Post-1974 Greek Foreign Policy

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RÉSUMÉ

La politique extérieure grecque après la chute du régime militaire peut être divisée en deux périodes: avant et après la défaite du communisme en Europe orientale et en Union Soviétique. Tant Karamanlis que Papandreou représentent la desaffiliation de l'identification de la Grèce d'après-guerre avec les politiques et les institutions de l'ouest. Karamanlis a initié un processus de multilatéralisme dans les Balkans communistes, alors que Papandreou a poursuivi des affiliations tiers-mondistes durant son premier mandat au pouvoir. Des relations plus étroites avec les pays de l'Union européenne ont obligé Papandreou à effectuer un virage complet de sa politique occidentale. Cependant l'échec de l'Union européenne à présenter un front uni face à la crise yougoslave, ainsi qu'à développer une politique étrangère et de sécurité a influencé le virage vers les États-Unis. Les relations de la Grèce avec ses voisins des Balkans se sont améliorées après une période de tension avec le FYROM et l'Albanie, mais la Turquie demeure la préoccupation de sécurité la plus urgente pour le gouvernement grec.

ABSTRACT

Greek foreign policy after the fall of the military regime can be classified within two periods, before and after the demise of communism in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Both Karamanlis and Papandreou represent a departure from Greece's post-war identification with western policies and institutions. The former initiated a process of multilateralism in the communist Balkans and the latter pursued third world affiliations throughout his first term in power. Closer relations with the EU obliged Papandreou to make an about face turn in his policy *vis-à-vis* the West, but the European Union's failure to face the Yugoslav crisis in unison and develop a common foreign and security policy accounts for Greece's swing towards the US. Greece's relations with its Balkan neighbours improved after a period of tension with FYROM and Albania, but Turkey remains the most pressing security consideration of the Greek government.

The conditions under which Greece's Foreign Policy was conducted after 1974 can be roughly classified into two periods a) 1974-1989 and b) 1989 - present. During the first period the country's position in the southern flank of NATO gave it a vital role in the defense of Western Europe from Soviet threats. Greece's and Turkey's geostrategic importance was mutually reinforcing so that any disruption of their strategic continuum diminished their individual value to western security.[1]

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Greece's deviation from its western orientation after 1981 was waged with a war of words rather than deeds. US compliance, *vis-à-vis* the Greek military regime and its subsequent inaction during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, opened the door to Andreas Papandreou's criticism of the West and his third-world experiment.

With the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and its satellites, the geostrategic value of the states that constituted NATO's southern flank appeared to diminish. In this new security environment the US expressed its unwillingness to maintain naval, air-force and monitoring bases in Greece. Consequently, PASOK's platform against US military presence lost its meaning. It was therefore not long before the implications of global changes in South Eastern Europe became obvious. With Russia out of power-politics and the European Union unable to play a decisive role in the bloody dissolution of Yugoslavia, the US remained the only credible force that could stabilize the volatile region.[2]

Papandreou's series of *volte-face* turns began with his stance *vis-à-vis* the EC during the second half of 1988. In Greece's second term in the rotating EC presidency, he declared his unqualified support for European federalism. By doing so he was in fact committing Greece to an EC credo that challenged the traditional dependence of the economy on the Greek state and required a significant trimming of the public sector.

Relations with the European Union are not classified under "foreign policy" in Greece but belong to a special category with a profound input on domestic developments. The benefit of membership and the structures of convergence have gradually created a realignment of political forces beyond the traditional right-left divide. With the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and especially with the rise of technocrats in PASOK, the new "modernisers" and "traditionalists" have cut across the membership of both major parties in parliament. The new divide was nowhere more obvious than in the cross-party voting that contributed to Costas Simitis' victory in the 1996 elections.

