with a view to pinpointing prominent dynamics. In light of these general dynamics, the study then zeroes in on the regional and domestic motivations that facilitated a political alignment between Ankara and Doha. Second, through expert interviews, the current study substantiates the findings from the meager literature on the Turkish-Qatari relations.

Findings of this study indicate that the historical evolution of the Turkish-Gulf Arab relations is marked by political orientations of actors, security concerns and economic interests. Findings on the regional dynamics of the more specific Turkish-Qatari relations indicates that close relations between Ankara and Doha cannot be viewed separately from the overall trajectory of relations with the other Gulf Arab countries, most notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE. However, the underlying forces that the Arab Spring surfaced seems to have challenged this conclusion, as Ankara and Doha currently enjoy exceptional relations with one another while they are in increasingly worse terms with their neighbors.

The study further reveals that the present Turkish-Qatari political alignment is not attributable to one specific factor. These relations have been shaped by a confluence of numerous dynamics. First example is the convergences of foreign policy approaches and tools both actors have used, which facilitated taking similar positions on important regional issues. Another finding is that the regional developments prior to and throughout the specified period created a conducive environment for both actors to

cooperate in numerous areas. In this regard, Arab Spring stands out as the most prominent arena whereby Ankara and Doha elevated their relations to the level of political alignment. The study also suggest that the domestic dynamics, as materialized in the role of leadership, as well as both actors' interests, have been important determinants of cordial relationships. Finally, identity politics, as materialized in both actors' vision regarding the regional political structure and who the players of this structure should be, stands out as a central force that shaped relations.

Dedication

In loving memory of my late father Kemal Pala and my charmingly humble grandmother Hatice Karacan, who both taught me the value of hard-work, sacrifice and modesty. May we be united in Paradise.

I dedicate this Master's dissertation to, first and foremost, my mother, who is truly the queen of all mothers with all the beautiful superlatives the English language cannot possibly allow me to express.

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CHAPTER I: Evolving Dynamics of Turkish Foreign Policy

Towards the Gulf Arab Countries¹

1.1. Introduction

Significant global and regional political developments gave rise to new political actors in the Middle East at the beginning of the twenty-first century. While the influence of the traditional Arab heavyweights such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia seemed to fade away, other regional countries such as Iran on the one hand and Turkey and Qatar on the other hand have become increasingly more prominent political actors. The emergence of Turkey and Qatar in the regional political scene since the beginning of the millennium could be attributed to several factors. First, the region was witnessing a power vacuum due to the dwindling influence of traditionally leading countries. Second, the US reluctance to be involved in regional affairs provided space for the political visibility of these political actors. Third, using public diplomacy, mediation and conflict resolution as powerful foreign policy tools, both Turkey and Qatar built confidence across the region. These important factors, combined with strong economic indicators, augmented the regional and international visibility, and in return the soft power of Ankara and Doha concurrently.

The outbreak of the popular Arab uprisings, or the Arab Spring², at least

¹ The phrase “Gulf Arab countries” in this study refer to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE, and less so to Bahrain and Oman. Turkey’s relations in the Gulf is generally towards or from these three countries, in addition to Qatar. Muscat and Manama have generally enjoyed minimal relations with Ankara.

initially, presented Turkey and Qatar with a conducive political environment to cash in their confidence, investments in and cooperation with the Islamists, i.e. the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). Against this political context, Turkey and Qatar emerged as natural allies in regional politics. At this critical juncture, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) emerged as the strongest adversaries of this alliance as they saw in the increasing power of the Islamists a threat for their survival and the region's security and stability. What factors led Turkey and Qatar to concur on almost all regional developments and pursue similar political objectives? To answer such a complicated question comprehensively, it becomes imperative to trace the special relationship between Ankara and Doha from its initial stages to present day.

Starting with the new foreign policy approach under the leadership of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) in Turkey in 2002 (Ayhan, 2011; Cevikalp, 2013; Gumus, 2013; Guney, 2013; Kocgunduz, 2011) and Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa in Qatar, economic, political and socio-cultural relations between the two actors improved dramatically. Later, these relations paved the way for a convergence of policies on different regional and global issues (Ozturk, 2011). For some, these relations are no more than a product of convergence of foreign policies and strategic interests on several issues, and therefore they are purely

² The term "Arab Spring" will be used to refer to the "Arab Uprisings" or "Arab Revolts" in this study. This choice does not connote any personal preference/tendency of the author. Rather, "Arab Spring" is a popular term and most of the scholarly articles and the popular media use it.

pragmatic (Dr. B. Baskan³, personal interview, May 19, 2014), while for others, relations between Turkey and Qatar, especially after the onset of the Arab Spring, is a good example of political alignment⁴ that is grounded in identity politics (Simsek, 2013; S. Marufoglu⁵, personal interview, May 27, 2014).

Some political analysts argue that the ideological aspects of the Turkish and Qatari foreign policies became more prominent because they both viewed the rising power of Islamists as harbinger of stronger Islamist influence in the region (A. Abdulla⁶, personal interview, May 25, 2014; A. Sager⁷ personal interview, August 27, 2014; K. Koch⁸, personal interview, August 27, 2014). Moreover, both actors calculated that, given the regional power vacuum and the rising power of Iran, other Sunni actors would approve of their initiatives (Marufoglu, 2014). Policies inspired by such expectations and driven by a strong leadership on both sides prompted considerable level of political convergences between Turkey and Qatar. As of 2013, compared to the other Gulf Arab countries, Turkish-Qatari relations demonstrated an exceptional level of harmony.

The regional power vacuum since the First Gulf War and the resultant

³ Dr. Birol Baskan, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Doha, Qatar.

⁴ Political alignment refers to convergence of political visions and positions of two or more political actors. It does not connote a political alliance, which is more intense in degree and scope.

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⁶ Dr. Abdulkhaleq Abdulla, Political Science Department, the United Arab Emirates University, Al-Ain, UAE.

⁷ Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman and Founder of Gulf Research Center, Cambridge, UK.

⁸ Dr. Christian Koch, Director of the Gulf Research Center, Geneva, Switzerland.

security concerns motivated both Turkey and Qatar to pursue a security oriented foreign policy until 2000s. This started to change with the settlement of domestic political tensions and propagation of a different foreign policy outlook under the auspices of visionary leadership both in Ankara and Doha (Marufoglu, 2014). This clear shift in foreign policies of both actors at the turn of the century is one main reason why this study starts its investigation of the relations from 2002 onwards. Another reason why this study starts its analysis from 2002 is Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa's visit to Turkey in 2001, whose effects began to be felt more prominently from 2002 onwards, with the JDP assuming power in Turkey. The study covers the relations until 2013, when the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa, the main architect of Qatar's foreign policy, abdicated power to his son. Also, 2013 was an important time as Turkish-Qatari relations witnessed an exceptional level of political alignment due to the regional political dynamics the Arab Spring instigated. What motivated such cordial relations and the political alignment between the two actors? This study is an attempt to probe the dynamics behind such close relations and the political alignment within the specified period.

1.2. Evolving Dynamics of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards the Gulf Arab Countries: Historical Background

Relations between Turkey and the oil-rich Gulf states were minimal until 1980s. There were several reasons for this. First of all, political orientation of both sides were somewhat antithetical to one another: Turkey was a secular and democratic country who pursued a complete Westernization process while the Gulf countries, spearheaded by Saudi Arabia, were conservative monarchies that were, at least initially, suspicious of Westernization. Second, “benign neglect⁹”, “non-interference” and “maintaining a balance towards Arabs and Israelis” were the most important principles of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East. Such principles precluded Turkish foreign policymakers from developing genuine relations with the region in general and the Gulf states in particular for decades (Marufoglu, 2014; M. Zweiri¹⁰, personal interview, May 27, 2014).

Third, relations with other Arab countries in the Middle East, particularly Syria and Iraq, both neighbors of Turkey to the south and the southeast, determined Turkey’s relations with the Gulf to a considerable extent (Altunisik & Tur 2005; Criss, 1997). Turkey mostly viewed the region through its problematic relations with these two neighboring countries and wanted to stay away from a “troubled region”. Likewise, the Gulf Arab countries, viewed Turkey from the

⁹ “Benign neglect” in International Affairs refers to non-interference in a political phenomenon or event with the expectation that non-interference would benefit a political actor more than continual attention to that phenomenon or event would.

¹⁰ Dr. Mahjoub Zweiri, Department of History, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar.

lenses of Syria and Iraq and they mostly bought the arguments of their Arab brethren vis-à-vis Turkey (Kirisci, 2001).

Another reason why Turkey-Gulf Arab relations were minimal was because it was not until the 1970s that the Gulf Arab countries, headed by Saudi Arabia, assumed a more central political and economic leadership in the wider Middle Eastern Arab region with the oil money pouring into their state coffers (Hanieh, 2010). As these newly emerging Gulf countries strengthened their regional and global position, the center of the Arab political and economic weight shifted from the North Africa and Levant to the Gulf Arab region (Abdulla, 2010). This systemic shift in regional politics prompted a modification in Turkish foreign policy. Another reason why Turkey's relations with the Gulf Arab countries were minimal was that the majority of the Gulf Arab countries, namely Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the UAE, did not gain their independence until 1971, when the British withdrew from the region. This confined Turkey-Gulf Arab relations to the Saudis and Kuwaitis for a long time (Marufoglu, 2014).

A deeper understanding of the evolution of Turkish-Qatari relations in the last decade comes with a prerequisite: a thorough analysis of the motivations behind the evolution of Turkish-Gulf Arab relations from late 1970s to 2000s. Such an analysis will not only contextualize the Turkish-Qatari relations within the larger Gulf context, but it will also facilitate tracing political, economic, strategic and socio-cultural motivations. In addition, as there is a lack of literature on the

Turkish-Qatari relations, a general analysis of Turkey-Gulf Arab relations can shed much-needed light on the dynamics that shaped the evolution of the Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 until 2013. Given these justifications, this section focuses on prominent issues, dynamics and motivations of the Turkey-Gulf Arab relations in the literature.

Turkey-Gulf Arab relations have not attracted sufficient interest from scholars until the turn of this century. None of the following works allocated any specific attention to the Turkey-Gulf Arab relations, except *en passant* in the context of the Gulf War: William Hale's (2013) *Turkish Foreign Policy Since 1774*, Altunis & Tur's (2005) *Turkey: Challenges of Continuity and Change*, Ozcan's (2008) *Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the EU and the Middle East*, Robins' *Suits and uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War* (2003) and *Turkey and the Middle East* (2003), Bal's (2004) *Turkish Foreign Policy in Post-Cold War Era*, Martin & Kerides' (2004) edited book *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*. The only work that has "a few pages" specifically dedicated to the Turkey-Gulf Arab relations is titled "*Turkish Foreign Policy: From Independence War to Present; Phenomena, Documents and Interpretations*" edited by Oran (2001). An examination of the "almost-nonexistent" literature that deals, directly or indirectly, with the Turkey-Gulf Arab relations points to several major motivations that were influential in the evolution of this relationship.

First of all, political orientation of both sides was an important

consideration in establishing diplomatic and political relations. Although Turkey was viewed as a Western country at times, it was viewed as a Muslim country at other times. In this sense, religious and historical ties and socio-cultural affinities between the two actors facilitated establishing and improving relations. Second, the general trajectory of Turkey's relations with the neighboring Arab countries has been an important determinant for the trajectory of Turkish-Gulf Arab relations. For example, relations with neighboring Syria and Iraq, and relations with Egypt, the biggest and the most influential of all Arab countries until recently, have influenced Turkey's relations with the Gulf Arab countries. Third, the intensity of Turkish-Israeli relations have dramatically affected the Turkish-Gulf Arab relations. When relations with Israel warmed, relations with the neighboring Arab countries as well as the Gulf Arab countries seemed to grow tense, and vice versa.

Fourth, public and elite perceptions of both actors vis-à-vis one another were other factors that would accurately predict the success of a rapprochement or the failure of an initiative to improve relations. Fifth, Turkey's economic interests would mostly predict the trajectory of the Turkey-Gulf relations. For example, at times when Turkey urgently needed to address its economic woes, as in 1980s and 2000s, relations grew much faster. Finally, in cases where the regional security arrangements are threatened, Turkey and the Gulf states tended to enjoy converging political views, as was evident in the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution, the Invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the War on Iraq in 2003.

These determinants can be examined under four major subtitles, which the following section does.

1.2.1 Foreign Policy Orientations

There is a clear parallelism between the trajectory of Turkey-Gulf Arab relations and the foreign policy orientations of both sides. Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle Eastern Arab countries was based on the concept of benign neglect, from the announcement of the Republic of Turkey until well into the 1960s. The policy of benign neglect, which was in operation until the Cyprus Crisis in 1964, and the policy of non-intervention in intra-Arab affairs, which was in force until the Invasion of Kuwait in 1990, determined the quality and quantity of relations with the Gulf (Ozel, 1995; Yavuz, 1997; Altunisik & Tur, 2005; Hale, 2013). Turkish foreign policymakers calculated that interference in Arab affairs would harm Ankara's interests, whereas avoiding such affairs would bring benefits. Within this framework, Ankara tried to avoid complicated relations with the Arab world. Until long after Kuwait enters the list of independent Gulf countries in 1961, Turkey-Gulf Arab relations were confined to the relations with Saudi Arabia *per se*.

Gulf countries, more specifically Saudi Arabia, became the new champion of Islamic solidarity and Arabism after the defeat of Nasser's Egypt in late 1960s. Saudi Arabia viewed Turkey's position on Arab issues, such as the UN voting on Algerian independence and recognition of Israel in 1949, as destructive to the

unity of the Arab world and Islamic solidarity, which are the most important pillars of the Saudi foreign policy to this day. Such adverse Turkish foreign policy decisions, according to Samaan (2013), fed the perception of terrible Turk in the Arab world, creating mistrust and suspicion on both sides.

The meager literature on Turkey-Gulf relations fails to mention whether or not Turkey and Saudi Arabia had any motivation to cooperate in face of growing Communist threat in the Middle East and how Saudi foreign policymakers viewed Turkey's secular, democratic and Western-oriented state establishment vis-à-vis their own theocratic monarchy. This scarcity of literature begs even more attention as both Saudi Arabia and Turkey were staunchly pro-American and anti-Communist at the same time. Moreover, this paltry literature fails to address whether Saudi Arabia or Turkey attempted to balance their foreign policy orientations with a view to forming a stronger front against the Communist threat.

1.2.2. Relations with Israel

Another important dynamic that was pivotal in the evolution of Turkey-Gulf Arab relations was Ankara's pro-Israeli stance and diplomatic relations with Israel. Yesilbursa, (2010) observes that Turkey had a relative interest in the Gulf in the 1950s, mostly in Saudi Arabia, after the Democrat Party assumed power. Similarly, Saudi Arabia expected the Democrat Party, which purported to be an

antithetical party to the staunchly secular Republican People's Party¹¹ (RPP), to have a different approach to Turkey's co-religionists. However, the Democrat Party's excessive reliance on the USA and its increasingly more Western stance on international issues caused the Middle Eastern Arab countries and Saudi Arabia to view Turkey as "a stooge of Western imperialism" (Yesilbursa, 2010; Gonlubol & Kurkcuoglu, 2006). For example, Turkish Foreign Minister Zorlu visited Riyadh in 1957 in order to ask for support for the Baghdad Pact, which for many was a British initiative under the mask of Turkey (Uzer & Uzer, 2005). Although King Saud seemed to appreciate Turkey's concern that the Soviet infiltration into Syria would bring new threats for the whole region, he reiterated that Turkey's pro-Israeli position and her diplomatic relations with Tel Aviv prevented establishing closer relations and cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Turkey (Yesilbursa, 2010).

The course of Turkish-Israeli relations assumed even more attention after King Faisal, a staunch supporter of Arab causes, and Islamic unity and solidarity, assumed power in 1964. King Faisal's term coincided with Turkey's realization that the policy of supporting Israel unconditionally, which was in order to gain US security promises vis-à-vis the potential Soviet aggression, was not serving Turkish interests as the Cyprus Crisis in 1964 showed (Ozel, 1995; Bengio & Özcan, 2000).

¹¹ RPP, founded by Kemal Ataturk, remained in power from 1923 until 1950 as the single party. In Turkey's first genuine multi-party elections in 1950, the RPP's adversary, the Democrat Party, won a landslide victory. RPP's allegedly anti-Islamic policies and staunchly secularist outlook was to be taken advantage of by right-wing and Islamist parties.

The first high-level visit from the Gulf Arab countries to Turkey was in this period. The Saudi King Faisal paid a short visit to Turkey in 1966 as part of his official tour for advocating the establishment of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which was founded in response to the Israeli victory in 1967 Arab-Israeli War (Erhan, 2010). Kamel (1974) maintains that closer relations with Saudi Arabia, and later with Kuwait, influenced Ankara's foreign policy priorities in favor of Arab and Muslim causes. For example, Turkey became a vocal supporter of the Arabs in international forums; strove to keep minimal relations with Israel in order not to disappoint its Arab counterparts; and embraced a multidimensional foreign policy outlook in order to improve its political, economic, commercial and socio-cultural relations with the Arab countries.

Increasing economic and political connections between Turkey and the Gulf constituted an important factor in shaping Turkey's foreign policy towards Israel in this period. For example, at the OIC's Lahore Summit in 1974, Turkey was pressured to sever its diplomatic relations with Israel. Otherwise, the funding from the Islamic Development Bank would not be granted to Ankara (Yavuz & Khan, 1992). Mounting economic concerns in Turkey motivated Ankara to grant permission to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to open an office in Ankara in 1976 and support anti-Israeli decisions at the OIC. When Israel unilaterally announced Jerusalem as its "complete and united capital" in 1980, Saudi Arabia's pressure and release of a \$250 million financial aid were instrumental in Ankara's decision to downgrade its diplomatic relations with Israel

(Koni, 2012)

Similarly, Yavuz & Khan (1992) maintain that Gulf Arab countries threatened Turkey with halting financial assistance and political support unless Ankara totally severed ties with Israel. Turkey played a balancing game between such Arab demands and its relations with the West, which was not independent of its relations with Israel. This continued until after the Camp David Accords in 1978, which significantly reduced such Arab pressure. Like in the 1970s and 1980s, economic and political engagements with the Gulf countries affected Turkey's Israeli stance in the post-Cold War political context of the 1990s. However, unlike the 1970s and 1980s, when Turkish foreign policy priority was expanding economic opportunities with the Gulf countries, Turkish foreign policy in 1990s prioritized national security vis-à-vis the Kurdish separatist activities. These national security concerns and the easing of the Arab-Israeli tensions paved the way for military cooperation agreement between Turkey and Israel in 1996 (Ozcan, 2008; (Bengio & Özcan, 2000). This agreement infuriated the Muslim world in general and the Arabs in particular, passing two harsh resolutions against Turkey in OIC's 8th summit in Tehran in 1997, forcing President Demirel to leave the summit in protest (Raptopoulos, 2004). In fact, security-concerns poisoned Turkey's relations with the Arab world in general and the Gulf in particular throughout the 1990s.

The pendulum of Turkish-Israeli relations would swing once more during JDP's second term in office. The Israeli War on Lebanon in 2006, the Israeli

attack on Gaza in 2009, Prime Minister (PM) Erdogan's criticism of the Israeli President Peres and Israel at the Davos Summit in January 2009, and finally the 2010 Israeli massacre of nine of the Turkish citizens on Mavi Marmara Flotilla¹² motivated a nosedive in Turkish-Israeli relations, while it created a conducive political environment for Turkey to mend its relations with the rest of the Middle East (B. Koroglu¹³, personal interview, May 26, 2014).

1.2.3. Economic Concerns

Economic concerns have grown increasingly more important over the years for Turkish-Gulf Arab relations. With petrodollars pouring in the 1970s, the market potential and the financial aid and investment capabilities of the Gulf Arab countries increased dramatically. Regional political developments weakened Arab nationalism and the center of Arab politics gradually shifted to the Gulf (Abdulla, 2014). At this conjunction in history, political elite in Ankara was facing a dire need for cheap oil and more foreign investments to continue the economic growth, given the American embargo on Turkey due to Ankara's intervention in Cyprus in 1974 (Yavuz & Khan, 1992). In addition, the growing Gulf markets were becoming lucrative destinations for Turkish exports.

Starting with the 1970s, literature on Turkey-Middle East Arab relations

¹² Mavi Marmara is the Turkish flotilla that set out for Gaza for providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people. The flotilla organizers expected to attract international attention to the sufferings of Gazans under Israeli blockade. However, Israeli naval forces attacked the flotilla in international waters before reaching to Gaza and killed 9 Turkish citizens, which later increased to 10.

¹³ Prof. Dr. Burhan Koroglu, Director of the Civilization Studies Center, Bahcesehir University, Istanbul, Turkey.

began to emphasize the Turkey-Gulf relations, more specifically the economic dimension in relations. In this respect, Al-Sab'awi (1991), Ayhan (2009), Yesilbursa (2009), Yavuz & Khan (1992), Mercan (2008), Cetinoglu (2009), Demir (2009), Laciner (2009), Ayhan (2011), Oktav (2013) among others have all argued that the prime driver of Turkey-Gulf relations in this period was economic. Turkish economy was experiencing serious difficulties and Ankara wanted to tap into the potential of Gulf countries to assist Ankara in overcoming these challenges. Growing volume of export figures and tourist numbers (Karpat, 2001); expanding Turkish-Gulf Arab economic interaction, such as the increasing number of Turkish companies and Turkish immigrant workers in Saudi Arabia; as well as growing Saudi financial aid and investments in Turkey, such as Faisal Finance and Al-Baraka Turk (Koni, 2012), were all significant milestones in the evolution of Turkey-Gulf economic relations. In addition, most of the bilateral agreements with the Gulf countries in this period were geared toward improving economic, financial and commercial relations. Although literature mainly focuses on Turkey's dire need for improving economic relations with the Gulf countries and the benefits of this interaction for Turkey, none of the sources seem to mention whether or not or to what degree this relationship carried any economic or political benefit for the Gulf countries.

The agreements in economic, financial and commercial areas, combined with Turkey's favorable approach to the Arab causes, paid off. Towards the end of 1980s, investments in different sectors by the Islamic Development Bank, the

Abu Dhabi Fund, the Saudi Fund and the Kuwaiti Fund reached about \$1 billion (Soysal, 2000). Increasing economic relations were also reflected in the trade shares. While Turkey's export to European Economic Community comprised 64% of its total exports in 1979, this figure dropped to 49% in 1981; in contrast, exports to the Middle Eastern countries increased from 23% in 1979 to 44% in 1981 (Demir, 2009).

Literature also mentions how economic relations between Turkey and the Gulf countries attracted a refreshed attention in 1980's with the cordial diplomatic exchanges between the military regime in Ankara (1980-1983) and the Gulf leaders. According to Firat and Kurkcuoglu (2001b), the Gulf countries, led by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, were favorable to the military regime in Ankara and this facilitated Turkey's growing economic relations with the Gulf. In this respect, Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Jabir Ahmed Al-Sabah visited Ankara in 1981, and President Kenan Evren paid a visit to Kuwait in 1982, both for the first time. This was followed by President Evren's historic visit to Saudi Arabia in 1984. The two sides agreed on establishing a Turkish-Saudi Joint Investment and Trading Company by private sector actors as well as easing trade regulations. Additionally, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey and its Saudi counterpart made major progress regarding expanding trade volumes, establishing investment financing companies and inviting Turkish construction sector to the Gulf market (Turkiye-Suudi Arabistan Iliskileri (Turkey Saudi Arabia Relations), 2008). The literature mentions these exchanges *en passant* and does

not examine why Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were willing to work with the military regime in Ankara and how this was perceived in secular circles in the Turkish army.

Such cordial relations were continued by PM Ozal (1983-1989), who laid special emphasis on economic relations with the Gulf in his active, multi-dimensional foreign policy approach (Laciner, 2009). One of the first legislations the Ozal government passed in the parliament was allowing foreigners to buy property in Turkey, which was aimed at attracting rich oil Sheiks from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to invest in property in Turkey (Koni, 2012). This was followed by a government decree that allowed private financing companies to operate in Turkey. Shortly after, Saudi-owned Faisal Financing Institution and Al-Baraka Turk Private Financing opened their Turkey branches, followed by Kuwait-Turk Islamic Banking in 1989 (Koni, 2012). The literature also lightly touches on how the increasing Gulf investments in Turkey influenced the cultural, financial and religious institutions and perceptions of Turkish people toward the Gulf Arab countries and their understanding of Islam; however it falls short of explaining whether or not such perceptions helped enhance economic or political relations between the actors.

Improving relations with the Gulf were evident in soaring Turkish exports to the Arab countries. Although the researcher could not locate specific trade volumes between the Gulf countries and Turkey in this period, existing numbers point to a drastic increase. While Turkey's export to the Middle East Arab region

was only \$54 million in 1970, this reached \$3 billion in 1985, which equaled to 40.8% of total Turkish exports (Hale, 1988, p.166). In addition, between 1974-1990, Turkish companies won about \$18.3 billion worth of contracts from the Middle Eastern Arab countries: with 22 Turkish contracting companies in 1978, 113 in 1981 and 242 in 1982 along with 250.000 Turkish emigrant workers (Robins, 1991, p.101).

President Ozal saw the Invasion of Kuwait by Saddam as an opportunity to expand Turkey's economic influence and win economic and political support from the Gulf (Yavuz & Khan, 1992). The Gulf Sheikdoms responded positively to Ankara's requests and promised to compensate Turkey for its economic loss due to opening up its Incirlik Base to International Coalition's military flights and complying strictly with the embargo on Iraq. Gulf countries partly realized their promises and Saudi Arabia granted \$1 billion worth of oil to Turkey and \$1.5 billion worth of oil to the Turkish Defense Fund (Firat & Kurkcuoglu, 2001b). However, the changing security landscape in the region would leave some of Turkey's initial objectives incomplete: expanding economic interests in the Gulf and reaping political support from Gulf monarchies. Overall, the Gulf War I did not only hurt the Turkish economy but also prepared the ground for a power vacuum in the Kurdish region in Northern Iraq which precipitated separatist Kurdish terrorism in Turkey's Iraqi borders (Altunisik & Tur, 2005; Laciner, 2009).

1.2.4. Security Concerns

Security concerns were another prominent motivation in how Turkey-Gulf Arab relations evolved. The Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979 was an alarming development not only for the religiously conservative Gulf monarchies but also for secular, democratic Turkey. The Iranian Revolution and the looming threat of “regime export” meant the collapse of the American security arrangements in the region. The Soviets capitalized on the American failure to evade the revolution in Iran and invaded Afghanistan shortly after the revolution. Alarmed with these developments, both Gulf Arab countries and the USA sought to formulate policies that would maintain oil security and continue the political status-quo in the Gulf monarchies (Mercan, 2008). Initially, although some Western powers encouraged Turkey to participate in the provision of security to the Gulf in early 70s when Britain was leaving the Gulf, Ankara refused to be involved (Mercan, 2008). However, given its increasing economic and political engagement with the Gulf countries and the tacit American approval of the Turkish involvement in the region’s security, Ankara was motivated to add “security” as a new dimension to its relations with the Gulf in the coming years (Mercan, 2008; Firat & Kurkcuoglu, 2001a; Ciftci & Ertugay, 2011; Oktav, 2003).

In this sense, the Iran-Iraq War that broke out shortly after the Iranian Revolution, and which threatened not only Turkey’s oil security but also the survival of the Gulf states, demonstrated that both actors had legitimate security and stability concerns in the region (Aykan, 1994; Mercan, 2008). This concern

was materialized in agreements Ankara and Riyadh signed in 1984, whereby both sides decided to exchange personnel for military training, education and cooperation as well as assist each other in establishing and modernizing military facilities (Firat & Kurkcuoglu, 2001b). For example, Ankara dispatched a military commission to Khamis Mushait airbase in order to train Saudi pilots to protect oil fields in the Eastern Province while Saudi officers came to Turkey for training. Similar agreements and exchanges took place between Turkey and Kuwait as well, but at a limited level.

Security concerns were also prominent in how Ankara approached the Invasion of Kuwait. Viewing Saddam's aggression on a neighboring country unacceptable, Turkey had to abandon its traditional policy of non-interference and impartiality towards intra-Arab issues (Robins, 2003). Both Turkey and the Gulf monarchies stated that the invasion would trigger political instability in the region. Turkey's willingness to side with the coalition forces was aimed at reinforcing not only Turkey's strategic importance for the region (Altunisik, 2013; Firat & Kurkcuoglu, 2001b) but also for becoming an active member of the post-war security arrangements.

To accomplish the previously stated goal, Turkey strove to convince the Gulf countries, mainly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, to purchase Turkish F-16 fighter jets and armored vehicles. These efforts did not come to fruition as Kuwait and the UAE, and later Saudi Arabia announced that they were not interested in the deal (Firat & Kurkcuoglu, 2001b). Overshadowed by militarily much stronger

actors in the region such as the USA, Turkey was not viewed as a strong alternative to the Western military protection. Overall, Ankara's security concerns about the region played an important role in Turkey's siding with the Coalition Forces. However, although the war ended with the liberation of Kuwait and the security of the Gulf countries was enhanced, its political repercussions would comprise serious national security challenges for Turkey in the next decade (Altunisik & Tur, 2005; Karadeli, 2007). These challenges would render Turkey's opening to the region short-lived, pushing Turkey to direct its energy to domestic security problems and democratization efforts, rather than expanding its engagement with the Gulf states (Oktav, 2011).

In 1990s, given its economic exigencies, Turkey sought ways to improve relations with Iraq without breaking UN sanctions. Turkey even seemed willing to establish a pact, whereby Turkey, Iran and Iraq could control the will for an independent Kurdish state in the region (Ozel, 1995). Ozal's "peace pipeline" proposal that would carry the waters of Turkish rivers to the Arab world was designed to abate the Arab suspicions about Turkish intentions towards the region and expedite wider regional and economic integration. However, Turkey could not be a major partner in the aftermath of the Gulf War I as two major problems with Syria continued: the conflict over the waters of Tigris River and the support for separatist Kurdish terrorism in Turkey (Altunisik, 2013). Using its position in the Arab League, Syria was able to take the water crisis into a pan-Arab level and was able to push for a Arab League resolution in 1996 which

called on Turkey to share its water with Syria and Iraq.

Acting together, Syria and Iraq, also supported by Saudi Arabia, launched a campaign to stop World Bank funding of development projects on the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers (Eder & Carkoglu, 2001). Later, when Turkey started incursions into Northern Iraq in an effort to obliterate PKK bases there, Arab countries, headed by Syria and Iraq, accused Turkey of trying to divide an Arab country (Ozel, 1995). Turkey's Kurdish issue was regionalized after an independent Kurdish authority was established in Northern Iraq, which became a safe-haven for PKK attacks inside Turkey. The First Gulf War created a power vacuum in Northern Iraq, where two Kurdish factions actively sought for an independent state with the shield the American forces provided. The area under the Kurdish control became a springboard for the PKK, who was responsible for launching hit and run attacks on Turkish military (Ozcan, 2008). Although Turkey and the central government in Iraq regarded an independent Kurdish state as a threat to their territorial integrity, the Iraqi government continued to view Turkish incursions into Northern Iraq, i.e. the autonomous Kurdish area as foreign intervention. Moreover, Syria developed closer relations with Armenia, Greece and Iran, which Turkey interpreted as encirclement by hostile countries.

To this background, Turkey's engagement with the Middle East in the 1990s was mostly marred by the Syrian support for PKK. Turkey's response to such developments was drawing closer to Israel. Capitalizing on its connections in the Arab world, Syria was able to present Turkish-Israeli relations as a new

threat to the Arab world. According to Bengio & Ozcan (2000), for example, Syrian Vice-President Khaddam stated that the Israeli-Turkish alignment was “the greatest threat facing the Arabs since 1948”. An OIC resolution passed in Tehran in 1997 with the efforts of Syria, Iran and Egypt, Turkey was castigated for its close relations with the Jewish state (Altunisik, 2013).

All in all, foreign policy orientations, relations with Israel, economic calculations and security concerns played an important role in shaping the Turkish-Gulf Arab relations, which would enter into a new phase at the turn of the century. The Invasion of Iraq by the American forces in 2003 and the removal of Saddam from power instigated groundbreaking political developments in the region, which brought Turkey and the Gulf Arab countries closer yet once again. What were the dynamics that brought about closer relations between Turkey and the Gulf Arab countries? How these dynamics intersected to shape the relations between the two sides? The following section tries to answer these questions.

1.3. Dynamics of the Increasing Relations between Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries: 2002 to 2013

Although political relations between Turkey and the Gulf Arab countries started in the 1980s in real sense, the most conducive domestic and international environment came at the turn of the century when both Turkey and the Gulf

Cooperation Council (GCC¹⁴) countries found an optimal economic and political context for improving relations in the political, economic and strategic domains (Aras, 2005; Olson, 2008; Baskan, 2011b; Almuedo, 2011; Talbot, 2013). Many scholars argue that the real dynamic behind the drastic improvement in relations between the two regional actors is grounded in a combination of structural systemic changes and domestic factors (Ari, 2010, Kosebalaban, 2011; Barkey, 2011). Another instrumental dynamic in the process was increased Turkish foreign policy activism and involvement in the region (Talbot, 2013; Oktav, 2013; Akkaya, 2013). This fresh foreign policy outlook, as formulated by Foreign Minister Davutoglu, embraces a multidimensional foreign policy, zero problems with neighbors and it downgrades security concerns while promoting economic integration and soft power capabilities (Davutoglu, 2010).

In answering what dynamics drive the increased Turkey-GCC relationship, Aras (2005) identifies several important factors: the ongoing Iraqi crisis, Turkey's European Union (EU) membership process, the threat of international terrorism, Turkey's active participation in the Greater Middle East Initiative headed by the US, increasing business and trade relations between Turkey and the GCC, Turkey's increased profile in the OIC and finally, Turkey's response to the issues concerning the wider Muslim world. Foley (2010) attributes the rapid development of Turkey-GCC relations to the convergence of opinion of both

¹⁴ The Gulf Cooperation Council (founded in 1981) was not an actor in Turkey's relations with the Gulf until mid-1980s. Heretofore, the Gulf monarchies were referred to as the Gulf Arab countries in the thesis. From now on, the terms "GCC" and "Gulf Arab countries" will be used interchangeably.

actors' on four major issues, namely Turkish Parliament's refusal to allow the US Army to use Turkish territory to invade Iraq in 2003; Ankara's foreign policy of encouraging rapid economic development and resolving regional political problems; the regional instability following the U.S. invasion of Iraq; and finally, the realization that old allies, the EU for Turkey; the US for the GCC, may not be as valuable as before.

For Barkey (2011), several dynamics instigated dramatic improvement in the Turkey-GCC relations throughout the JDP governments: the structural change in Turkish economy, which became aggressively export-driven from 1980s onwards and which motivated Turkish foreign policy makers to search for new markets; the JDP leadership and their ambition to transform Turkey into a global actor; the declining influence of the military which allowed the JDP governments to relegate security concerns stemming from the Kurdish separatism and Islamist movements in Turkey. Martin (2009) contends that the most important dynamics that prompted closer relations between Turkey and the GCC states are all security related: increasing Iranian influence in Iraqi politics, Iran's increasing military power, radical Islamism, potential problems with excessive reliance on US security provision and ambivalent GCC relationship with Iran. Martin (2009) further contends that Turkey's security concerns about Iranian nuclear program and radical Islamist overlaps with the GCC's security concerns and GCC alignment with Turkey would be a win-win opportunity for both actors. However, Martin fails to provide a convincing argument as to in what

ways the Iranian nuclear program could pose security threats to Turkey, while the Turkish government under Erdogan has been supportive of the Iranian arguments.

Olson (2008) argues that the invasion of Iraq and its ramifications for the ethno-political tensions in the Gulf motivated the GCC states to view Turkey as a counter-balance to increasing Iranian influence and assertiveness in the region as well as the Iraq's eventual reconfiguration. These security concerns played an important part in North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) offer in 2004 (Ayhan, 2009; Legrenzi, 2007). The ICI envisioned to expand its security umbrella over the GCC countries and institutionalize its intention to bring the GCC under the fold of the NATO (Scheffer, 2005). Although Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE responded positively to NATO's offer by 2006 and showed willingness to modernize their security systems accordingly, the ICI seems to have fallen short of going beyond the representational level and could not alleviate GCC's mounting security concerns (Legrenzi, 2007). Ayhan (2009) maintains that Turkey's strong economy, NATO membership, Sunni-majority population and moderate policies are important considerations for the GCC states to view Turkey as a strategic partner.

Similar to the trajectory of relations between Turkey and the larger Middle East, economic motivations, especially for the Turkish side, were other prime drivers of the increasing Turkey-GCC relations. Both initially and throughout this

period, economic and political legs of the relationship nurtured one another. According to Kardas (2012) Karagol, (2013), Erkacar & Karagol, (2011) and Ataman & Ucgan (2011), once Turkey-GCC diplomatic relations were in progress, there was an increase in Gulf capital flows into the Turkish economy, which was under serious strain due to the global economic crisis. The more high-level visits from state dignitaries took place, the more the economic interactions increased, especially towards Turkey, who offered lucrative opportunities with its increasingly stronger economic and financial indicators. These visits were especially important for Turkish businesses because it is mostly hard to penetrate into the GCC markets without direct governmental assistance. Pointing to the importance of high-level visits, Martin (2009), Biresselioglu (2011), Hursoy (2013), Guney (2013), Widen (2012) and Ekmekci & Yildirim (2013) state that these visits were instrumental for creating a favorable political environment necessary for expanding trade and investment as well as cordial political relations.

In addition, Biberovic (2008), Hursoy (2013) and Biresselioglu (2011) point to several dynamics that strengthened economic relations between Turkey and the Gulf. On the Turkish side, although Turkey is increasingly becoming an energy transit route, it is poor in terms of energy resources and this makes it an important customer for Gulf oil and gas. Second, Turkish economy has become stronger with substantial macro-level structural reforms, which promotes it into an important destination for Gulf foreign direct investments (FDI). Third, successive

JDP victories and Turkey's rediscovery of the Middle East gave impetus to its political and economic stability. In addition, poor investment returns in Western markets and high growth rates in Turkish and Gulf Arab markets are cited as important dynamics that increased appetite for mutual Turkish-Gulf Arab investments, according to Oxford Business Group's 2012 Turkey Report. On the Gulf side, budget surpluses, Turkey's geo-economic position (geo-strategic location and huge population), gradual institutionalization of Turkey-GCC relations through bilateral agreements (Nasser, 2008) and Turkey's EU accession talks, which bolstered investor confidence, are other dynamics that motivated Gulf businesses to invest in Turkey (Biberovic, 2008).