Restoration of democracy in Greece was largely due to a dramatic external event. The Turkish invasion of Cyprus on 23 July 1974, triggered the disintegration of the military regime and led to the return of Karamanlis as Prime Minister. Only one day after the second Turkish offensive in Cyprus, Greece withdrew from the military structure of NATO in protest against the alliance's lack of active concern over the invasion. Another serious development was Turkish claims over a portion of the Aegean territorial waters, seabed and airspace, extending well to the west of the major east Aegean islands. This convinced the Greek public that Turkey

would attempt to realize these claims by using its powerful Aegean army. According to Greek government evaluations, Turkish diplomacy, skilfully diverted international attention from the maintenance of its forces on Cyprus to a 'composite of directly and indirectly related and mutually reinforcing issues' in the Aegean.[3] A broad consensus was thus formed among Greeks of all political tendencies that the immediate security threat was no longer directed from Greece's northern neighbors but from Turkey.[4] Karamanlis' government took immediate measures leading to the fortification and the militarisation of the east Aegean islands.

Greece's withdrawal from NATO's military structure was more of a trial separation than a divorce as the country remained in the political arm of the Alliance. Karamanlis repeatedly rejected the non-alignment option and after the normalization of the internal situation, expressed his willingness to reenter the military structure of NATO. The Greek reintegration attempts were vetoed by Turkey, which having raised a claim over the reallocation of the Athens FIR, was, in effect, also demanding a reallocation of the operational control zones of the Aegean airspace. According to pre-1974 arrangements, NATO had ceded the military responsibility over the Aegean airspace (Greek and international) as well as the Aegean Sea (Greek and international sea waters) to Greek command. Any other arrangement would result in a situation where Greek territories (eastern Aegean islands) would be placed under Turkish protection.[5]

Negotiations for the country's re-entry proved long and arduous. Three reintegration plans with settlement proposals by the Supreme Commander Allied Forces Europe (SACEUR) General Haig (1978-1979) and a fourth one by his successor General Rogers (1980), were rejected. A solution was finally accepted in October 1980, with a provision allowing the reallocation question to be settled later within the Alliance.

Throughout his post-junta years as Prime Minister, Karamanlis accomplished the double feat of transforming himself into a liberal politician and emancipating his political camp from its past subservience towards the United States and NATO. No doubt it took a disaster of the Cypriot magnitude to shake up the Greek conservatives, (both in Greece and the United States) and an event of national significance to release their reaction against their traditional loyalties. Karamanlis, however, managed to temper such reactions into a constructive criticism of western insouciance that proved effective both through the American embargo of February 1975 - on weapons to Turkey - and the plethora of UN resolutions over Cyprus.[6]

Greece's role as an interlocutor among Balkan states suspicious of each other's motives, profited greatly from the July 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the Helsinki final act. Although the spirit of Helsinki ultimately contributed to the erosion of authoritarian regimes in Eastern Europe, in 1975 it appeared that the Communist *status quo* had been secured in exchange for "unenforceable promises on human rights".[7]

This allowed Communist Balkan leaders either to seek further emancipation from Soviet tutelage (Rumania) or to feel reassured that regional cooperation did not threaten their relations with Moscow (Bulgaria). In Helsinki, Karamanlis secured the agreement of Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia for an interbalkan meeting at the level of Deputy Ministers of Coordination and Planning.[8] Of the three, Rumania was traditionally the most positive toward political multilateralism and Bulgaria, the least.

Reluctant to enter a multilateral relationship, even on a limited basis, Sofia attempted to dilute the Balkan initiative by including other East European states. A renewed effort by Karamanlis to make the Summit Meetings a recurring event, was politely rebuffed by Bulgaria, reflecting Soviet fears that institutionalized Balkan cooperation could affect the cohesion of the Warsaw Pact. Belgrade took a middle position. Without discouraging multilateralism, Tito felt that it presupposed a settlement of differences between such states as Greece and Turkey, Bulgaria and Rumania, Yugoslavia and Albania. Of the two remaining Balkan states, Albania was adamant in its opposition to multilateral arrangements and Turkey agreed to participate once the meeting was determined. The interbalkan conference of Deputy Ministers of Planning took place in Athens between 26 January and 5 February 1976, with the participation of all Balkan states, except Albania.