The GCC states' concern about radical Islamist movements and Shia political activism (Ayhan, 2009) as well as international terrorism (2003 bombings in Istanbul and 2004 Khobar Attacks in Saudi Arabia) motivated Turkey and the GCC to sign several military cooperation agreements on regional security and counterterrorism following the ICI in 2004 (Cetinoglu, 2014). Turkey-GCC relations took a more strategic dimension when the council announced Ankara as a strategic partner in 2008, first time the GCC extended such status to another country. Ayhan (2009), argues that although officials from both sides emphasized that this partnership does not target any other country, GCC's prime motivation was counter-balancing Iran. Ayhan concludes that given the Gulf security dynamics, the US plans to withdraw its military presence from the Gulf, potential US-Iran rapprochement and Turkey's increasing capabilities, Turkey could play a

significant role in providing security for the GCC. However, the literature fails to account for how the current rift among the GCC countries themselves and the disagreements between Turkey and some of the GCC members would impact such a conclusion.

Similarly, Martin (2009) contends that Turkey's conventional military capabilities could enhance GCC security as Turkish military power is the only regional option that can counter-balance Iran's military capabilities. However, Baskan (2011) points to the fact that Turkey is not self-sufficient militarily and cannot enhance Gulf security. He goes on to argue that Turkey's military role cannot go beyond being a conduit between the GCC and the NATO, as was expressed in the ICI in 2004. In answering whether or not Turkey and the GCC can cooperate on the Iranian nuclear issue, radical Islamism and regional instability, Martin (2009) argues that Turkey and GCC will proceed cautiously in realizing their strategic relationship because, on the one hand, Turkey needs Iranian energy for its growing economy and cooperation in fighting against the PKK terrorism, while on the other, some GCC members are wary of alienating Iran.

Another security dynamic that encouraged closer Turkey-GCC relations was the Iranian nuclear issue (Ayhan, 2009; Pope, 2010; Taspinar, 2008; Cetinoglu, 2014). For GCC countries, a successful Iranian nuclear program that would grant Iran the nuclear capability would destabilize the Gulf monarchies because Iran would be more emboldened to interfere with the Shia minorities in

Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. In this sense, Pope (2010) and Ayhan (2009) maintain that given Turkey's NATO membership and domestic dynamics, the GCC states expected Turkey to oppose Iran's nuclear program. Along these lines, Turkey announced that it is against Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons capabilities, while at the same time expressing Ankara's support for Tehran's right to have peaceful nuclear energy. Although, both actors had similar position on Iranian nuclear issue initially and this seemed to bring relations even much closer, Turkey's persistence, along with Brazil, to break the international isolation of Iran in 2010 and to find a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis caused some confusion and concern at the GCC level (Elik, 2014).

As the Arab Spring unfolded, the trust and convergence of opinion between Turkey and some of the GCC members, most notably Saudi Arabia and the UAE, on regional issues began to vanish. Oktav (2013) argues that the Arab Spring disrupted Ankara's economy-based relations with the GCC states and prioritized the security dimension in relations. Once it was clear that the Islamists were the winning side in the fast-unfolding Arab Spring, and how this was perceived by the GCC members, especially the Saudi and Emirati governments, the relations between Turkey and the GCC began to deteriorate. Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have all emerged as assertive players that wanted to shape the Arab Spring dynamics to their benefit. This caused serious frictions not only among the GCC members states, but also between Turkey and the GCC. The political differences over the Arab Spring began to overshadow the

close Turkey-GCC relations in the economic and strategic realms. The only exception was Qatar. Turkey and Qatar witnessed an unprecedented level of convergence of opinion and action in numerous regional issues.

1.4. Problem Statement

Albeit extremely limited, the literature on Turkey-GCC relations mentions the dynamics of growing Turkey-Gulf Arab relations from 1980s until 2000s. There is a much richer literature on the dynamics of Turkey-GCC relations from 2000s onwards, parallel to the growing political, economic, strategic and socio-cultural relations. Studies that cover this last period points to several domestic, regional and international dynamics that played an important part in the evolution of the Turkey-GCC relations. However, there is still an obvious lack of focused literature on the dynamics that shaped the more specific Turkey-Qatar relations from 2002 to 2013. No study to date has thoroughly studied the evolution of Turkish-Qatari relations and charted out the dynamics that were influential therein. The meager literature on Turkish-Qatari relations is descriptive, disparate and scattered mostly in non-academic sources such as newspapers, magazine articles and government and/or private web-sites. The current study addresses this gap by providing a focused examination of the dynamics that shaped the evolution of Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 until 2013 and presents its findings within a narrative.

1.5. Research Question

1. What regional and domestic dynamics shaped the evolution of the Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 to 2013?

1.6. Methodology

This research study utilizes two data collection techniques. The first technique consists of a survey of the literature on Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 until 2013. The literature survey is conducted by examining a multitude of primary and secondary sources such as books, refereed journal articles, online newspaper and magazine articles, think-tank reports, documents/notes posted on Turkish and Qatari governmental websites and documents published by research centers. The survey of literature as a technique aims to scan as much data on a topic as possible from a wide range of sources and it stands out as an important method. Given the scarcity of sources on the topic, there was no selection criteria. Sources were primarily in English and Turkish, and to a smaller extent in Arabic.

The second research technique used in this study is interview. Sometimes primary and secondary sources may fail to document recently trending topics, especially when there is a paucity of substantial secondary data on the topic. In such cases, expert/elite interviews may be beneficial to substantiate findings from a wide range of sources, most of which are non-refereed. In addition, such interviews help complete any potential gaps between what is mentioned in the

literature and what novel information interviewees might provide. Hence, interviews function as a verification mechanism for the secondary information sources. This study draws data from 20 semi-structured interviews¹⁵ conducted with academics, diplomats, political analysts and think-tank specialists based in Turkey, Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Iran, England and the USA. The interviews, which were carried out either in person or online, took place either in the interviewees' offices/homes or at hotels during conferences. The online interviews were done either through several e-mail correspondences or Skype calls or in person. All interviews were done solo and there was no one else nearby during the interviews. The interviews were conducted in English and Turkish. The interviews that took place in Turkish were later translated into English prior to the data analysis. The interviewees were selected on two criteria. Interviewees with expert knowledge on the topic and easier access were given priority.

The interviewees were given the consent form, which includes all the specifics of the study, and they were briefed about the interview procedures. The interviews lasted from 25 to 45 minutes and questions were adjusted according to the interviewee's expertise areas and backgrounds. None of the interviews were recorded as interviewees preferred note-taking. Interview sessions followed a standard protocol in order to minimize confounding factors. Semi-structured

¹⁵ Please refer to the list of questions used in the interviews in App. A. These questions provided a structure; but when necessary, they were rephrased, skipped or additional questions were posed to explore more detailed answers.

questions allowed insightful explanations on the dynamics behind the evolution of the Turkey-Qatar relations. The most conspicuous difficulty of this technique was being able to get appointments for high-ranking interviewees, such as diplomats whose answers would be invaluable. Another difficulty was getting some interviewees talk about sensitive issues, such as the potential Qatar-MB links and the recent rift between Saudi-Emirati-Kuwaiti and Qatari governments and the recent problems between Turkey and Saudi-Emirati block.

The qualitative investigation methods are notorious for ending up with voluminous data that may seem unmanageable (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Analyzing qualitative data requires an intense process of sorting, reorganizing and restructuring huge amount of information (Patton, 2002). According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), qualitative analysis involves a “search for general statements about the relationships among categories of data; it builds grounded theory” (p.111). Along similar lines, Schatzman and Straus (1973) state that “probably the most fundamental operation in the analysis of qualitative data is that of discovering significant classes of the things, persons and events and the properties which characterize them” (p.110).

1.6.1. Data Analysis

Within the theoretical information on analyzing qualitative data, this study employed a five-stage qualitative data analysis process. First, non-usable and non-intelligible data was reduced with due consideration to not losing valuable

information. Second, salient categories i.e., common themes that most interviewees mentioned, were identified wherein the data could be categorized. Third, for effective data entry and coding, the NVivo Software, an intelligent qualitative analysis software for classifying and arranging large chunks of qualitative information, was used to categorize and reorganize the data. Fourth, once the categorization was complete, categories were tested against those created by examining the literature survey. This stage focused on domestic and external dynamics, in addition to noting any alternative explanations on the growing Turkish-Qatari relations. Interviewees did not talk about any dynamics not mentioned in the existing literature, so there was a considerable overlap between the literature and the interview data. Fifth, the analyzed qualitative data were inserted into thesis, either as quotations or as interpretations of what the interviewees expressed.

The next chapter examines the dynamics of relations between Turkey-Qatar from 2002 until 2013. In so doing, it first provides major milestones in Turkish-Qatari relations and then delineates the foreign policy approaches and the most prominent foreign policy tools utilized by both actors, with a view to singling out convergences in Turkish and Qatari foreign policies and how these convergences facilitated taking similar positions on some of the most important regional issues.

CHAPTER II: Dynamics of Turkey-Qatar Relations: Foreign Policy Approaches, Tools and Convergences

2.1. Turkey-Qatar Relations from 1970s to 2000s

Diplomatic relations between Turkey and Qatar were established at the ambassadorial level in 1972, which was followed by the opening of the Turkish embassy in Doha in 1980 (Widen, 2012). There was a temporary upward trend in relations with the opening of the embassy, which brought about an agreement in 1985 to “strengthen the friendly ties existing between the two countries” and “promoting and developing relations in the fields of culture, arts, science and technology” (App. B). Within this framework, both countries showed their willingness to “develop and facilitate the cultural and intellectual exchange” by means of publications, films, radio/television programs and by exchange of professionals from different fields (App. B). However, these agreements were not ratified until the 1990s, and therefore were not effective in consolidating relations between the two parties.

When Turkey began to show more interest in the GCC countries due to their increasing international political and economic standing, Qatar was included in a presidential visit that took place in 1986. During the Ozal governments in the 1980s, Turkey’s newly developing political, economic and cultural relations with the GCC were mostly towards or from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait due to their economic power and larger populations. Another milestone in relations was

reached when Qatar opened its embassy in Ankara in 1992. However, due to Turkey's internal problems and Qatar's lack of interest in Turkey, relations continued to remain minimal. Although more and more Turkish immigrants and business people were choosing Qatar as their destinations, diplomatic relations did not demonstrate sufficient improvement due to Turkey's securitized foreign policy towards the Middle East, and the GCC by extension, and Qatar's passive foreign policy (Koroglu, 2014).

The inactivity in diplomatic and economic relations between Turkey and Qatar were to change with Sheikh Hamad's assumption of power in 1995. In line with his new foreign policy approach of improving relations with all regional powers, Turkey and Qatar signed an agreement in 1999 to establish bilateral consultations among senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from both countries. Turkish and Qatari governments emphasized their "desire to increase and further consolidate existing ties" and "develop friendship and cooperation" in areas of common interest in order to "contribute to international peace, security and economic development by means of creating mutual confidence, understanding and cooperation in international relations." (App. C)

The framework put forth in the bilateral consultations among senior officials gained practical meaning when relations began to rise with Sheikh Hamad's visit to Turkey in 2001. During this visit, both countries agreed to materialize economic and military cooperation by signing several important agreements for preventing double taxation, promoting and protecting reciprocal

investments, and for cooperating in the military field. In addition to cooperation in the field of security, Sheikh Hamad's 2001 visit effectuated other agreements, such as fighting against organized crime and cooperation in fighting against international terrorism, which spoke to the importance both parties attached to the regional security and stability (see App. D).

While Turkey's standing was increasing in the Middle East, security concerns in the Gulf were mounting. Political instability in Iraq and Iran's increasing political influence and its contentious nuclear program, motivated Turkey and Qatar to sign another milestone agreement for cooperation in the military field in 2007. In addition to affirming the security cooperation agreement of 2001, this new agreement envisioned cooperation in military training and education, cooperation between Land Forces, Naval Forces and Air Forces, exchanging military monitors for training purposes as well as cooperation in the field of defense industry, military history, military archives, military publications and military museums (see App. E).

2.2. Foreign Policy Approaches and Tools: 2002-2013

A comprehensive understanding of the Turkish-Qatari political alignment and exceptionally good relations requires an examination of both actors' foreign policy approaches and the tools they utilized as well as an examination of why and how their policies on numerous regional foreign policy issues converged. This examination will shed light on why the evolution of the Turkish-Qatari

relations demonstrated an exceptional pattern, compared with other GCC countries, especially throughout the Arab Spring. The concurrence of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa's and Qatari Foreign Minister's foreign policy visions on the one hand and the Turkish Premier Erdogan's and Turkish Foreign Minister's foreign policy visions on the other helped intensify Turkish-Qatari relations in all fields within the specified period. When the region began to witness the winds of change with the Arab Spring, both parties enjoyed a similar vision of the regional dynamics of change and the direction this change should take. This convergence of opinions and accompanying policies took Turkish-Qatari relations to a higher level, which can be referred to as a political alignment.

Foreign policy approach is a strong indicator of how a country envisions to realize its national interests. Foreign policy approach of a country determines the tools to be utilized to safeguard its position in the international arena and achieve its national interests. In order to understand what dynamics facilitated close relations between Turkey and Qatar and how these relations eventually transformed into a political alignment, we, first of all, need a closer examination of their foreign policy approaches and instruments¹⁶. Turkish and Qatar foreign policy approaches and the predominant tools utilized within the specified period concurred significantly. This presented valuable venues for both actors to cooperate in regional issues and facilitated forging closer relations.

¹⁶ A foreign policy approach is a general way of understanding how foreign policy should be formulated. A foreign policy tool refers to a more specific instrument that is utilized to achieve goals formulated within a more general approach. For example, a security-oriented foreign policy approach may utilize military instruments, while a diplomacy-oriented approach may use instruments such as foreign aid or public diplomacy.

2.2.1. Turkish Foreign Policy Approach and Tools: 2005-2011

In his *Strategic Depth*, Ahmet Davutoglu, the intellectual architect behind Turkey's new foreign policy, refers to two important power parameters, namely "stable" and "potential" power parameters. These parameters determine the extent of a country's power in the international political arena (Davutoglu, 2010). While stable parameters comprise of unchangeable factors such as history, geography, population and culture; potential power parameters are changeable variables such as economic, technological and military capabilities. By examining the interaction among these parameters, Davutoglu suggests that Turkey would maximize its influence within the regional and international political system by pursuing a dynamic foreign policy (Davutoglu, 2010).

He further maintains that with a strategic mindset, strategic planning and political will, a country's power projection can be enhanced. To this end, Davutoglu identifies two main goals in the new Turkish foreign policy: a dynamic re-interpretation of the power parameters and a multi-dimensional foreign policy that emphasizes peace and stability, both domestic and regional. For Davutoglu, Turkey's historical depth (long shared history with the regions around it) and its geopolitical depth (strategic geographical position) force Turkey to realize the two goals mentioned above as well as give Turkey a unique capability to increase its influence, or soft power, in the region (Davutoglu, 2010). However, while excessively focusing on Turkey's stable parameter's in his power projections, Davutoglu fails to give due attention to potential power parameters such as

technological and military capabilities, which have central importance especially in modern warfare and power projections.

Davutoglu's idea of a more ambitious, dynamic and multi-dimensional foreign policy would find a conducive environment with some regional and domestic developments. First, the EU approved Turkey's membership bid to join the Union in the Helsinki Summit in 1999, which relegated Turkey's security-oriented approach to foreign policy (Sozen, 2010). Second, with the coming of the JDP to power in 2002, Turkey focused on the EU reforms to become a full-member. Persistence in pursuing the reforms and the EU membership improved micro- and macro-economic indicators. Third, the EU approved to begin accession talks in 2004, which increased Turkey's standing internationally and regionally (Aktas, 2010; Dalay & Friedman, 2013). These developments enabled Ankara to pursue a more ambitious and more multi-dimensional foreign policy compared to before. However, as Baskan (2011a) aptly observes, as soon as the Arab Spring uprisings started, especially in Libya and Syria, Davutoglu's ambitious and multi-dimensional foreign policy in the region fell apart beyond repair.

Foreign Minister Davutoglu believed that Turkey's strategic depth, a combination of its geostrategic, historical and cultural ties to the region, brought with it responsibilities and opportunities, which could be activated to increase Turkey's regional and international prominence (Walker, 2007). To that end, Turkey exempted Lebanese, Syrian and Jordanian citizens from obtaining visas

and led efforts to create a small-scale customs union between the four actors, which PM Erdogan called as the Shamgen¹⁷. As mentioned earlier, such an economic opening reverberated in the region and allowed Turkey to reach other markets in the Arab Middle East, especially the Gulf region, through Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Turkish products started to become more visible in the Gulf markets from agricultural produce to popular consumption materials such as Turkish soap operas and films.

Ankara utilized several tools to achieve its new foreign policy objectives under Davutoglu, two of which stand out. After embracing a zero-problems policy with neighbors and resolving some of the decades-long political and diplomatic problems, Turkey turned its attention to her neighbors and the broader region to share its experience and expertise. Mediation was Turkey's first foreign policy tool. Ankara mediated between the Israeli-Palestinian and the Israeli-Syrian sides, the Lebanese political/sectarian entities, Hamas and Fatah and the Iraqi political parties (Altunisik, 2008). Ankara's all-inclusive and equidistant mediation efforts to resolve regional problems and defuse political/sectarian tensions enhanced Turkey's soft power capabilities in the Middle East (Aras, 2009; Oguzlu, 2007). Using mediation and peace-making, Turkey came to be viewed as an impartial mediator and facilitator in regional disputes (Dalay & Friedman, 2013; Smolen, 2012). Turkey was seen as a capable actor who could establish multidimensional relations with multilateral actors (Altunisik, 2008; Aktas, 2010).

¹⁷ Shamgen is an allusion to the European Schengen visa. "Sham" means Damascus in Arabic and Turkish.

Regional political developments, at least until the Arab Spring, validated the wisdom of having zero-problems. However, with the Syrian quagmire, serious doubts about the wisdom of the practitioners of the zero-problems policy emerged.

Foreign aid and humanitarian assistance was another important foreign policy tool that Turkey has consistently utilized under the JDP governments. For example, according to the Global Humanitarian Assistance report 2013, with over \$1 billion in aid, 0.13% of its national wealth, distributed in 2012, Turkey came right after rich Western donors like the US (\$3.8 billion), the EU (\$1.9 billion) and the UK (\$1.2 billion). With these figures, Turkey was the third most generous donor after Luxembourg and Sweden, and the first country in terms of how much the humanitarian assistance increased in 2012. According to Cevik (2013), through becoming an important donor, Turkey boosted its role as a trustable mediator in regional conflicts in addition to expanding its sphere of influence and soft power by engaging with the people on the ground. Although foreign aid as a foreign policy tool has worked effectively for quite a while now, including it in the Turkish foreign policy toolbox as a stable instrument is heavily dependent on the situation of the Turkish economy.

In addition to its humanitarian and state-building efforts in Africa, most notably in Somalia, Turkish foreign aid played an important political role as well. When the MB government in Cairo was in need of instant cash for its debt-stricken economy, Morsi turned to Ankara. The Turkish government agreed to

deposit US\$2 billion in the Egyptian Central Bank for the purpose of funding small and medium-sized enterprises, helping finance infrastructure projects and boosting foreign currency reserves. According to Bradley (2012), Ankara was utilizing bilateral foreign aid as a foreign policy tool to win lucrative contract for its growing manufacturing sector. A similar trend in Turkish foreign aid was also noticeable in Tunisia and Libya, where the Islamist governments had cordial relations with Ankara. With its equidistant and all-inclusive foreign policy approach and the utilization of mediation, humanitarian assistance and state-building efforts, especially in Somalia and Libya, and foreign aid, especially those to the MB government in Egypt, Turkey increased its soft power immensely. However, in light of the political instability the Arab Spring brought to these countries and the recent economic troubles Turkey is undergoing, the eventual success of the policy of funding allies is highly doubtful.

2.2.2. Qatari Foreign Policy Approach and Tools: 2004-2011

After gaining her independence in 1971, Qatar pursued an independent foreign policy; however, Riyadh exercised a significant level of influence on Doha especially in terms of basic security (Roberts, 2012). After Sheikh Hamad assumed power in 1995, Qatar has gradually become a leading, moderate, Muslim country with massive political and economic investments in nation branding. According to Peterson (2006) a small state like Qatar “should exploit a unique niche whereby it provides a service or commodity that benefits neighbors,

the region, or the broader world.” (p.741). As we shall see below, this service was mediation and conflict resolution endeavors.

Qatar’s foreign policy is predicated on strengthening international peace and sovereignty (Constitution of the State of Qatar, 2004). Given its size and population as well as the regional instabilities, Qatar’s new foreign policy vision aimed at maintaining and enhancing regional and domestic security and political stability (Khatib, 2013). In this regard, countering potential expansionist policies of neighboring countries, namely Iran, was an important Qatari foreign policy goal initially. Qatar enjoys considerable percentage of a Shiite population¹⁸ and shares its lifeline gas reserves, the Northern Field, with Iran. Hence, avoiding sectarian tensions in the region assumed an important consideration in the Qatari foreign policy behavior (Kamrava, 2011). Qatar would not want an uncontrollably emboldened Iran in the region; neither would it want to alienate Iran with hostile policies. Moreover, maintaining sovereignty and autonomy, vis-à-vis influential neighbors such as Saudi Arabia, was another important security consideration in Sheikh Hamad’s foreign policy vision (Wright, 2011).

Qatari foreign policy tools were more prominently charted out after the security concerns of Qatar were alleviated with the US Army moving to the Al-Udeid Air Base in 2003. Since then, mediation or peace-brokering has become

¹⁸ According to a research conducted by the American-based Pew Research Center titled “Mapping the Global Muslim Population” more than 100,000 Shia people lived in Qatar in 2009, which was around 10% of the population. The study can be reached at <http://www.pewforum.org/2009/10/07/mapping-the-global-muslim-population>

A more recent report published by the United States Department of State titled “2011 Report on International Religious Freedom – Qatar” puts the percentage of Shia population in Qatar around 5-15%. The study can be located at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/50210591c.html>.

the most important Qatari foreign policy tool (Khatib, 2013). For Qatar, mediation is an integral foreign policy tool that aims at maintaining an active involvement in regional issues, enhancing and deepening its influence in the region and beyond. To this end, the Qatari foreign policy assumed immense dynamism in the Gulf and the broader Middle East due to the power vacuum in region (Abdulla, 2014). In fact, “peaceful resolution of international disputes” entered the Qatari Constitution, making Qatar one of few countries that have conflict resolution/ mediation in their constitution (Wright, 2011).

“The foreign policy of the State is based on the principle of strengthening international peace and security by means of encouraging peaceful resolution of international disputes...” (Constitution of the State of Qatar 2004, Article 7).

In line with this article, Qatari mediation efforts proved successful in bringing a brewing civil war in Lebanon in 2008 to an end; in encouraging the government and the most influential rebel group to sign a ceasefire agreement and a peace framework to end the civil war in Darfur, Sudan, in 2010; and in bringing several cease-fires between the government and the Houthi rebels in Yemen in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Clearly, the Qatari foreign policy-makers were aware that increasing Qatar’s visibility and soft-power in the international political arena would bolster Doha’s chances for success in mediation (Kocgunduz, 2011; Kamrava, 2011; Gumus, 2013). Therefore, a successful campaign for nation-branding and reputation building as a progressive Muslim country was taking place (Barakat,

2012; Cooper & Momani, 2009). The establishment of the Al-Jazeera channel, hosting several sports events (1995 FIFA Under 20 World Cup, 2006 Doha Asian Games, 2011 Asian Football Cup, 2011 Pan Arab Games and 2022 World Cup), research and think-tank centers (Brookings and RAND Corporation) and distinguished international conferences (2012 UN Conference on Climate Change, 2012 UN Conference on Trade and Development) as well as active involvement in regional and international organizations (GCC, OIC and UNSC); investments in education (Qatar Foundation, Education City), culture (Museum of Islamic Arts, Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, etc.) and aviation (Qatar Airways) increased Qatar's visibility and soft-power (Salem & Zeeuw, 2012; Gumus, 2013; Kamrava, 2014). Qatar earned extensive "subtle power" from these endeavors, cashing it successfully to support its image as an honest, impartial mediator and peace-broker, which Qatar used extensively in its foreign policy (Kamrava, 2013).

Another important foreign policy tool that Qatar has been utilizing is foreign aid, which was sometimes a part of its checkbook diplomacy. In addition to sending millions of US\$ worth's of humanitarian aid to Africa and Asia as an instrumental foreign policy tool, Qatar gave foreign aid to countries affected by the Arab Spring. Egypt has received the lion's share from Qatar given its centrality in the Arab world and Sheikh Hamad's position that the newly emergent democratic Islam would dominate the Middle Eastern Arab region and it was in Doha's best interest to participate actively in this historic shift (Steinberg, 2012). Encouraged by large amounts of capital and the initial absence of other regional

and international actors (Philbrick & Shepherd, 2013; Abdulla, 2014; Koroglu, 2014), ambitious Qatari foreign policymakers gave more than US\$7.5 billion to Egypt throughout Morsi's presidency in the form of direct financial aid, emergency loan and liquefied natural gas (Egypt Returns \$2 Billion to Qatar, 2013).

Similar to the Turkish case, the foreign policy approach and tools Qatar adopted extended its soft power immensely. Although Qatar was able to realize most of its foreign policy objectives with its foreign policy approaches and tools, the Arab Spring revolutions and counter-revolutions gave way to many challenges to the continuity of such policies.

2.2.3. Analysis of Foreign Policy Approaches and Tools

Turkey and Qatar are both pro-Western, moderate Muslim countries with high-levels of integration into the global economy (Gumus, 2013). Although both countries tend to assert their distinctive positions on some international issues, they pursue a pragmatic and rationalist foreign policy. As the evolution of the Turkish and Qatari foreign policy in 2000s demonstrate, there was a confluence of favorable domestic and regional factors that augmented their international political and economic standing. Domestically, both countries enjoyed a period of political stability and unprecedented economic development under a strong leadership. Regionally, there was a power vacuum both in the Gulf Arab and the Middle Eastern Arab regions. Against this backdrop, the more both actors demoted their hard security concerns, the more confidence they gained in their

active, impartial, multi-dimensional foreign policy. Mediation and conflict resolution stood out as crucial tools in this respect. The more Turkey and Qatar utilized such foreign policy tools, the more they enhanced their regional and international prestige and soft power (Kamrava, 2014) as well as drew closer to one another in joint regional political endeavors. In this regard, President Gul's remarks are quite telling:

"We told him [Sheikh Hamad] in the meeting that Turkey appreciates Qatar for its effective role in the solution of several problems in the region. We expressed our gratitude once again to Qatar for its constructive and positive efforts with regard to the Middle East peace process, the settlement of the disputes between Israel and Palestine, the issues concerning Lebanon, Iraq, Darfur, and Yemen and in many other major problematic areas." (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2009)

Similarly, PM Erdogan observes that *"We [Turkey and Qatar] have identical views on regional and international issues and we are doing our best with the State of Qatar in order to transform our region into a peace zone."* (Turkey and Qatar working for regional peace, 2013). The Turkish position is also reiterated by the Qatari side. For example, Salem Bin Mubarak Al Shafi, the ambassador of the State of Qatar in Ankara, states that Ankara and Doha "shared a similar point of view and... pursued similar policies regarding international matters, particularly regarding the conflicts in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq and the Arab Spring" which "allowed further development in bilateral relations and stronger ties" which is "a positive force for the resolution of regional

problems” (Unal, 2014).

Examining the foreign policy approaches, objectives and the dominant foreign policy tools of both actors, we see that they both attach great importance to domestic and regional peace and stability. Ankara’s zero problems with neighboring countries policy was considerably similar to Doha’s willingness to solve the territorial disputes over the Hawar Islands and the Saudi border. For both Ankara and Doha, good relations with neighbors and a peaceful region means more opportunities for economic interdependence and safer markets for exports (Dirioz, 2009; Kamrava, 2014). In fact, Ankara and Doha cooperated in their mediation endeavors that aimed to bring the conflict among Lebanese parties to an end in 2011.

More importantly, both Turkey and Qatar have capitalized on their capability to offer generous amounts of foreign aid for humanitarian and development purposes to countries where the Arab Spring brought Islamist governments into power (see following sections). Ozturk (2011) argues that parallelism between both actors’ multi-dimensional foreign policy approaches, mediation and conflict resolution efforts drew them gradually closer. It cannot be argued that similar foreign policy approaches and tools *per se* engendered closer Turkish-Qatari relations; however, their facilitative effect cannot be denied.

2.3. Convergence of Political Positions

In light of the previous section on the similarities between the foreign policy approaches, objectives and tools both actors utilized, Turkey and Qatar experienced a great level of convergence on many regional issues. There are two distinct dynamics that has driven this convergence. First, the leadership of both actors employ an “Islamic”, not “Islamist¹⁹”, discourse to justify/legitimize their foreign policies and practices before their constituents and the regional public opinion. For example, according to G. Nonneman²⁰ (personal interview, August 27, 2014), the understanding of Islam in the Qatari foreign policy makers is more of a “worldview” rather than an “ideology”. Therefore, unlike the Islamists, the objective of this worldview is not to impose radical change on society but to build popular consent. In this regard, both Turkish PM Erdogan and Foreign Minister Davutoglu have extensively relied on the concepts of Islamic civilization²¹, being a voice for Muslims, refusing radicalism and embracing tolerance and moderation²². In fact, PM Erdogan assumed the role of co-sponsor of United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative.

Similarly, the Qatari leadership has repetitively used a discourse which

¹⁹ “Islamic” is simply a politically neutral adjective while “Islamist” is usually used as a politically charged concept in many contexts. Islamists are claimed to maintain that Islam should be the sole guiding force in one’s social and personal life and that politics is a tool to change society in this direction.

²⁰ Dr. Gerd Nonneman, Dean of Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in Qatar, Doha, Qatar.

²¹ See Ahmet Davutoglu (1994): *Civilizational Transformation and the Muslim World* for theorization and practice of the civilizational discourse in contemporary politics.

²² See Burhan Duran’s (2013) article for a detailed discussion on discourse of Islamic civilization: *Understanding the AK Party’s Identity Politics: A Civilizational Discourse and its Limitations*

endorses the strengths of Islamic civilization, representing Muslims on the world arena and rejecting radical views²³. To this end, Qatar Foundation has established a center for contribution to civilization and formed a committee for supporting alliance of civilizations, whereby “Islamic civilization” was promoted. Additionally, Qatar plays a key role in strengthening the UN Alliance of Civilizations initiative. The current Qatari Foreign Minister Khalid bin Mohammad Al-Attiyah states:

“Our support to this institution is not an improvisational issue or a political issue, but rather a support based on a distinctive vision and a set Qatar’s foreign policy principles. We are for the promotion of dialogue among cultures and civilizations²⁴”.

Such a discourse was important for both actors as it fed their soft power.

The second underlying dynamic that paved the way for foreign policy convergences is more pragmatist and less-ideologically driven. Following a rationalist line of thinking, both Ankara and Doha care about the security and stability of the region, which is vital for the well-being of their economies and their integration into the global economy (P. Aarts²⁵, personal interview, August 27, 2014; Baskan, 2014; Bayoumi, 2014b). Turkey is willing to win as much of the Middle Eastern market as possible in order to increase its exports. Similarly,

²³ See Sheikh Hamad’s UN speech at: <http://www.unesco.org/dialogue/en/kahlifa.htm>

²⁴ See FM Khalid bin Mohammad Al-Attiyah’s speech at: <http://www.gulf-times.com/qatar/178/details/393479/fm-pledges-qatar%E2%80%99s-support-for-alliance-of-civilisations>

²⁵ Dr. Paul Aarts, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Qatar needs to enhance its regional international standing in order to connect its huge gas reserves to nearby markets and beyond (Koroglu, 2014). Both countries were aware that accomplishing regional stability and peace, and cooperating with a leadership that they can easily work with would greatly increase their political and economic influence. This was a prime driver of converging positions. These two dynamics promote one another and they together cultivate a better ground for foreign policy convergences on many regional issues, which will be examined next.

2.3.1. Position on Hamas

Turkey has repeatedly declared that Hamas is a legitimate representative of the Palestinian people because it won a clear electoral victory in transparent Palestinian elections in 2006 (Cetinoglu, 2009). Policymakers in Ankara maintained that inclusion of Hamas in mainstream Palestinian politics would promote democratization of Hamas; while excluding it would bring further radicalization. At the 2009 World Economic Forum in Davos, PM Erdogan stated:

“If we would like to see democracy take root, then we must respect... the people who have received the votes... If it's only Fatah who is present... that is not going to be sufficient... Hamas has to be taken into consideration as well because they are a part of that society, they have won an election, so they too must be included in this equation.”

(International Crisis Group, 2010)

Ankara argued that ostracizing a democratically elected Hamas would undermine efforts to draw it closer to mainstream politics and would expand Iranian influence over Hamas (Dalay & Friedman, 2013; B. Shahandeh²⁶, personal interview, August 27, 2014).

Similar to the Turkish position, Qatar has extended diplomatic and financial support to Hamas arguing that branding a democratically elected government as terrorist would bolster the radical wing in Hamas (Haykel, 2013), which would be detrimental to the peace process. Qatar was able to broker a reconciliation agreement between Hamas and Fatah in Doha in 2012, which envisioned to create a unity government and include Hamas in mainstream Palestinian politics. Also, Sheikh Hamad became the first Arab leader to visit Hamas-controlled Gaza to break the Israeli blockade and declare to the international community that Hamas is a legitimate political entity (Cevikalp, 2013). Similar to Ankara, Doha aimed at using its leverage in the international arena to include Hamas in the mainstream Palestinian politics as well as distance it from the Iran-Syria-Hezbollah axis (Al-Mughrabi, 2012). During his speech at the 6th Doha Forum in 2006, Sheikh Hamad criticized the international community for punishing Palestinian people for their democratic choices:

“This important Arab experience should be supported and encouraged rather than putting pressure on it or interfering with the right of the people to choose their leaders to threaten to withhold aid to them. Challenging the

²⁶ Dr. Behzad Shahandeh, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran.

choice of the peoples will only result in fuelling feelings of despair and generate waves of wrath...the results of these elections reflects a commitment to what is decided by the collective will and the acceptance of the citizens' free choices. This calls upon advocates of democracy all over the world to respect the decision of the Palestinian people.” (Bibbo, 2006).

In line with their strong belief that consolidation of security in the Middle East is dependent on the success of the democratic process, both Turkey and Qatar strove to end the international isolation of Hamas. To accomplish this goal, both actors hosted Hamas leaders as well as sought to mediate between Hamas and Fatah. In fact, with the Arab Spring, Hamas leadership relocated to Doha. All in all, both Turkish and Qatari leadership had genuine interest in bringing an end to the Palestinian suffering, which substantiated their discourse on Islamic civilization, being a voice for Muslims, refusing radicalism and embracing democracy, tolerance and moderation. Although this was an ideological position on the outside, it brought about pragmatic benefits to Ankara and Doha in the form of international and regional visibility and soft power (Kanat, 2010). Turkey and Qatar knew the importance of the Palestinian cause on the way to winning hearts and minds in the region. This was important for both actors as the most important foreign policy tools they used, i.e. conflict resolution, public diplomacy and moderation, required having a closer connection with the popular opinion.

2.3.2. Position on the Lebanese conflict

Lebanon, whose sectarian politics is notorious for political crises, has been an important site for Turkey and Qatar to show that the foreign policy principles of maintaining and enhancing regional security is not only in words. To this end, both Turkey and Qatar have undertaken several initiatives to resolve conflicts among Lebanese factions. To this end, Qatar worked tirelessly until an agreement was reached to end months of Lebanese political crisis in 2008 and saved the country from a potential civil war (Kamrava, 2011; Barakat, 2012). Similarly, Turkey sent troops to Lebanon as part of the UN peace keeping mission in 2006. Turkey's willingness to send troops to Lebanon to help prevent Beirut from sinking into deeper conflict with Israel, and Qatar's success in preventing a brewing Lebanese civil war in 2008 drew both actors to initiate joint mediation efforts to resolve another political crisis. Lebanon's already fragile political structure suffered yet another blow in 2011 when Hezbollah withdrew 11 of its ministers from the cabinet, which culminated in the Lebanese government's collapse. As the situation was escalating in 2011, Turkish and Qatari Foreign Ministers have called on all Lebanese sides to compromise. However, the joint endeavor fell short of resonating with the Lebanese parties and the initiative failed to accomplish its goal, upon which both actors decided to end their mediation efforts.

Both Turkey and Qatar were actively involved in maintaining peace in Lebanon. This active involvement were due to three motivations. First, as stated

in their foreign policies, both actors strive to achieve peace and stability in all the region and Lebanon was a fertile ground to prove their discourse (Koroglu, 2014). Second, both sides knew very well that Lebanon has a key importance in maintaining regional peace, given its complicated religious and political composition. If peace and stability in Lebanon was endangered, it would upset other regional dynamics. Third, genuine efforts to resolve conflicts in Lebanon would reverberate through the region and would mean prestige and public diplomacy for Turkey and Qatar as well as facilitate their relations with countries such as Iran, who enjoys a strong hold therein (Zweiri, 2014).

2.3.3. Position on the Iranian nuclear program

Iran has increasingly become a central political actor in the Middle East after the Invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the fall of Saddam regime. Traditionally, most Sunni states in the Middle East, especially most GCC states, have always been mistrustful towards Iranian foreign policy and accused Iran of taking advantage of sectarianism and activating proxies in order to create instability in the region. Concerns about an increasingly assertive Iran with region-wide influence and with potential to acquire nuclear weapons intensified with Western allegations that Iran is pursuing a nuclear program that eventually aims to produce nuclear weapons (Shahandeh, 2014).

Alarmed at such a possibility, most of Iran's neighbors, more specifically Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE and Kuwait, expressed their dismay of Iranian

intentions and have even suggested to assist a potential US operation on nuclear sites²⁷. However, given their important political, economic and strategic interests, both Turkey and Qatar have pursued a different foreign policy from the West and the Gulf Arab countries, with the exception of Oman. According to Davutoglu, “Iran is the only land corridor for Turkey to reach Asia and the second source of energy for Turkey.” (Traub, 2011). In addition, for Turkey, Iran is an influential partner who can play “an active role to achieve peace and security in the region to end the Syrian crisis” (Bayoumi, 2014b). For Qatar, Iran is an important neighbor with whom Doha shares world’s largest natural gas field, i.e. the North Field, as well as a potential gateway to the Turkish and European natural gas markets. A combination of such interests led the Turkish and Qatari foreign policy toward Iran’s nuclear program converge to a great extent.