Bulgaria and the Soviet Union began to change their views on Balkan multilateralism in 1978. Karamanlis'1979 visit to Moscow was therefore perfectly timed for a significant Greek-Soviet rapprochement and the approval of a follow-up on Balkan multilateralism, although this process was confined to fields of technical cooperation. After securing Zhivkov's agreement, Karamanlis proposed to the other Balkan leaders a conference of experts on telecommunication and transportation. The conference took place in Ankara on 26-29 November 1979. The outcome of the second conference on interbalkan cooperation made it clear that political questions could not be dealt within a South Eastern Europe divided into blocs. Karamanlis nevertheless was not discouraged from his plan of approaching political cooperation indirectly, through confidence building in non-political fields.

Full membership in the European Community, concluded in May 1979 after tortuous negotiations, was the hallmark of Karamanlis dogged pursuit of an "organic Greek presence in the West". Yet the domestic debate on the merits and liabilities of membership between 1975-81 focused on the ideological and even security aspects of being part of the European Community "rather than on the practical decisions needed to absorb the shock of accession and transform the institutional and administrative system into flexible and effective instruments capable of responding to EU policy requirements". The road to a sober evaluation of Greek membership was still a long way ahead. In the meantime Greece would undergo a new ideological phase under the Panhellenic Socialist Movement's (PASOK) advent to power.

During Papandreou's first tenure as Prime Minister, Greece sought to pursue a more "independent" foreign policy. Certain aspects of PASOK's policy, however, were veritable exercises in irrelevance. At a time when the non-aligned movement was in general decline, Papandreou chose to establish ties with essentially anti-Western neutrals of northern Africa and the Middle East. When the Reagan-Gorbachev tug of war on disarmament was beginning to bear positive results, he joined the leaders of five other states (Mexico, Argentina, Sweden, India, and Tanzania) to promote world denuclearization and continued to press for nuclear-free zones in the Balkans. Finally, Papandreou's reluctance to join with the United States and Western Europe in condemning the Soviet Union on issues such as the introduction of martial law in Poland and the downing of the KAL airliner, won his government points with Moscow but created ill-will in Washington, whose support was far more important for Greek security.

Stripped of its declaratory aspects, however, PASOK's policy toward the West did not differ widely from that of many Community members. Soon after his advent to power in 1981, Papandreou quietly abandoned his threat to withdraw from NATO and to hold a plebiscite to decide Greece's membership in the EC. Furthermore, instead of closing the US bases in Greece, he signed a new defense cooperation agreement in 1983. This agreement maintained the bases for five more years, although publicly he sought to portray the move as the beginning of their removal. Without any visible benefit for Greece, Papandreou consciously tried to create the impression of being the maverick of the Western alliance. It has often been claimed that the electoral support which Papandreou derived from his much publicized rebellious image justified the damage it wrecked on Greece's position in the West. Of course the justification was on Papandreou's terms.

PASOK reflected a resurgent isolationism in certain segments of society that sought to protect themselves from Western competition and the dislocations of adjustment posed by closer integration with Europe. Based on a parochial sense of moral superiority but acknowledging the economic power and technology of the West, PASOK opted for the fantasy of the "third way."[9]

Both major parties, PASOK and New Democracy, shared similar perspectives regarding the problems between Greece and Turkey. Unlike former Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis, who had conducted bilateral discussions with Turkish officials without success, Papandreou had insisted from the outset that any discussion with Turkey would be tantamount to sacrificing Greek security. The Davos meeting between Papandreou and (then) Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal in February 1988 therefore represented a significant deviation from PASOK's basic foreign policy stand. Almost a year earlier, a crisis caused by Turkey's decision to send a research vessel escorted by warships into the disputed continental shelf region - around the islands of Lesbos, Lemnos, Samothrace - had brought the two states close to an armed clash. The crisis was eventually defused, but it underscored the delicate state of relations between the two countries in the Aegean.

Furthermore, the enormous burden of defense spending on the Greek balance of payments and the long military service which detracted from the government's populist image, convinced Papandreou that he needed to reduce the prospect of a possible outbreak of war between Greece and Turkey. In the spring of 1988, however, Turkish Foreign Minister Mesut Yilmaz raised the question of the "Turkish" minority in Greek Thrace and dismissed any possibility of a Turkish military withdrawal from Cyprus before the two communities came to an agreement. Although some progress was made in developing a set of confidence-building measures regarding accident prevention in international waters of the Aegean, the "Davos spirit" gradually lost momentum and ground to a halt in 1989.

After winning the election of 1990, the New Democracy's main task was to curtail the huge internal and external deficits while improving Greece's image as a dependable member of the West. Both priorities were associated with Greece's two main foreign policy considerations: (1) the evolving shape of the European Community, that would determine Greece's economic future; and (2) the forms of Western collective defense cooperation which would assure its security.

Greece, along with other southern EC members, favored an acceleration of the Community's political union through a "deepening" of its institutions.[10] To the Greeks, broadening EU membership would blur the focus of the intergovernmental conference on political union and possibly diminish the prospects for economic and monetary union. In the field of security, Greek policymakers favored the absorption of the WEU by the EU over the long run.

The Maastricht Treaty on European Union, adopted in December 1991, was greeted with satisfaction in Athens and was ratified in the Greek parliament with the support of all parties except the Greek Communists. At Maastricht, Greece was also invited to become a member of the WEU. However, the EC's decision that Article 5 of the modified Treaty of Brussels - which provides a security guarantee in case of attack on members - should not be applied between member-states of NATO and the WEU, caused considerable irritation in Athens and diminished the importance of WEU membership from Greece's point of view.

At the same time, the WEU's decision to invalidate Article 5 in case of Greek-Turkish conflict renewed Greek interest in the United States and NATO as the most credible deterrents against threats to Greece's security. Greece considered the CSCE to be a useful forum for problem-solving in such areas as arms control and monitoring of human rights violations, but an unwieldy mechanism for collective security.

Relations with the United States improved as a result of the defense cooperation agreement in July 1990, which would regulate the operation of American bases and installations on Greek soil for the next eight years. Greece's naval support for the allied cause during the Gulf War aided the positive climate in Greek-American relations and Mitsotakis was the first Greek Prime Minister to visit Washington since 1964. Stressing the necessity of decisively opposing invaders, Greece also made its airspace and bases available to the Western coalition's forces. The island of Crete, in particular, was an important launching pad for US operations in the Gulf.

The collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe was not greeted with enthusiasm by many Balkan states. Albania's Stalinist regime initially resisted change, despite the mass exodus of its people to Greece and Italy. Serbia considered communism as the only tissue binding its different ethnic groups together. Rumania's National Salvation Front, which won 66 percent of the popular vote in the May 1990 elections, included a number of high-ranking former Communist Party officials, including President Iliescu. Bulgaria's Socialist Party, which secured 47 percent of the vote in the June 1990 elections, was actually a modified version of the old ruling party.[11]

Given the rigid structures of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union's fear that institutionalized Balkan cooperation could diminish bloc cohesion, Greece traditionally placed strong emphasis on bilateralism in its relations with the Balkans states. The first attempts at multilateral cooperation initiated by Premier Karamanlis, involved meetings of Balkan experts on such subjects as transport, communications, energy and commerce, and left political issues aside. Papandreou broadened the agenda to include political subjects by reviving an old Rumanian proposal for a regional nuclear-weapon free zone.[12]

With the change in the policy initiated by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the meeting of six Balkan foreign ministers in Belgrade in February 1988, dealing with confidence and security-building measures and minority questions, heralded a new period of inter-Balkan relations. Balkan foreign ministers met on several occasions since then to monitor progress on issues of common interest. The meeting of foreign ministers, held in Tirana during January 18-20, 1989, examined guidelines to govern relations between Balkan neighbors, while the meeting of experts in Bucharest, May 23-24, 1989, dealt with confidence and security-building measures.[13]

Greece's bilateral relations with Bulgaria were institutionalized with the signing of the "Declaration of Friendship, Good Neighborliness and Cooperation" in September 1986. The gradual reduction of Soviet influence in the region contributed to Bulgaria's fear of isolation, while Greece wanted to secure its northern flank in case of conflict with Turkey.[14] The advent of the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) to power, however, led to a shift in Bulgaria's policy toward Turkey. The October 1991 elections resulted in a narrow victory by the UDF over the Socialists and made the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF), the party representing the interests of the Turkish minority, the decisive factor in forming a government. This, along with US leverage over Bulgaria, increased Turkey's role in Bulgarian affairs.