Although both Ankara and Doha are resolutely against potential Iranian nuclear weapons due to increasingly sectarian Iranian policies in the region, they have persistently avoided bandwagoning with neither the anti-Iran camp in the region nor the West (Cetinoglu, 2009). For example, Qatar voted against a 2006 UNSC resolution, which demanded Iran to suspend uranium enrichment, arguing that the region was already in flames and therefore Iran should be granted channels of diplomacy and more time to guarantee the achievement of a peaceful solution (UN 5500th Meeting, 2006). Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, the

²⁷ See, for example, the alleged Saudi reaction towards the Iranian nuclear program in Wikileaks cables. http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/11/28/world/20101128-cables-viewer.html?_r=1&#report/iran-08RIYADH649

Qatari representative, stated that proceeding with the draft resolution would serve neither regional security nor the Council's unity and that this resolution would intensify the conflagration in the region.

Quite similar to Doha, Ankara voted against a 2010 UNSC Resolution, which imposed further sanctions on Iran in order to stop its nuclear program. Turkey, along with Brazil, argued that “the adoption of sanctions would negatively affect the momentum created by the Tehran Declaration and the overall diplomatic process” initiated by Turkey and Brazil (UN 6335th Meeting, 2010). Ankara also maintained that “the resolution’s adoption should not be seen as an end to diplomacy” and “efforts towards finding a peaceful solution must be continued even more resolutely”. Additionally, both Ankara and Doha have expressly declared that they were against any military solution to the issue and that they would not allow their territory to be used for a military operation against Iran (Kocgunduz, 2011).

2.3.4. Position on the Islamists’ rising influence in the region

Perhaps the most important political convergence that Ankara and Doha witnessed was their support for the rising influence of non-state actors namely the Islamists in the region, to the dismay of their neighbors as well as most of the international community (A. J. Al-Otaibi²⁸, personal interview, August 27, 2014). What started as similar foreign policy outlooks in early 2000s, transformed swiftly

²⁸ Abdullah Jabre Al-Otaibi, Chairman of the Political Science Department, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

into a “political alignment” after it became clear that the Arab Spring revolutions could be a moment for the Islamist movements, i.e. MB (A. Kuru²⁹, personal interview, May 23, 2014).

Although why Turkey and Qatar sided with the MB –a non-state actor, and then the state itself in some of the Arab Spring countries– is still open to debate, there seems to be three possible explanations. First, given their persistent Islamic discourse and their vision that if Islamists are given opportunity they would embrace democracy and democratic processes, Ankara and Doha sided with the Islamists. This was an ideological choice, which would help Ankara and Doha to realize their identity-based goals in the region: helping create moderate Islamic governments (Qatar-Turkey Relations: Political and Economic Rapprochement, 2014) which in turn would improve lives of millions of Muslims in the region. However, this explanation fails to account for why Turkey was initially reluctant to topple the Gadhafi government and why both countries chose to turn a blind eye to the uprisings in Bahrain.

Second explanation is that both actors are pragmatic states in terms of political and economic opportunities, and they wanted to ride the MB wave (Abdulla, 2014; Koch, 2014; Nonneman, 2014), which seems to be more cogent than other explanations. Having invested in enhancing their soft power through branding and public diplomacy efforts on the ground, both Ankara and Doha wanted to cash in such assets as quickly as possible, given the regional power

²⁹ Dr. Ahmet Kuru, Department of Political Science, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA, USA.

vacuum and lack of potential regional or international competitors (Kamrava, 2014). In fact, at the initial stages of the Arab Spring neither Saudi Arabia nor Egypt nor Iran seemed to be prepared for or willing to shape the changes. It was mostly Doha, and later Ankara, that seemed more enthusiastic and prepared to influence the newly emerging regional order. Similarly, the US assumed a favorable position toward the choice of the majority, i.e. the MB (Koroglu, 2014), which facilitated the position of Ankara and Doha. Although both actors, especially Turkey, was already in a win-win relationship with all of the Arab Spring countries, they thought that the power vacuum and lack of potential contenders would prove to be a much better win-win relationship (Abdulla, 2014). Moreover, both Ankara and Doha could become central players in the region as the newly emerging MB governments would be in their orbit as they viewed Ankara as source of democratic inspiration and Doha as a source of financial support (Cevikalp, 2013).

Third, Turkish and Qatari foreign policy approaches believed in change and people's choice. Being both US allies, who believe in "change in line with people's choice", Turkey and Qatar have consistently emphasized that political reforms and economic development were interrelated and that these two concepts together would bring change towards more democracy and socio-economic development in the region (Gumus, 2013). In this respect, in his 2006 Doha Forum opening speech, Sheikh Hamad stated:

"The controversy over reform that has started in the Middle East is 'necessary'

and "must continue until citizens get their due share of political and economic freedom... Establishing the regional security could not be completed unless democratic practice make progress." (Bibbo, 2006).

Another question arises here: if Turkey and Qatar were both in favor of change then why did they chose to side with the Islamists and not with the other more secular factions? The MB elements comprised the largest, the most well-prepared social groups that were pushing for change and demanding democratic rights in the Arab Spring and therefore Ankara and Doha put their support behind them. This position maintains that even if it was other social dynamics, i.e. non-Islamist actors, Ankara and Doha would still react the same way. For example, Ankara's pro-secular advice in Cairo in the early days of the MB government and the Turkish government's initial willingness to work with Bashar al-Assad on condition that he realized some political reforms point to such a principled approach. Similarly, according to a 2011 Bilgesam³⁰ report, "*the Qatari government has noted that many of the 'Islamist' parties in question..., have declared strategies to tackle unemployment, education, democracy, and other such topical ills that plagued the past regimes*" and therefore Qatar supported Islamists as they had a plan for tackling social issues and strengthening democracy. However, similar to the first explanation, the Bahraini case undermines the argument that Ankara and Doha are wholeheartedly behind

³⁰ Bilge Adamlar Stratejik Arařtırmalar Merkezi (Wise Men Center for Strategic Studies) is an Istanbul-based think-tank organization. The report can be reached at: http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=447:turkish-qatari-relations-in-a-post-conflict-neighborhood&catid=77:ortadogu-analizler&Itemid=147

change and people's choice.

2.3.5. Position on the Syrian crisis

The rapprochement between Turkey and Syria, prior to the Arab Spring uprisings, has been the most important political arena whereby Ankara tested its new foreign policy approach. At least until the Arab Spring, this new approach proved to be a great success. The Turkish-Syrian political, economic and socio-cultural relations have witnessed dramatic improvements, which resonated with other neighboring countries and the region at large. For example, Turkey and Syria held high-level joint parliamentary meetings and abolished visa regimes to draw relations closer. Ankara and Damascus signed more than 60 agreements and memoranda of understanding on a wide array of issues from politics to commerce, security, culture, education, agriculture, health, transportation, environment, water (Ilgit & Davids, 2013). The Syrian leadership trusted the Turkish leadership so much so that they agreed to the Turkish mediation between Israel and Syria, which would end the occupation of the Golan Heights in return for Syrian recognition of Israel. A similar trend emerged in Turkish exports to Syria, which jumped from \$184,267 in 2000 to \$1,844,605 in 2011, an increase of more than 10 times (TUIK³¹, 2014). The tourist movements from Turkey to Syria followed a parallel trajectory which grew from 122,417 people in

³¹ TUIK: Turkish Statistical Institute. Figures retrieved from http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1046 on May 21, 2014.

2000 to 974,054 people in 2011 (TUIK³², 2014).

Simultaneously, Doha was establishing an extensive network of diplomatic and economic relations with Damascus with the help of its mediation overtures in Lebanon, where Syria was heavily involved. According to Gulbrandsen (2010), by the time the Doha Agreement between the Lebanese factions were signed in 2008, Qatar was already one of the biggest investors in Syria. For example, the Qatari Diar invested \$350 million in Ibn Hani Resort in Latakia and they established a \$5 billion Qatari-Syrian Holding Company to invest in different real estate, tourism and industrial projects. Gulbrandsen also points to the Damascus-based Qatar National Bank Syria (QNBS), 49% of which was owned by the Qatar National Bank (QNB) while the Syria International Islamic Bank, Syria International Insurance Company, and Syrian-Qatari Takaful Insurance all operate under the Qatar International Islamic Bank (QIIB).

The relations between Turkey, Syria and Qatar gained a new momentum when the French and the Syrian Presidents as well as the Qatari Emir and Turkish PM met in Damascus in 2008 with a view to improving Lebanese-Syrian relations and enhancing stability and security in the Levant. A similar meeting took place among Erdogan, Asad and Sheikh Hamad in 2010 in Istanbul, where the three leaders as well as their foreign ministers voiced identical views about some of the most pressing regional issues such as the Israeli aggression, the reconciliation between Palestinian factions, political stability in Iraq and Iran's

³² TUIK, figures retrieved from <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/turizmapp/menuturizm.zul> on May, 21, 2014.

right to possess nuclear energy (Assad, Erdogan and Sheikh Hamad meet in Istanbul, 2010).

Having built close personal connections with Bashar Al-Assad and the extensive diplomatic and economic investments, both the Turkish and the Qatari leadership tried to use such influence to expedite democratic reforms and weather the instability that the Arab Spring would instigate. However, such advice fell to deaf ears in Damascus, upon which both Turkish PM Erdogan and Qatari Emir stated their personal disappointment with the Asad regime (Beaumont, 2012). Once the violence between the Asad regime and opposition grew fierce, Ankara and Doha severed diplomatic relations, recognize the opposition and develop strategies to remove Asad from power.

Against this context, the Syrian case has served as the most crucial dynamic that motivated the Turkish and Qatari foreign policy alignment throughout the Arab Spring. Both Ankara and Doha have pursued a very proactive position towards the Syrian uprisings by coordinating the political, financial and logistical support they provided to the Syrian opposition (Ozturk, 2011). On the political side, both Ankara and Doha became active advocates of the Syrian opposition. For example, Ankara advocated and facilitated the formation of the Syrian National Council (SNC) and recognized it as the official representative of the Syrian opposition as well as helping its military wing, i.e. the Free Syrian Army (FSA) by providing logistics on Turkish soil and sending them the weaponry coming from the Gulf. Also, Ankara brought the plight of Syrian

people to the international forums and tried to gather political support and recognition for the SNC. Ankara also supported a 2012 UN peace initiative, which envisioned a ceasefire and a UN Supervision Mission to be established in Syria, which failed due to lack of dialog between the regime and the rebels. Turkey also actively participated in another initiative proposed in Istanbul in 2012, i.e. the Friends of Syria, urging the Assad regime to realize the UN and Arab League reforms and recognize the SNC as a legitimate representative of Syrian people. Active diplomatic and political efforts to resolve the Syrian crisis motivated Ankara and Doha to recognize the newly formed Syrian National Coalition in 2012 in Cairo.

Similarly, Doha has shown great effort to push for a condemnation of the Syrian regime's actions at the Arab League in 2011, which was followed by the suspension of Syria's Arab League membership due to its failure to end army attacks on civilians and withdraw from cities. Given Doha's active advocacy, the Arab League proposed a peace plan to the Syrian regime which asked for accepting international monitors, removing troops from major towns and freeing political prisoners. In addition, Doha became an important capital, along with Istanbul, that hosted important opposition figures and the SNC meetings. Given its logistical support to the FSA, which went through Turkey, Doha worked closely with Ankara in coordinating its diplomatic and military support. However, as the Syrian crisis deepened, the crisis assumed an acutely sectarian dimension. The Turkish-Qatari line were closer to the MB elements in the SNC

while the Saudi position wished to exclude the MB and integrate more jihadist elements in the Syrian opposition. Such differences strengthened the Turkish-Qatari political alignment (Tastekin, 2013) as both Ankara and Doha were wary of the jihadist elements and were favorable to the Syrian MB (Marufoglu, 2014).

Based on this narrative, several dynamics explains why Ankara and Doha cooperated closely on the Syrian crisis. First, as mentioned above, Turkey and Qatar have always wanted to enhance security and stability in the region and have cooperated to accomplish such goals as in Lebanon and Palestine. By showing a harmonious reaction to the Syrian crisis, both sides aimed to pressure the Asad regime to refrain from upsetting regional security which would have far-reaching ramifications. However, as the uprisings intensified and Asad regime was blamed for committing several massacres, this position became increasingly more difficult for Ankara and Doha to sustain and they had to alter their strategies accordingly. Second, from a pragmatist perspective, both actors had large amounts of investments and economic interests in Syria and their joint calls to the Asad regime in the early stages of the uprisings were aimed at maintaining security and stability, which was crucial for their economic interests. This was especially true for Turkey as Syria has been the most critical link to the rest of the Arab Middle East in Turkey's new foreign policy approach, which promoted economic interdependence in the region. If this link was broken, Ankara's zero problems policy as well as its regional economic clout would be seriously disrupted.

Another reason why Ankara and Doha cooperated in the Syrian crisis, according to Ahmed (2013), which sounds a little far-fetched, was Syria's reluctance to accept a natural gas pipeline project that would transport Qatari natural gas through Arab countries to Turkey and to Europe, which would enhance Qatar's regional influence as a source of reliable energy source. Fourth, on the ideological side, close Turkish-Qatari cooperation on the Syrian crisis was augmented by their strong conviction that the imminent dynamics of change would catapult the Islamists, i.e. MB elements, to the center of regional politics and therefore it was in their best interest to support the MB elements, as the strongest alternative of all. Ankara and Doha anticipated that the newly emerging "Islamist belt" countries, including Syria, would yield more cooperative governments (Abdulla, 2014; Sager, 2014; Al-Otaibi, 2014). In addition, being wary of the increasing Iranian influence in the region, both Turkey and Qatar expected that a new government in Damascus, which would technically bolster Sunni Islamists' position in Syrian politics, would confine Shia-Iranian influence on the Alewi-dominated Syria and Hezbollah-dominated Lebanon (Kuru, 2014).

In summary, foreign policy objectives and tools utilized by Ankara and Doha created several venues for both actors to enhance their regional cooperation. Although their foreign policy approaches and the instruments they employed to accomplish their foreign policy objectives facilitated a high level of convergences regarding pressing regional issues, these dynamics alone does not present a complete picture of the evolution and the nature of Turkish-Qatari

relations. In order to provide a complete account of these dynamics, the following chapter analyzes the regional and domestic factors that paved the way for closer relations and the political alignment between Ankara and Doha.

CHAPTER III: Regional and Domestic Dynamics of the Evolution of the Turkish-Qatari Relations (2002-2013)

As stated in the previous chapter, the foreign policy approaches, objectives and tools of both Turkey and Qatar facilitated the political convergences between the two actors. This was evident in the similar foreign policies Turkey and Qatar formulated in face of several regional issues such as the Palestinian problem, the Lebanese conflict, the Iranian nuclear program, the increasing influence of the MB elements in the Arab Spring countries and the Syrian Crisis. Ankara and Doha pursued not only parallel objectives throughout all of this regionally significant issues, but they also utilized similar political instruments to achieve their goals such as conflict resolution, mediation, humanitarian assistance and foreign aid.

Converging foreign policies and tools per se falls short of explaining the cordial nature and rapid pace of the Turkish-Qatari relationship as they do not necessarily lead to better and closer relations. Therefore, this chapter examines the regional political context as well as the domestic dynamics such as leadership, identity politics and interests (political, strategic and economic) that were influential. Conducive regional dynamics prepared the ground for the domestic dynamics above to become focal determinants of this relationship. Especially the ambitious leadership on both sides and their concurring visions

regarding the rising power of Islamists helped Ankara and Doha establish exceptionally cordial relations, compared with some of the regional powers.

3.1. Regional Dynamics of Turkish-Qatari Relations

On the regional level, the first and the most important issue was the Invasion of Iraq in 2003, which resulted in not only political instability but also greater Iranian influence in the Middle East, especially in Iraq, Lebanon and even Palestine (Zweiri, 2014; Marufoglu, 2014; Abdulla, 2014). With the failure of the American plans in Iraq in the post-Saddam era, the US has grown increasingly more reluctant to be involved in regional problems. This historic juncture would later create an optimal opportunity for Turkey to advance its relations with the Arab Middle East in general and the GCC countries in particular.

The American reluctance to engage with the pressing regional problems and the conflict over who should govern Iraq resulted in a power vacuum, which weakened the Sunni political actors while strengthening the position of the majority Shia political actors in Iraq (ICG, 2010; Kardas, 2006). Given its considerable influence on the Shiite politicians, Iran easily filled in the power vacuum in Iraq, boosting its assertive political stance vis-à-vis the regional heavyweights such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia (Shahandeh, 2014). As the Jordanian King's argument of "Shiite Crescent" began to materialize and as the traditional leaders of the Arab world, i.e. Saudi Arabia and Egypt, retreated into oblivion, Turkey and Qatar, both Sunni-majority countries, emerged as new

players willing to fill in the power vacuum (Momani & Ennis, 2012). According to Koroglu (2014), what paved the way for Turkish and Qatari political positions and interests to draw closer to each other at this critical juncture had to do with a regional urge to counter-balance surging Iranian influence.

Marufoglu (2014) concurs with Koroglu and states that “in addition to Turkey’s and Qatar’s pro-Palestinian discourse, Iran’s increasing regional influence was a major determinant in the evolution of the Turkish-Qatari relations to its current level.” He suggests that the GCC decision to announce Turkey a strategic partner in 2008 was a combination of the two factors above, namely the American reluctance to shape the regional power vacuum and the resultant surge of Iranian influence. Qatar was one of the first countries expressing interest in Turkey becoming a strategic partner. Qatar viewed Turkey as an influential political actor and a militarily powerful partner vis-à-vis Iran (Koroglu, 2014; Nonneman, 2014). This strategic relationship between the GCC and Turkey paved the way for formulating common positions over regional issues and furthering economic ties (Baskan, 2014).

Turkey’s EU membership efforts had a profound effect on Ankara’s growing relations with the GCC in general and Qatar in particular. Initially, when “the EU decided to formally start accession talks with Turkey on the 3rd October, 2005, people in the Middle East have started to seriously consider the idea that Turkey’s potential entry into the EU could also help them develop/modernize and

live in peace with the West.” (Oğuzlu, 2007, p.89). However, when the EU seemed to postpone Ankara’s full membership on grounds of several political and economic concerns, Turkey was disillusioned with a stalled EU accession process (Barkey, 2011). When Ankara realized that the Brussels was not genuinely interested in Turkey’s full membership, the Turkish government intensified efforts to integrate Turkish economy with that of the Middle East with a view to increasing Turkey’s strategic and economic value (Ulrichsen, 2014; Al-Otaibi 2014; Sager, 2014).

Moreover, according to Koroglu (2014), another dynamic that gave meaning to these regional factors, which paved the way for closer Turkish-Qatari relations, was the tacit American approval of the policies of these two friendly actors. For the Americans, it was a pragmatic choice to support the policies of Turkey and Qatar, both pro-Western countries that are well integrated into the global economy. Until the onset of the Arab Spring, the Turkish-Qatari relations revolved around mutual economic interests and maintaining regional peace. The Arab Spring revolts were probably the most influential regional dynamic that gave a fresh dimension to the relations between Ankara and Doha. Especially with the Arab Spring revolts in Egypt and Syria, relations between Ankara and Doha moved towards a political alignment, which will be examined next.

3.1.1 Arab Spring: Changing Regional Dynamics and the Turkish-Qatari Political Alignment (2011-2013)

The initial euphoric predictions about the outcomes of the Arab Spring started to fade away quickly. Instead, internal frictions, foreign meddling, sectarian divides and even civil war began to appear as more realistic outcomes of the Arab Spring. Bar the initial ecstatic expectations, regional realities that the Arab Spring has ushered proven to be an important game changer which has left its mark not only on Turkey-GCC relations but also on Turkish-Qatari relations. Like most capitals, Ankara was caught with surprise when demonstrations in Tunisia grew into mass protests and calls for the fall of the Ben Ali regime. The quick and peaceful success of the Tunisian people in changing their decades old corrupt and authoritarian regime was greeted with joy by many sections of the Arab societies in North Africa, the Levant and the Gulf, who demanded immediate political change and better economic conditions.

When the revolutions hit Egypt, the Turkish leadership was quick to call for the fall of the Mubarak regime on Al-Jazeera. For Ankara, Mubarak proved to be a difficult partner who was disturbed by Turkey's growing influence in the Arab world (Koroglu, 2014). Similarly, due to its troubled relations with the Mubarak regime for over a decade and its good relations with the opposition in Egypt, namely the MB, Qatar rushed to champion the democratic rights of the Egyptian people through Al-Jazeera. Both Ankara and Doha envisioned to realize their foreign policy goals and increase their clout in Egypt if Islamists, i.e. the MB,

were to assume power(Tocci, 2011). Therefore, they found each other as natural allies.

Similarly, Syrian uprisings proved to be another important phase in the Turkish-Qatari political alignment. Both Turkey and Qatar enjoyed extraordinarily close relations with the Asad regime and both countries had invested heavily therein, as was mentioned above. Therefore, the leadership in both countries tried to convince Damascus to introduce political reforms, even nominally, to weather the uprisings. By the summer of 2011 when the violence between the Asad regime and the opposition intensified, both Turkey and Qatar called for international intervention, which fell to deaf ears. For Ankara and Doha, Syria could turn out to be another country in the region where the MB elements could become the new government. This would not only bring another reliable ally for Ankara and Doha, but it would also cripple Iran's influence on Syria and Lebanon, where Shiite political actors enjoy great popular support base. Having economic and political stakes in the Syrian situation, Turkey and Qatar began to provide political, financial and logistical support for the Syrian opposition. Given their converging foreign policy objectives, Turkey and Qatar witnessed an unprecedented political alignment with each other when Syria turned into an ideological (MB and Saudi-Emirati axis vis-à-vis the Turkish-Qatari axis) and sectarian (Iranian influence on Syria and Lebanon) battleground beyond just the Syrian government and the opposition.

By the time Tunisia and Egypt were well under the MB governments and there was high probability that others could follow, the differences between the Turkey-Qatar-Egypt axis on the one hand and the Saudi-UAE axis on the other began to surface (Simsek, 2013). For the latter, democratically elected MB elements posed an ontological threat to their survival. A successful Egypt under the MB government could grow to be an example for the popular opinion in the Gulf. This in turn could ruin decades-old monarchies in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere.

Due to its central role in Arab politics, its huge population and colossal potential as an important regional ally, Doha and Ankara extended political, financial and logistical support for the Morsi government (Ulrichsen, 2014), which was examined in earlier sections. As evidenced by the Egyptian and Syrian cases, the Arab Spring proved to be an arena whereby the Turkish and Qatari foreign policy visions towards the Arab Middle East converged to a great extent. Towards the end of Sheikh Hamad's reign, which ended in June 2013, Turkey and Qatar enjoyed a political alignment, at the expense of worsening relations with Saudi Arabia and the UAE (Sager, 2014; Al-Otaibi, 2014).

Why did the Arab Spring serve as a springboard for the Turkish-Qatari political alignment? There were several dynamics that motivated this political alignment. First, Islamist elements in JDP's constituency (JDP is not supported by Islamists *per se*) approved of the potential success of Islamist rising in the

region and supported or was at least sympathetic to the JDP government's initiatives in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Syria as evidenced by an array of pro-Islamist demonstrations, humanitarian assistance activities organized by several conservative civil societies and numerous publications to mold public opinion. In fact the JDP leadership were of the same opinion as most of their constituency, and in some instances these demonstrations and humanitarian assistance campaigns were orchestrated by the government itself (Anonymous Turkish diplomat, June 2, 2014). Similarly, the Qatari leadership, who had cordial personal connections with and favorable views towards the MB elements in most Arab countries, saw in the Arab Spring a potential region-wide dominance of the Islamist movements.

Second, both Ankara and Doha believed that if Arab uprisings resulted in Islamist governments, they would enjoy more regional influence (Nonneman, 2014; Aarts, 2014) and better economic opportunities (Kamrava, 2014). Third, both Ankara and Doha supported the popular uprisings as the most principled approach given their support for people's choice and promotion of democracy. However, their lack of support for the Bahrain's popular uprising undermines this position. As the conflicts in Syria and Egypt aggravated, Ankara and Doha's active involvement in the Arab Spring began to take a more partial and sectarian character, which ruined both actors' reputation as trustable mediators. According to Beaumont (2012), the Arab Spring, the Libyan uprisings to be exact, "marked a "qualitative change" in Qatar's foreign policy from an "activist" but militarily

"unthreatening" stance to active intervention." (p.6). Also, Qatar's foreign policy objectives in Syria and Egypt, especially its unwavering support for the MB, created serious fractures in its relations with important GCC members such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

According to Baskan (2011a), the Syrian quagmire undermined Turkey's positive image as an impartial actor who could speak to all conflicting sides in the region. In addition, for many secular and liberal Arabs, Turkey's position on the Egyptian crisis and its support for the MB undermined its potential as a successful role model who could engage differing layers of society, from ultra-seculars to Islamists, into a peaceful democracy (Abdulla, 2014; Arab World Favors Turkey, May 18, 2010). Due to losing their reputation as impartial political actors who could talk to all sides of regional problems and having seen the stakes of being on the losing side, Turkey and Qatar intensified their coordination, which eventually drew them even much closer, politically and economically. Only time will tell how successful the Turkish-Qatari political alignment was in achieving their objectives throughout the Arab Spring.

Regional dynamics, especially the Arab Spring and its groundbreaking effects in the region, are very important in understanding the evolution of the Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 to 2013. However, these dynamics alone cannot give a comprehensive understanding unless they are corroborated with domestic dynamics. Thus, the next section examines the role of leadership,

identity politics and interests (political, strategic and economic), which are the key determinants of the nature and pace of relations between the two actors.

3.2. Domestic Dynamics

Several important domestic dynamics transformed the newly emerging relations between Ankara and Doha at the turn of the century into a political alignment before Sheikh Hamad abdicated power in the summer of 2013. On the Turkish side, the most important catalyst of Turkey's return to the Middle East was initiated in the aftermath of the capture of Ocalan, the leader of the separatist terrorist organization, i.e. PKK. With the PKK losing its military and logistical capabilities to a great extent, Ankara began to follow a less security-oriented foreign policy, which brought about a thaw in relations with Syria and later Iraq and Iran, whose cooperation was instrumental in abating the Kurdish separatism (Ismael & Aydin, 2003). Also, in addition to strengthening the Turkish civil society, the decline of the security-oriented policies initiated a process whereby Turkish domestic and international politics grew increasingly demilitarized. Gradually, the Turkish Armed Forces, known for its rigid secularism, lost its influence on the Turkish political scene, which in turn paved the way for a more multi-dimensional foreign policy with the Muslim Middle Eastern nations (Altunisik & Tur, 2005). In addition, the Turkish economy that plunged with 1999, and 2001 economic crises, began to show dramatic increases from 2002 onwards. For example, according to World Bank

Development Indicators (2014), while Turkish economy shrank 5.6% in 2001, it quickly picked up and registered a 6.1% growth in 2002 and a staggering 9.3% growth in 2004³³. Business associations such as TUSIAD³⁴, TUSKON³⁵ and MUSIAD³⁶ rushed to the Middle East in general and the Gulf in particular to gain new markets for Turkish products (Koroglu, 2014) and attract FDI in different sectors. Consequently, there was dramatic interest in the Middle East, both at the governmental and the civil society levels.

On the Qatari side, the economy has witnessed unprecedented growth rates. For example, according to World Bank (2014), while Qatar grew only 3.3% in 2001, this figure has soared to 19.2% in 2004 and 26.1% in 2006, one of the highest in the world. Economic development and the absence of other regional heavyweights, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, coincided with a visionary leadership in office, which allowed Qatar to venture into brave foreign policy initiatives to assert its regional and international presence. In terms of the regional security, Doha was under the US security umbrella with the relocation of the US Middle East Combat Air Operations Center from Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. In addition, a strong economy brought about a content public, which minimized the potential for domestic political distractors. Moreover, as mentioned before, similar to the Turkish zero-problems with neighbors policy, Doha resolved its border disputes with her

³³ For more detailed data please refer to: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG>

³⁴ TUSIAD: Turkish Industry and Business Association

³⁵ TUSKON: Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists

³⁶ MUSIAD: Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association

neighbors.

All of the domestic dynamics above, coupled with the regional political context described above, nurtured a conducive environment for both Turkey and Qatar to cooperate in almost all spheres. Additionally, the enthusiasm of leadership on both sides, the role of identity politics and mutual political, economic and strategic interests facilitated closer relations between Ankara and Doha, which will be covered next.

3.2.2. Leadership

Individual-level variables in foreign-policy making are as important as systemic and structural variables as it is the leadership of a country that gives meaning to external structural determinants (Hudson, 2005). This is especially valid in Turkey and, by extension, the Middle East where constraints on democratic institutions are still abundant (Sayari, 1996; Ozbudun, 2000). In this sense, the role of leadership has been an instrumental, if not the most instrumental, catalyst in the evolution of Turkish-Qatari relations (Cevikalp, 2013; Unal, 2014; Koroglu, 2014; Marufoglu, 2014; Bayoumi, 2014a). The leadership in both Ankara and Doha have been extremely powerful political figures from 2002 until 2013, both domestically and globally, given their strong leadership capabilities and ambitious foreign policy goals. Both the Turkish PM Erdogan and the Foreign Minister Davutoglu have been the most influential figures in Turkish foreign policy-making and execution in more than a decade. They shared a

similar regional and international foreign policy vision and goals with the Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa and the Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassim.

Kenneth Katzman, a Gulf expert at the Congressional Research Service, contend that “the Emir and Hamad bin Jassim have a lot of confidence, and they take a lot of risks (cited in Bollier, 2013). Also, according to Michael Stephens, an analyst at the Royal United Services Institute, the Emir and Hamad bin Jassim were together behind the foreign policy initiatives of Qatar and they are the foreign policy-makers who made Qatar “Qatar” (Bollier, 2013). Similar views were expressed by the Turkish Premier Erdogan about Hamad bin Jassim:

“... [is] a wise personality, a model leader and a man of broad vision, [who] has played an important role in the development of his country and the rise in his people's level of affluence... His contributions toward the resolution of problems in the region... and his diplomatic efforts during the Arab Spring, are worthy of commendation. I am also pleased by the momentum gained in Turkish-Qatari relations and by the fact that my close friend and I share the same vision when it comes to international affairs”.

(Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber al-Thani, 2012)

Quite analogous to the Emir and Foreign Minister (FM) Hamad bin Jassim, the PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu have been characterized by strong brinkmanship which sometimes creates contention with the West and the regional powers. However, their brinkmanship does not stem from an inherently anti-Western sentiment, rather the leadership on both sides excel at shrewd

tactics that enhance their regional popularity as well as increase the influence of their respective countries. According to Ozel (2009), Davutoglu's ambitious Turkish foreign policy objectives, which is quite similar to Qatar's, do not confront the West, but rather it is complementary to the Western foreign policy goals in the Middle East. Similar to the Emir and Hamad bin Jassim who capitalized on the power vacuum in the Arab Middle East and beyond, PM Erdogan and Foreign Minister Davutoglu share a vision wherein Turkey expands its influence and fills in the power vacuum in the region. According to Uslu (2009, para. 2).

“Both Davutoglu and Erdogan used identical themes and maximized Turkey's regional importance, as well as used the phrase "zero-problem policy" to characterize the country's relations with the Muslim world and the West. It appears that Erdogan's foreign policy statements are strongly influenced by Davutoglu.”

Leadership of both countries was an important dynamic that has augmented Turkish-Qatari relations. According to Ahmet Demirok³⁷, *“the constant coordination between the Turkish and Qatari leadership as well as their keenness to develop policies in line with their broader foreign policy visions motivated a closer relationship between the two actors”* (Demirok, May 22, 2014, personal communication). Similarly, Salem Bin Mubarak Al Shafi, Qatar's ambassador to Ankara observes that *“bilateral relations “[between Turkey and Qatar] gained momentum in the 2000s. After 2011, the bilateral relations reached a level of harmonization and coordination thanks to the wisdom of the two*

³⁷ His Excellency (HE) Ahmet Demirok, Turkish Ambassador to Doha, Qatar.

countries' leaderships." (Unal, 2014).

3.2.3. Identity Politics

For many, identity has occupied an important role in the formulation and evolution of the Turkish-Qatari relations (Gumus, 2013; Koroglu, 2014; Kuru, 2014; Abdulla, 2014; Marufoglu, 2014; Bayoumi, 2014; Sager, 2014; Al-Otaibi 2014). Two important factors stand out that lend support to this position. First, both the Turkish and the Qatari leaders have emphasized the role of socio-cultural affinities and historical ties in their cordial relations. For example, according to both HE Ahmet Demirok, Turkey's ambassador to Doha, and HE Salem Bin Mubarak Al Shafi, Qatar's ambassador to Ankara, at the root of this close bilateral relationship lie the historical ties and cultural affinities, which facilitated adopting convergent foreign policy principles and policies (Bayoumi 2014a; Unal, 2014). Similar views were expressed by PM Erdogan and the Emir Sheikh Hamad who have repeatedly emphasized the "deep-rooted common history stretching back centuries" on various occasions.

The second factor that speaks to the significance of identity in the relations is the coordinated support both leadership extended to the Palestinian cause and the MB elements throughout the Arab Spring. According to K. Ulrichsen³⁸ (personal interview, May 27, 2014), given its conservative, religious constituency on whom Erdogan depends, identity has played a crucial role for

³⁸ Dr. Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, Fellow for the Middle East, Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy, Houston, TX, USA.

Ankara's decision to focus on relations with Qatar and advocate the Palestinian cause and the MB. According to Kuru (2014) "Both Erdogan and the Emir seem to have supported Muslim Brothers in various Arab countries. Thus, their support to the "Arab Spring" was an example of identity politics, based on Islamism."

Koroglu (2014) contends that the Palestinian cause, especially after the Israeli War on Gaza in 2009, has drawn Erdogan and Sheikh Hamad closer. "Given their ummah-oriented foreign policy visions and goals", continues Koroglu, "they sought to improve the lives of Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere". Koroglu also maintains that, in addition to his vision of unity among the Muslim countries, Sheikh Hamad's pan-Arab views motivated Qatar to throw its support not only behind the Palestinians but also the MB. Somewhat different from Koroglu, Abdulla (2014) contends that although the Qatari Emir entertains pan-Arab views and this is reflected in Qatar's foreign policy, support for the MB and the resultant dispute between the GCC members is not pan-Arab. Similar to the Qatari Emir, for Erdogan, one of the most prominent motivations for supporting the Palestinian cause and the MB was to enhance Islamic solidarity and safeguard the ummah's interests (Marufoglu, 2014).

It can be argued that the two factors enumerated above are closely intertwined with personal beliefs of the leadership on both sides. For example, in an interview with the New York Times, Erdogan stated:

"Before anything else, I'm a Muslim. As a Muslim, I try to comply with the requirements of my religion. I have a responsibility to God, who created me, and I

try to fulfill that responsibility. But I try now very much to keep this away from my political life, to keep it private."

(Sontag, 2003)

Even though Erdogan claims that he tries to keep his beliefs away from politics, Yavuz (2009) maintains that "From Erdogan's perspective, a nation is a religious community and the people of Turkey constitute a nation by sharing Islam" (p.131). Erdogan's history of activism and political discourse under the National Outlook Movement³⁹ points to a connection between his deeply-rooted ideological stance and his foreign policy vision under the JDP governments. However, Erdogan has repeatedly denied its past and emphasized that his views have changed over time⁴⁰.

Similarly, Sheikh Hamad gave clues to the most instrumental component of his identity at his abdication message where he emphasized his care for the Arab unity: "We believe that the Arab world is one human body, one coherent structure, that draws its strength from all its constituent parts." According to Telhami (2013), Sheikh Hamad read the popular dynamics in the region aptly and established his country's foreign policy in favor of the Islamic and Arab identity, which showed itself in his support for the Palestinians and the MB. Al-Jazeera network assumed a vital role in materializing Sheikh Hamad's vision of

³⁹ National Outlook Movement, led by Necmeddin Erbakan, emerged in the 1970s as a reaction to the social and economic ills that were thought to be caused by the strictly secular and Westernized nature of the Turkish state. Promoting a program of cultural renewal, moral development, social justice and industrialization, the National Outlook stressed religious education and participation in politics. As an ardent student of this movement, Erdogan was and still is frequently blamed as an Islamist by the secular state establishments both in Turkey and the West.

⁴⁰ On many occasions, PM Erdogan declared that he "changed his National Outlook shirt".

representing the whole Islamic ummah by becoming a voice for the voiceless (Koroglu, 2014). Sheikh Hamad's political vision could have both influenced and been influenced by the MB elements that migrated to the Gulf in the 1960s, one of the most notable of whom is the Egyptian Islamic theologian Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, who is known for his passionate support for the MB governments in the Arab Spring countries. Sheikh Hamad's pan-Ummah stance on the Palestinian issue and Qatar's support for Hamas cannot be explained with mere pragmatism as siding with the people's choice on such issues has been much costlier than staying neutral.

International relations is an arena for rational, self-interested state actors who pursue policies to ascertain their survival in a chaotic political milieu. Thus, domestic dynamics, the role of leadership and the effects of identity politics *per se* fall short of providing a complete account of the evolution of Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 to 2013. The next part examines the place of interests in Turkish-Qatari relations within the specified time period.

3.2.4. Interests

Although identity is an important consideration in foreign policy-making in Ankara and Doha, their policies are not purely ideological. As stated in the foreign policy analysis of both countries above, Turkish and Qatari foreign policies are more pragmatic and conciliatory than they seem. According to Kamrava (2014) and Gulbrandsen (2010), for example, Qatari foreign policy is heavily influenced by the trade and investment opportunities. Similar views are

expressed about Turkish foreign policy making by Kirisci (2009), who argues that economic factors, other than anything else, have become extraordinarily important in shaping Turkish foreign policy. Along similar lines, Turkish and Qatari support for the Palestinian cause and the MB could be related to Ankara's and Doha's pragmatic calculations rather than purely ideological concerns.

According to this line of reasoning, Turkish and Qatari overtures to the Islamists seem to have two goals. First, winning the general public approval which is generally sympathetic to the Islamists. Although both actors seem not to have accomplished much by extending their support to Hamas, they have won the public opinion in general. However, given the political structures in the Middle East and the fact that general public opinion cannot necessarily be reflected in the politics due to a lack of democratic institutions, winning the public opinion have not brought about tangible outcomes for both actors. Second, Ankara and Doha projected to expand their regional influence greatly when/if Islamists would be on the winning side. However, this also seemed increasingly more difficult given the political picture of the Arab Spring countries and the forces that shape it. Based on such considerations, it can be argued that mutual political, strategic and economic interests, not necessarily purely ideological motivations, were more instrumental in establishing cordial relations between Ankara and Doha while their relations were deteriorating with other regional powers.