The most sensitive issue between Greece and Bulgaria was the decision by the UDF government in January 1992 to recognize the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as an independent state with the name "Macedonia." Bulgarian Foreign Minister Stoyan Ganev made clear, however, that this recognition did not entail Bulgaria's recognition nor acceptance of the existence of a separate Macedonian nation. While the threat to Greek security posed by Skopje was negligible, the sensitivities of the inhabitants of Greek Macedonia to any challenge to their identity proved acute.

By August 1991 Yugoslavia had almost completely collapsed as an integral state. In the September 8, 1991, referendum in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Slavic majority voted overwhelmingly for independence, but the Albanian minority (26 percent of the total population) signaled its preference for becoming an autonomous republic, in April 1992. Greek public opinion only gradually became aware of the significance of these developments while Prime Minister Mitsotakis initially displayed flexibility on the question of the emerging state's name.[13] Greece's main concern was that the new state entity would not use the term "Macedonia" without signifying its geographic confines in order to exclude an implicit irredentist claim on its neighbors. Given the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's forty-five-year history of school indoctrination and maps that claim both Bulgarian and Greek Macedonia, the Greeks considered such qualifications to be essential. In an effort to block unqualified recognition of the Republic, Greek Foreign Minister Antonis Samaras recognized Slovenia and Croatia, on December 17, 1991, and adopted a common EC declaration establishing conditions for recognition, which included a ban on "territorial claims toward a neighboring Community State, hostile propaganda (and) the use of a denomination that implies territorial claims."[14]

Other Greek objections concerned the preamble of the Constitution to the founding manifesto of the People's Republic of Macedonia in 1944, which stressed "the demand to unite the whole of the Macedonian people around the claim for self-determination." In the meantime, the controversy over the terms of recognition hit the Greek media with full force. With a little help from both rightist and leftist politicians, public opinion was inflamed by fears that Skopje would monopolize the term "Macedonia." Although Mitsotakis privately adopted a moderate position, his precarious majority in parliament (two seats) reduced his room to maneuver. When he sacked Samaras and assumed the duties of foreign minister himself in April 1992, he was obliged by domestic pressure to maintain his predecessor's basic position. The subsequent saga of Greek foreign policy *vis-à-vis* FYROM has become a case study of how diplomacy fails when it is determined by domestic priorities. After many mishaps the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 signed by Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias, FYROM Minister Stevo Crvenkovski and Cyrus Vance (as a special envoy of the UN Secretary-General), although not a final agreement, cleared the way for a tacit relationship between the two states.

Ties between Greece and Albania were expanded through a cross-border trade agreement signed in April 1988. A year before, Greece renounced its old claims to southern Albania and terminated the state of war that had remained in force since World War II. After the thaw during the

Papandreou period, relations vacillated between carrot and stick politics. The fate of the Greek minority, which constituted the main obstacle in Greek-Albanian relations in the past, persisted as a contentious issue.[15]

The Albanian elections in March 1991 allowed the Socialists (formerly Communists) to retain power but the March 1992 elections gave the Democratic Party, headed by Sali Berisha, a clear mandate. The Greek minority was represented in the Albanian parliament by five deputies of the minority party "Omonia" in 1991, its deputies reduced to two in 1992 and its name changed under government pressure to "Union for Human Rights".