3.2.4.1. Political interests

Politically, Ankara viewed Doha as a safe gateway to the Gulf, an increasingly important sub-region that has gradually become the center of Arab politics and economics. According to Cevikalp (2013), the political power vacuum in the region and Qatar's active foreign policy rendered Doha a natural ally for Ankara, who needed partners in its active foreign policy in the region. Ankara not only anticipated to work more harmoniously with the pro-Western and forward thinking leadership in Doha, but also wanted to benefit from its political influence in the region. In addition, Ankara realized that Doha has established strong political connections across the region with both the governments and the opposition forces such as the MB (Marufoglu, 2014). These were all important assets for Ankara which could bring more influence and a web of constructive relations in the broader Middle East.

Parallel to Turkey's motivations, Qatar also had political interests in developing cordial relations with Ankara. Doha needed regional allies to pursue its regional foreign policy goals. Turkey, with its forward thinking, Sunni Muslim and pro-Western government that concurs on most regional issues with Doha, stood out as an ideal partner. Second, Turkey boasts one of the strongest armies in the NATO while Qatar needs other countries for its security. Turkey, a strong NATO member with vast human resources and economic potential, represented a strong counter-balance to the increasing Iranian influence in the region, both politically and militarily (Dirioz, 2013; Guney, 2013). Although Qatar deems Iran

as an important neighbor; she does not want to see Tehran enhance its regional political influence even further as this could bolster Iran's irredentist views and jeopardize the North Field, Qatar's economic lifeline.

Due to security concerns stemming from Iran's bolstered regional influence and its alleged meddling in regional affairs, especially provoking the Shiite population in their territories, some of the GCC members, Bahrain and Kuwait, wanted Turkey to play a role in extending the NATO's security umbrella over the GCC. To this end, the GCC announced Turkey as a strategic ally in 2008, which was wholeheartedly welcomed by Doha. In fact, on the occasion of the signing of the memorandum of understanding for accomplishing strategic partnership in all areas the Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad Bin Jassim stated that this "is a step on the way to a strategic partnership with Turkey" ("Gulf monarchies boost ties with Turkey", 2008).

Moreover, in a Der Spiegel interview, the Emir stated that "China is coming, India is coming and Russia is on its way, too... I don't know if America and Europe will still be leading..." (Windfuhr & Zand, 2009). Taken in the context of a potential decreased role for the Americans in the Gulf security in the future and the potential threats from neighboring countries, i.e. Iran and Saudi Arabia, developing close relations with Turkey could be Emir's strategy to diversify political and military allies. Finally, according to Eckart Woertz, an expert on Middle East food security, one of the most pressing security issues for Doha is food security (personal contact, April 14, 2013). In this regards, Guney (2013)

maintains that Turkey stands out as a reliable and geographically convenient partner for Qatar to secure food for its growing population.

3.2.4.2. Economic interests

Economy was probably the strongest motivation for the Turkish-Qatari relations, more so for Ankara. Although the relationship has gained a political alignment dimension throughout the Arab Spring, initially, the economic leg of this relationship was much stronger. For Ankara, Doha represents another lucrative Gulf market which can fuel the bustling Turkish economy. Trade volumes, tourism, FDIs and energy cooperation projects between Turkey and Qatar point to a gradually growing relationship. As Table 1 below shows, while the Turkish-Qatari trade volume was only around \$20 million in 2000, it hit an all-time record in 2008 reaching a staggering \$1,233 billion. Although Turkey's exports to Qatar has dwindled due to the post-economic crisis environment, Qatari exports to Turkey have witnessed a steady increase reaching to almost half a billion USD in 2012.

Tourism has emerged as another area where both actors could gain economic benefits. Although, according to Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2013), only 108 Qatari people visited Turkey in 2000, this figure has jumped to 1,210 in 2003, 1,955 people in 2005, 4,862 people in 2008, 7,661 people in 2011, 13,971 people in 2012 and almost 20,000 in 2013. In a similar trajectory, Qatari and Turkish FDI figures have seen a surge.

Table 1 Turkish-Qatari Trade Volumes from 2000-2013

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Turkish Exports to Qatar	9,963*	8,402	15,572	15,688	35,026	82,045	342,147
Qatari Exports to Turkey	11,313	5,779	10,659	8,310	17,727	50,725	66,411
Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Turkish Exports to Qatar	449,963	1,074,013	289,361 ⁴¹	162,549	188,138	257,329	244,077
Qatari Exports to Turkey	29,643	159,353	85,652	177,046	481,018	466,499	373,923
Source: Turkish Statistical Institute, 2014 *million \$							

According to Turkey's Ministry of Economy⁴², Turkish FDI stock in Qatar reached \$14 million in 2012, construction being the leading sector, while Qatari FDI in Turkey reached \$274 million in the same period. As of December 2013, 35 Turkish companies such as TAV, Yuksel, TEKFEN, Nurol, Samko, STFA and Yapi Merkezi, were involved in 108 projects in Qatar, which exceeded \$12.2 billion in total (Doha Bank, 2013). Until 2013, Turkish construction companies were involved in the building of the Hamad International Airport, the Education City, the Qatar National Convention Center, the North Road, the Salwa Road,

⁴¹ The dramatic decrease in Turkish exports in 2009 can be explained with the effects of global financial crisis on the Qatari construction sector, which heavily hit the Turkish steel and cement exports, two of the main export items.

⁴² For details see:

<http://www.economy.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=countriesandregions&country=QA®ion=4>

Port developments in Mesaieed and Ras Laffan, pipelines and GTL and LNG terminals (Factsheet on Turkey-Qatar Trade and Economic Relations, 2010).

Both Ankara and Doha view each other as valuable assets for cooperation in energy. Turkey is an energy-hungry economy that imports billions of dollars' worth of natural gas while Qatar is one of the leading natural gas exporters. According to the US Energy Information Administration data, Turkey has been in the list of countries with the highest energy demand increase. For example, Turkey, which is reliant on natural gas for almost half of its electricity production, imported 1.6 tcf of natural gas in 2012⁴³, which puts it in the list of top natural gas consumers in Europe. In this sense, access to sufficient and predictable gas supplies is a very important economic security issue for Turkey. To this end, Ankara has persistently tried to lower its heavy dependence on the Russian and Iranian natural gas. With Qatar becoming an important natural gas exporter, there emerged new avenues of cooperation in energy ("Turkey accelerates efforts", 2008).

Turkey's desire to become a major energy hub could be enhanced to a great extent if Qatari natural gas was transported to Turkey and then to the European markets via a pipeline. In this respect, in 2009, Qatar indicated interest in connecting to a projected pipeline that would run from Iran's South Pars Field to the Iranian mainland and onto Turkey (Babali, 2010). Such a pipeline would facilitate Turkey's goal to become an energy hub, increase economic

⁴³ Energy data on Turkey can be reached at: <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=tu>

interdependence among neighbors and open Qatari gas to the European markets (Acikel, 2011). To this end, during his visit to Turkey in 2009, Sheikh Hamad and President Gul "...had an exhaustive discussion on the pipelines, storage facilities, and refineries to be established... [in addition to]... the supply of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Qatar," (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2009).

Mutual economic transactions were not confined to trade volumes, FDI and cooperation in energy. Turkey pursued an active policy to organize fairs and other organizations in order to increase the amount of Turkish exports to Qatar and augment Turkey's visibility in the Qatari market. For example, a "Made in Turkey Fair" was organized in 2009 whereby a wide selection of Turkish products and over 200 Turkish firms met the Qatari consumers. Organized by Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, the 'Made in Turkey Exhibition' was the biggest Turkish products exhibition that has ever been organized abroad (Turkey Aims to Boost Trade with Qatar, 2009). These economic activities and the increasing visibility of Qatar, both internationally and in Turkey, attracted increasingly more Turkish people to Qatar, from small business owners to skilled workers to academics. This brought about plans to open a Turkish School in Doha as well as a Turkish Language Center.

Such close economic relations was hailed by both governments but also regarded as not satisfactory given the level of political relations. For example, in a seminar held after the first meeting of the Turkish-Qatari Business Council

(TQBC) in Istanbul in 2013, Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim, chairman of the Qatari Businessmen Association (QBA), stated that the QBA wants to enhance economic relations to the level of political relations (“Qatar, Turkey explore business opportunities”, 2013). To bring economic relations to the level of political relations, both the Qatari government, including the QBA, and the Turkish government advocated for Turkish companies to win as many contracts as possible as part of the 2022 World Cup investments.

For Doha, Turkey has stood out as a potentially lucrative market not only for natural gas exports but also for investments in multiple areas. Investments in different sectors expedited after the TQBC, whose aim is to enhance trade volume between the two countries, was formed in 2006. In the TQBC meeting held in Istanbul in 2009, chairman for Union of Chambers' and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, Hisarciklioglu stated that "There are many opportunities that will strengthen the cooperation between Turkey and Qatar. Turkey is a land of opportunities in terms of investments" (“Turkish-Qatari Business Council Meeting”, 2009). Similarly, Mubarak Al Shafi, Qatari ambassador to Ankara, stated that “We see Turkey as a very efficient country in terms of investment. There are many opportunities for Qatari investors in the energy, transportation, tourism and real estate sectors.” (Unal, 2014).

Within this framework, Al Wasaeel International Media Company, a subsidiary of the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), bought 25% share of the Turkish Turkuvaz Medya in 2008. The Barwa Group, one of the Qatari real

estate giants, partnered with the Turkish construction company Sinpas in 2011 to build the Ottoman Suites seaside residences in Istanbul. In 2012, Barwa group announced a \$500 million real estate investment project, from which Turkey was to get a considerable amount. Barwa's CEO Abdullah Abdulaziz Al Subaie stated that "Barwa Group plans to invest in residence and shopping mall projects in Turkey. Turkey's growing economy and promising real estate market is an investor magnet." ("Qatari real estate developer to expand in Turkey" 2013). Similarly, in 2011, Hassad Food, another subsidiary of the QIA, announced plans to buy farmland in Turkey to grow crops and raise livestock.

CHAPTER IV: Conclusion

Turkey's relationship with the Gulf Arab countries has evolved quite parallel to its relations with the Arab countries in the larger Middle East. Foreign policy orientations of Turkey and the Gulf countries, the trajectory of Turkey's relations with Israel, economic considerations as well as security concerns were important factors that shaped Turkey-Gulf Arab relations until 2002. Relations between Turkey and the GCC have witnessed unprecedented improvement from 2002 onwards, with the coming to power of the JDP. The Turkish Parliament's position vis-à-vis the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the convergence of opinion on security issues stemming from the sectarian frictions in Iraq prepared the ground for better Turkey-Gulf relations. Also, the threat of radical terrorism, the increasing Iranian influence in the region and Turkey's decisive pursuance of the EU membership were other dynamics that boosted GCC-Turkey relations in this period.

The dynamics above were also instrumental in shaping Turkish-Qatari relations given the fact that Qatar is a GCC member. In addition, there were other dynamics that facilitated closer Turkish-Qatari relations. Having similar foreign policy visions and utilizing similar tools to realize their visions, Ankara and Doha experienced a wide array of political convergences on crucial Middle Eastern and Gulf Arab issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Lebanese sectarian frictions, Iran's nuclear program and the Arab Spring. More

specifically, Turkey and Qatar enjoyed similar positions on the increasing influence of Islamists, i.e. the MB, throughout the Arab Spring. This was instrumental in their close political coordination throughout the Egyptian and the Syrian uprisings and the subsequent conflicts in these countries.

The turmoil unleashed by the Arab Spring expanded this political alignment and increased venues for cooperation between Turkey and Qatar. As a new geostrategic reality was taking root and the regional order was disintegrating, relations between Ankara and Doha reached remarkable levels. However, this came at the expense of neighborly relations with the other regional political actors. Although the democratically elected MB governments seemed to provide opportunities for Turkey and Qatar to expand their influence in the region, the Saudi-Emirati axis reversed the popular revolutions with counter-revolutions, as was the case in Egypt. For the Saudis and the Emiratis, the democratically elected MB governments posed an ontological threat to their survival. Similarly, Turkey's relations with neighboring Iran and Iraq, not to mention Syria, have worsened due to increasing sectarian nature of Turkish foreign policy.

On the domestic level, an increasingly multidimensional and less-security oriented foreign policy of both actors paved the way for close relations between Ankara and Doha. The unprecedented economic development both actors realized equipped Ankara and Doha with the financial means to pursue their ambitious policies. In addition, the leadership and their similar outlook on identity

politics, i.e. their firm support for the rising power of Islamists, expedited these relations. Finally and most importantly, pursuing a predominantly pragmatic rather than purely ideology-oriented foreign policy, both actors had a wide range of political, strategic and economic interests in establishing close relations, which transformed relations into political alignment, particularly throughout the Arab Spring.

In summation, the dynamics that motivated closer Turkey-Gulf relations demonstrate continuity. Security issues (Israeli-Palestinian conflict, sectarian conflict in Iraq, increasing Iranian influence, Iranian nuclear program) and economic concerns (need for markets, need for FDI) have shaped relations over the years. At some periods security-oriented policies dominated the relations, while during other periods economic motivations dominated. Additionally, ideational factors, such as the historical ties and socio-cultural affinities between Turkey and its Gulf Arab counterparts have sometimes facilitated the relations as well as caused confusion and suspicion on the Arab side, especially when the Turkish side approached Israel or seemed to support the Western position on regional issues.

Comparable to the dynamics above, the evolution of the Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 until 2013 were shaped predominantly by security concerns, pragmatic foreign policy approaches and economic and political interests. Additionally, ideational factors such as identity of decision-makers in the higher echelons of the state apparatus seems to have facilitated the abovementioned

political alignment between Ankara and Doha. In this regard, the current study validates the mostly disparate body of literature on Turkish-Qatari relations from 2002 to 2013 and points to a considerable degree of exceptionalism and detachedness the Turkish-Qatari relationship has demonstrated throughout the Arab Spring, compared to the trajectory of relations with other actors in the Middle East in general and the Gulf in particular. In this regard, one of the questions that future research can into is how possible it is for the GCC as an institution to establish a unified relationship with Turkey.

This study does not claim that there are unique reasons behind exceptionally closer relations between Turkey and Qatar within the specified period. Rather, the dynamics that shaped relations between Turkey and the Gulf Arab countries on the one hand and the dynamics that shaped relations between Turkey and Qatar on the other have been quite similar. This proposition is corroborated by the survey of the literature on the relations between Ankara and Doha and the data collected through interviews. In fact, these dynamics seemed to be identical until the Arab Spring surfaced deep seated concerns some GCC member states have regarding their regime survival. In this respect, what seems to have differentiated the Turkish-Qatari position, compared to some of the other Gulf countries, most notably Saudi Arabia and the UAE, is their stance on the Islamists and the Islamists' potential effect on the political status quo of the region. Future research could look into the specific reasons that made relations between the two actors exceptionally close.

How sustainable is the current level of the TR-QR relations? Whether or not the current trajectory of Turkey-Qatar relations is sustainable over the coming years is contingent upon a multitude of domestic and regional dynamics. Will the JDP party continue to be the dominant power in Turkish politics? What does the Islamic State mean for the regional political arena afflicted by sectarian conflict? How would potential economic problems in both or either of the countries affect relations? How will the MB elements react to increasing levels of state repression in the Arab Spring countries, especially Egypt? What direction will the friction between Qatar and its Gulf neighbors take? Given Turkey's and Qatar's political, strategic and economic interests and their need for regional allies in an unstable Middle East, it may not be far-fetched to anticipate that the relations will, at least, maintain its current level, if not intensify even further.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Interview Questions

MA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

MA Title: The Evolution of the Turkish-Qatari Relations from 2002 to 2013: Economic Interests, Political Aspirations and Identities

Main Research Question: How did the Turkish-Qatari relations evolve from 2002 to 2013?

I. **Domestic dynamics**

1. What **domestic events** shaped the Turkish-Qatari relations in this period?
2. What was the role of **leadership** in the evolution of the Turkish-Qatari relations in this period?
3. What was the role of **identity politics** in the Turkish-Qatari relations in this period?
 - i. To what extent do you think Turkish and Qatari leadership pursue identity politics in their foreign policy?
4. What was the role of **public perceptions** in the Turkish-Qatari relations in this period? To what extent is public perceptions is a driver of Turkish-Qatari relations?
5. What was the role of **interests** in the Turkish-Qatari relations in this period?
 - i. Political interests
 - ii. Strategic interests
 - iii. Economic interests

II. **External dynamics**

1. What **regional dynamics/events** affected the Turkish-Qatari relations in this period?
2. What **global dynamics/events** affected the Turkish-Qatari relations in this period?

III. **Arab Spring**

1. Some scholars suggest that the Turkish-Qatari political relations transformed into a **political alignment** since the onset of the Arab Spring. Do you agree or disagree?
 - i. If you disagreed, could you please explain why?
 - ii. If you agreed, what factors motivated this alignment?
 - a. What **domestic dynamics** motivated the Turkish-Qatari political alignment throughout the Arab Spring?
 - i. What was the role of Turkey's and Qatar's support for Muslim Brotherhood in the evolution of the political alignment in this period?
 - b. What **external dynamics** motivated the Turkish-Qatari political alignment throughout the Arab Spring?
2. What has the Arab Spring political alignment brought to Turkish-Qatari relations?

- IV. What are the **prospects of Turkish-Qatari political alignment**? Is it sustainable?

**Appendix B: Cultural Cooperation Agreement Between the Governments of
The Republic of Turkey and the Government of the State of Qatar, 1985**

**CULTURAL CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE OF QATAR**

The Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of the State of Qatar (hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties) desirous of strengthening the friendly ties existing between their two countries and of further promoting and developing their relations in the fields of culture, arts, science and technology, have agreed as follows :

ARTICLE 1

The Contracting Parties shall develop and facilitate the cultural and intellectual exchange between their two countries so as to encourage a better understanding of the culture of their respective countries by means of exchange of :

- a) Publications, films, radio and television programmes and works of art,
- b) University and other higher education professors, school teachers, scientists, researchers, medical doctors, technicians and students, granting them all possible facilities to accomplish their mission,
- c) Visits of journalists, writers, artists, musicians and folk dancers,
- d) Visits of athletic and sports teams,
- e) Any other exchanges as the Contracting Parties may agree upon.

ARTICLE 2

Each Contracting Party shall encourage at the universities and other institutions of higher education in its territory to create lecture courses on literature, history or other fields related to the culture of the other Party.

ARTICLE 3

Each Contracting Party shall facilitate and foster the establishment and development in its territory of cultural institutions of the other Party in accordance with applicable laws and regulations in force. The term "institutions" includes cultural institutes, libraries and other entities whose aim corresponds to the spirit and objectives of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 4

The Contracting Parties shall study the possibility of granting scholarships on reciprocal basis to enable the nationals of the other Party to pursue studies or researches and shall examine the methods and conditions under which degrees, diplomas and other certificates acquired in each Contracting Party may be recognized by the other Party for academic or professional purposes.

ARTICLE 5

The Contracting Parties shall consult each other, when necessary, with a view to preparing supplementary protocols necessary for the implementation of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 6

This Agreement shall be valid for a period of five years from the date of its entering into force. Upon the expiry of the said period its validity shall be automatically extended for further periods of one year unless either of the Contracting Parties advises the other Party in writing of its intention to terminate the Agreement six months prior to its expiry.

In case of termination, all programmes embarked upon before the notice of termination shall not be affected.

ARTICLE 7

This Agreement is subject to ratification and shall come into force on the date of exchange of instruments of ratification.

Done in Ankara, on the 11 th March 1985 in Turkish, Arabic and English languages, the three original copies being equally authentic. In case of controversy the English text shall prevail.

For The Government of
The Republic of Turkey

Vahit Halefoğlu
Minister Of Foreign Affairs

For The Government of
The State of Qatar

Ahmet Bin Seif Al-Thani
Minister Of State For Foreign Affairs

**Appendix C: Protocol on Consultation Between the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
State of Qatar, 1999**

**Protocol on Consultation Between the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar (hereinafter referred to as the "Parties");

INSPIRED by the desire to increase and further consolidate existing ties between the Parties;

REFLECTING the common aspiration of the Parties to develop friendship and cooperation;

AFFIRMING their conviction that the furthering of the friendly relations and cooperation between the Parties will contribute to international peace, security and economic development by means of creating mutual confidence, understanding and cooperation in international relations;

Have Agreed As Follows:

Article 1

The Parties hereby establish bilateral consultations at Senior Officials level between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar (hereinafter referred to as "the Consultations") to discuss bilateral relations between the two countries as well as regional and international issues of common interest and to exchange views and means of fostering and enhancing relations.

Article 2

The consultations may be held annually or more frequently as deemed necessary, alternately in Ankara and in Doha. The agenda and duration of each meeting will be determined through diplomatic channels.

Article 3

The outcome of the consultations shall not be made public, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Parties.

Article 4

The Parties may set up working groups or expert meetings in order to discuss specific areas of common interest. The results of these meetings shall be reported to the Senior Officials Meetings.

Article 5

The Protocol shall enter into force on the date of the signing and shall be valid for a period of 3 (three) years and shall automatically continue to be in force and so forth, unless either Party notifies the other in writing of its intention to terminate this Protocol 6 (six) months prior to its expiration.

Either Party may request in writing the revision or amendment of this Protocol. Any revision or amendment which has been agreed upon by the Parties shall come into force on such date as will be determined by the Parties.

Done in duplicate in Doha on 3rd April 1999, in Turkish, Arabic, and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the
MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
of the
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
Ugur Ergun
Ambassador

For the
MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
of the
STATE OF QATAR
Mohamad Nasr Hassan Al Nasr
Director
Department of International Organizations,
Conferences and Treaties Affairs

**Appendix D: Agreement of Security Cooperation Between the Government
of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of the State of Qatar, 2001**

18.02.2002
Sayı: 24675

**Agreement Of Security Cooperation Between
The Government Of The Republic Of Turkey and
The Government Of The State Of Qatar**

The Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of the State of Qatar, hereinafter referred to as the "two Parties".

Desiring to promote and strengthen the existing friendly relations and the cooperation between their two states;

Aware of the serious increase in criminal activities especially international smuggling of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the dangers created by international terrorism and organized crime, and financial crimes (money laundering) and counterfeiting of money, smuggling of artistic works and stolen precious objects; the smuggling of weapons, ammunitions and explosives and the falsification of documents;

Considering that, "The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961" as amended by the Protocol of 1972, "The Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971" and "The United Nations Convention on Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988", constitute the basis of national and international efforts to control drugs, psychotropic substances and chemicals used in their production;

Keen to establish the necessary mechanism between their competent institutions for cooperation which will be strengthened and promoted on the basis of equality, mutual benefit between them, and to initiate promptly their joint combat in accordance with their internal legislation as well as the international conventions in force;

Have agreed as follows:

**CHAPTER 1
COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY**

Article 1. The two Parties, due to the subjects contained in this Agreement, shall inform each other mutually about the identity of the other Party's citizens wanted in relation with illicit drugs and psychotropic substances trafficking, international organized terrorism, convicted for the crimes they have committed in their own territories and those suspected or investigated by the other Party and also about their involvement.

Article 2. The two Parties shall apply the relevant procedures in accordance with their national legislations for direct deportation to their homeland of those nationals of the other Party who have been convicted for any crime contained in this Agreement and then released but were decided to be deported.

18.02.2002

Sayı: 24675

Article 3. The Parties shall immediately transfer each other the information they obtained with regard to the initiatives and activities occurring either in their own territories or abroad and targeting the other Party.

Article 4. The relevant authorities of the Parties shall exchange information on recently and already discovered crimes and the methods used while committing such crimes and also the measures taken for the purpose of prevention of such crimes.

Article 5. Each Party may refuse to provide the assistance required by the other Party if such provision would jeopardize the sovereignty of its public security, current investigations in the territory of the Party demanded assistance or if such provision contradicts a court order or judgement.

Article 6. The two Parties shall mutually promote cooperation between their corresponding competent security and police organs; exchange visits, experiences, research, publication issued by each of them; promote cooperation in the area of training, qualification of the various police and security cadres. They shall promote and develop this cooperation between their security training and educational institutions and cooperate on specialist and in-service training of the personnel to combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, international terrorism and organized crime.

Article 7. Each Party shall inform the other of the conferences and security seminars it convenes so that any one of the two Parties can participate if it so desires.

CHAPTER 2

COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF FIGHTING AGAINST SMUGGLING OF NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES,

Article 8. The Parties shall cooperate in taking preventive measures for fighting the illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and revealing the methods used by smugglers.

Article 9. The Parties shall exchange information of the seized narcotic drugs, laboratory results and samples of investigation documents.

Article 10. The Parties shall take necessary measures at their border points in order to prevent illegal entrance of dangerous narcotic drugs into their country. Furthermore, they shall urgently exchange the information available or to be obtained with regard to the methods used for transportation, concealment and distribution of such substances and the identities of the smugglers of the above mentioned substances and of those carrying out activities in this connection and they shall make pre-notice with regard to inspection on and import-export of the chemicals used in production of narcotic drugs.

Article 11. If a laboratory producing narcotic drugs is revealed in the territory of either Party, the structure, working methods and technical features of that laboratory, together with photographs and all related information, will be sent to the other Party.

18.02.2002

Sayı: 24675

Article 12. The Parties shall report to each other about the measures adopted on the subject of fighting against narcotic drugs.

Furthermore, they shall exchange films, brochures, investigations and publications they have prepared with regard to the harms of these substances as well as works and searches warning the public about the subject.

Article 13. The two contracting Parties, in accordance with their national legislation and their international responsibilities, shall encourage the seizure of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the chemical substances used in their production.

Article 14. The two Parties shall take the necessary measures to pursue, liquidate and confiscate the revenue of the illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Article 15. The two Parties will control the substances used in the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and notify each other about the import and export of those substances.

CHAPTER THREE ORGANIZED CRIME

Article 16. The two Parties shall take joint measures to fight organized crime and specially money laundering, smuggling of cultural and natural possessions, valuable stones and mines, organs and tissues, counterfeiting of banknotes, securities and valuables, illicit trafficking in arms and ammunitions, radioactive, explosives, poisons and other hazardous materials and commissions.

Article 17. The joint measures shall be taken by exchanging information to fight and prevent organized crimes as illicit trafficking of arms and ammunition, radioactive, explosives, poisons and other dangerous materials aiming to harm the sovereignty and unity of the two states.

CHAPTER FOUR COOPERATION ON COUNTER TERRORISM

Article 18. The two Parties shall take effective measures in order to prevent preparation and carrying out of terrorist acts against the other Party's security and citizens within their boundaries.

18.02.2002

Sayı: 24675

Article 19. Cooperation against organized crime will cover the exchange of information regarding the activities and the modus operandi of terror organizations that harm the security and unity of any one of both Parties as well as the technical methods and tactics utilized in the fight against such organizations.

CHAPTER FIVE GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 20. A joint commission composed of the representatives of both Parties shall be established for follow-up of the cooperation and implementation of the agreement.

The Commission shall meet at least once annually, alternately in the Republic of Turkey and the State of Qatar.

Article 21. The Parties shall assign one of the personnel at their own Embassies as coordinator.

Article 22. The present agreement shall not hinder the implementation of the obligations included in the multilateral and bilateral agreements signed by the two Parties.

Article 23. Upon request, information and documents, which will be exchanged in accordance with the present agreement, shall be kept confidential and shall not be forwarded to a third party except with the approval of the sending Party.

Article 24. The present agreement shall stay in force for a period of one year and shall be automatically renewed for other similar periods unless either Party informs, through diplomatic channels, the other Party of its desire to terminate it, at least three months before the deadline of expiry of the agreement.

Article 25. This Agreement shall enter into force on the first day of the subsequent month following the second notification by the Parties that they have complied with the respective domestic requirements for its entry into force.

This Agreement is done in Ankara on the 25th day of December 2001, in two identical duplicate copies in the Turkish, Arabic and English languages, each text being equally authentic. In case of divergence on interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

FOR THE STATE OF QATAR

**Appendix E: Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of Turkey
and the Government of the State of Qatar on Cooperation in Military Fields
of Training, Technique and Science, 2007**

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE OF QATAR

**ON COOPERATION IN MILITARY FIELDS OF TRAINING,
TECHNIQUE AND SCIENCE**

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE OF QATAR ON COOPERATION IN MILITARY FIELDS OF TRAINING, TECHNIQUE AND SCIENCE

The Government of the Republic of Turkey and Government of State of Qatar hereinafter referred to as the "Parties"

Affirming their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter,

In realization of their mutual desire to enhance and consolidate their cooperation in the military and security fields on the basis of sovereignty of both sides,

Confirming their commitment to the Agreement on security cooperation concluded between them and signed in Ankara on 25/2/2001,

Desirous to pursue further cooperation between them in military fields of Training, Technique and Science,

Have agreed as follows:

**ARTICLE-I
PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Agreement is to commence military training and technical and scientific cooperation between the parties.

**ARTICLE-II
DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this Agreement, the following definitions shall have the meanings hereunder assigned to them:

1. "Sending State" shall mean the State sending personnel, material and equipment to the Receiving State for the purposes of implementing this Agreement;

2. "Receiving State" shall mean the State receiving personnel, material and equipment sent by the Sending State for the purposes of implement this Agreement.
3. "Guest Personnel" shall mean the military/civil officials of a Party located in the territory of the other Party, and bearing military identity cards issued by Armed Forces or Ministries of Defense of the two parties.
4. "Dependant" shall mean the spouse of the guest personnel or children of such guest military personnel depending on him or her for support.
5. "Senior Military/Civil officials" shall mean the most senior officials of the guest personnel who shall supervise the activities of the guest military/civil personnel sent by the other party within the scope of implementing this Agreement and bearing military identity cards issued by military forces or Ministry of Defense of the two parties.
6. "Superior/Leader" shall mean the commander of the headquarters or detachment or superior of the establishment where the military personnel are located.
7. "Official Duty" shall mean the duty to be determined according to this Agreement or other agreements to be concluded on the basis of the goals of this Agreement.
8. "Offenses Related to the Official Duty" shall mean the offenses arising from the acts or negligence during performance of the official duty considered inseparable from the official duty.
9. "Cooperation" shall mean activities undertaken for the purposes of implementing this Agreement.

ARTICLE-III SCOPE

This Agreement shall apply to the exchange of personnel, material, equipment, information and experience in the fields referred to in Article IV and in such other fields as may be determined by Agreements, Protocols, and other Technical Arrangements to be signed within the scope of implementing this Agreement.

**ARTICLE-IV
AREAS OF MILITARY COOPERATION**

The military cooperation between the two parties shall include following areas:

1. Military Training and Education.
2. Cooperation between Land Forces.
3. Cooperation between Naval Forces.
4. Cooperation between Air Forces.
5. Exchange of Military Monitors for Training.
6. Cooperation in the field of defense industry.
7. Military History, Military Archives, Military Publications and Museums.
8. Cooperation may cover other fields to be agreed on by the two Parties.

**ARTICLE-V
COMPETENT AUTHORITIES**

The competent authorities for the implementation of this Agreement:

On Turkish side : General Staff of the Republic of Turkey.

On Qatar side : General Staff of the State of Qatar.

**ARTICLE-VI
PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION**

1. The Parties shall determine the details of the implementation of this Agreement via Agreements, Protocols and other Technical Arrangements.
2. The Parties shall prepare annual revision for common activities for the implementation of this Agreement. Annual Implementation Plans regarding joint activities shall include the name and scope of activity, method, time and place of realization, executing institutions, financial matters and other details.
3. The implementation of this Agreement shall be realized by taking into consideration the mutual interests and needs of the parties on the principle of reciprocity.
4. Material, technical information and documents which the Parties shall exchange as donations or sell or co-produce in accordance with this Agreement or other agreements or protocols related to this Agreement, shall not be transferred to a third country without the prior consent of the other Party.

5. Cooperation between the Parties, shall be strengthened through reciprocal visits at all levels.

ARTICLE-VII PROTECTION OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

1. Each Party shall comply with the secrecy of the classified information obtained from the other Party.

2. The classified information shall not be transferred to governments, institutions and Individuals of a third country without the prior written consent of the two Parties.

3. The Receiving Party shall give a classification degree to the exchanged information equal to that given by the Sending Party and shall adopt the appropriate measures of protection.

4. Access to the classified information shall be restricted to authorized persons. Access to the classified information, shall be allowed to the designated authorities who shall use this classified information only for the official allowed purposes. The persons, who shall have access to the classified information, shall have the proper security clearance.

5. The responsibilities of the Parties regarding the protection and prevention of declassification of the exchanged classified information shall still continue after the termination of this Agreement, unless the two Parties agree otherwise.

6. The Parties shall respect patent rights, copyright and commercial secrets related to the areas of cooperation within the scope of this Agreement.

ARTICLE-VIII UNDERTAKINGS BY THE PARTIES UNDER OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

The provisions of this Agreement shall not affect the commitments of the parties originating from other International Agreements and shall not be used against interests, security and territorial integrity of the parties or other States.

**ARTICLE-IX
LEGAL ISSUES**

1. During their stay in the Receiving State, the guest personnel and their dependants of the Sending State shall observe the laws, rules and regulations of the Receiving State, including entry, residence and departure procedures. Jurisdiction shall also devolve to the Receiving State.
2. However, in areas where criminal jurisdiction is applicable, and if the sentence inconceivable in the legislations of the Sending State, the penal system in force included into the criminal legislations of both countries, or that which suits both of them, should overrule.
3. Activities of the guest personnel shall be terminated upon their violation of the laws of the Receiving State.

**ARTICLE-X
DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

1. Sending State reserves the right to apply the disciplinary provisions of its laws and its Military Service Act on the military personnel who are subject to the Military Service Act of the Sending State in the Receiving State territories. Senior military officials of the Sending State are vested with the power of imposing disciplinary measures on their personnel in accordance with the provisions of their own military disciplinary laws.
2. Guest military personnel shall be obliged to comply with all command orders and instructions of the armed forces of the Receiving State, and if the Receiving State requested the imposition of a disciplinary procedure, the Receiving State should be informed in writing and as quickly as possible on the measure being implemented.

**ARTICLE-XI
STATUS OF GUEST PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

1. Guest military personnel shall refrain from performing any kind of political and intelligence activities on the territories of the Receiving State.
2. Guest personnel and their dependants shall not be entitled to immunities or diplomatic privileges.

3. No mission shall be assigned to the guest personnel other than the ones specified in this Agreement or to be stated in the Agreements and Protocols to be signed in accordance with this Agreement.
4. The Sending State's military personnel shall wear their own uniform in their place of duty.
5. The Receiving State shall provide the equipment required for carrying out activities hereunder.

ARTICLE-XII UNFORSEEN STATUS

1. The Sending State reserves the rights to recall its personnel when deemed necessary. The Receiving State shall adopt all the necessary measures as soon as the request is received, except when there is a judicial sentence against personnel of the Sending State, in which case that personnel shall be withdrawn following the end of the execution of the judicial sentence.
2. In case a guest military personnel or a dependant dies, the Receiving State shall inform the Sending State, transport the body to the nearest international airport within its territory and apply all appropriate health protection measures until the delivery thereof.

ARTICLE-XIII MEDICAL SERVICES

1. The guest personnel and their dependants shall be entitled to medical care, first aid and dental care facilities at the Receiving State's military hospitals, against payment of the stated fees and in accordance with the available facilities at the Receiving State similar to those provided to the military personnel of the Receiving State and their dependants.
2. All kinds of the medical expenses of the guest military personnel and dependants, including medicines, and any long-term medical services as well as the expenses of transporting the patients to their home country, shall be borne by the Sending State.
3. All expenses related to the medical services provided by the civil institutions of the Receiving State must be borne by the guest personnel themselves.

**ARTICLE-XIV
FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1. Rights and financial obligations of the guest personnel assigned activities covered by this Agreement shall be borne by the Sending State.
2. The expenses of accommodation, boarding and transportation of the guest personnel shall be borne by the Sending State.
3. Guest personnel and their dependants shall be subject to the tax laws prevailing in the Receiving State during their stay within its territories.

**ARTICLE-XV
DAMAGE/LOSS AND INDEMNITIES**

1. Each Party shall compensate the other Party for damages caused to the latter's property (weapons/ammunition, material/equipment and fuel/oil etc.) resulting from acts of the personnel, whether deliberately or by negligence, while performing the duties assigned to them in accordance with this Agreement.
2. The legal legislations of the Receiving State shall be applied in the case of any loss or damage (caused deliberately or by negligence) to properties and goods in the Receiving State.
3. No indemnity shall be claimed by the Sending State for injury and death of its personnel during the execution of the duties assigned to them in the Receiving State in accordance with this Agreement, except in the case that investigations prove that the injury or death has been caused by a deliberate act.

**ARTICLE-XVI
PASSPORT AND IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES**

1. The guest personnel and their dependants shall be subject to the rules applicable to foreigners within the territory of the Receiving State.
2. When entering and leaving the country, the guest military personnel and their dependants shall be subject to the customs and immigration procedures foreseen in the Receiving State's law. However, the Receiving State shall facilitate – to the extent possible – the administrative formalities for them.

ARTICLE- XVII
DURATION AND TERMINATION

This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years and shall terminate when either Party sends a written notice of termination to the other Party 90 days in advance of the expiry date, otherwise the Agreement shall be automatically extended for successive one-year terms. In case of the expiry of this Agreement the Parties shall exert their utmost efforts to finalize the agreed works.

ARTICLE- XVIII
RATIFICATION AND ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date the last written notice is sent by either Party informing the other party of the fulfillment of all the required procedures as per domestic laws for its entry into force.

ARTICLE- XIX
SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

Should any controversy arise as to the implementation or interpretation of this Agreement, the Parties shall seek to settle the dispute within the shortest possible time through the formation of a Commission by the Parties or in any other way, which the Parties may agree upon, and if it was not possible to settle the dispute within (90) days after commencement of negotiations, either Party may terminate this Agreement upon a written notice of (90) days.

ARTICLE-XX
AMENDMENT AND REVISION

Either Party may propose amendments or revision of any of the provisions of this Agreement. Negotiations shall start within 30 days from receipt of a written proposal. If no result is reached, either Party may request to halting the negotiations.

**ARTICLE-XXI
TEXT AND SIGNATURE**

Done and signed in Ankara city on 23 / 05 / 2007 in duplicate copies, in Turkish, Arabic and English languages, each text being equally authentic. In case of dispute, the English text shall prevail.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE
OF QATAR**

SIGNATURE :

SIGNATURE :

NAME: General Yaşar BÜYÜKANIT

**NAME: Major General Hamad bin Ali
Al-Attiyah**

**TITLE: Commander of the Turkish
Armed Forces**

TITLE: Chief of Staff Qatar Armed Forces