The deterioration of economic and social conditions in Albania have brought over three hundred thousand illegal immigrants to Greece. If this number is multiplied by five dependents on average that remained back home, it can be assumed that close to half of Albania's population is supported by the remittances of the illegal workers in Greece. In spite of this state of financial dependence, former President Berisha chose to strain relations in 1994 by imprisoning five members of the "Omonia" minority organization on shaky charges of conspiracy against the state. Although the "Omonia" group was granted amnesty through American intervention, mutual suspicions persisted.[16]

The May 1996 elections in Albania that gave Mr. Berisha's party 122 parliamentary seats and only 10 seats to the Socialists, provoked wide accusations of fraud confirmed by foreign observers. By 1997 the "Pyramides" scandal began to unfold leading the country into a major social upheaval. Shady financial companies promising investors interest that would double their capital, began to collapse depriving thousands from their hard-earned savings. Within months, Albania reverted to a state of anarchy as armed rebels captured villages and cities. When the government and the CSCE summoned foreign troops to maintain order, Greece was quick to take part in the operation. The elections of June 29 -July 6 1997 yielded 110 seats for the Socialists and their allies and 25 seats for the Democratic Party. Sali Berisha resigned from the Presidency and Fatos Nano became Prime Minister. The new government is faced with a collapsed economy and a breakdown in law and order but commands a two-thirds majority in parliament which allows it to validate a new constitution for Albania. Relations with Greece could not be more promising and the members of the new cabinet are hand-picked personalities from all the parties that coalesced with the Socialists.

With Rumania, Greece had no serious outstanding problems. Without common borders and old feuds to settle, the two states shared a cultural history that goes back to Ottoman times. After the overthrow of Ceausescu, Greece was one of the first states to aid Romania and continues to act as an intermediary between that state, the EU and NATO.

From the very beginning of the outbreak of the Yugoslavian crisis, Greece supported a form of confederation in Yugoslavia that would guarantee the rights of the country's constituent parts and prevent the subsequent strife that would destabilize the region. Drawing on its ties with Serbia, Greece tried on several occasions to act as a credible interlocutor between Serbia and the EU and sought to keep the lines of communication open. Greek mediation was instrumental in freeing Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic from Serbian captivity in Sarajevo during the spring of 1992 and in maintaining contact between Ibrahim Rugova (leader of the Albanian Kosovars) and the Serbian government in Belgrade throughout the latter part of 1992. In addition, Prime Minister Mitsotakis played a key role in brokering the Athens Agreement on Bosnia in May 1993.

The Bosnian settlement of November 21, 1995 in Dayton Ohio, may not have solved the question of Croat-Bosniac-Serb relations, but at least put a temporary stop to the bloody conflict among the three. The partial lifting of the embargo on Serbia and the prospects of reconstruction opened an entire vista of possibilities for Greek investment and commerce in the region.

Prompted by the precarious state of affairs in the Balkans, Prime Minister Mitsotakis sought to improve relations with Ankara throughout the winter of 1991-1992. His attempt to revive the Davos summit with Prime Minister Demirel and promote the conclusion of a non-aggression pact, failed to bear fruit because of the lack of progress on the Cyprus question. The reluctance of Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash to reach an agreement with his counterpart George Vassiliou on the basis of UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros-Ghali's "set of ideas" during meetings in New York in August and September 1992, suggested that the Turkish government was not prepared to make substantial concessions.

In March 1995, Greece raised its objections to Turkey's entry into the EU Customs Union agreement, with the understanding that the application of Cyprus for EU membership would be discussed after the intergovernmental meeting of 1997. Greece's move elicited no positive response from Ms. Tansu Ciller's government. A series of incidents between the two states that began in 1994 over Greece's right to extend its

territorial waters from six to twelve miles, reached a high point on 8 June 1995 when the Turkish parliament granted the government license to take whatever action necessary (including military) if Greece exercised its right (foreseen by the International Law of the Sea Convention) to extend its territorial waters.

In January 1996 a team of Turkish journalists removed a Greek flag from the barren islet of Imia that belongs to the Dodecanese complex and hoisted a Turkish one in its place. Greek soldiers replaced the Greek flag and the incident was deemed as innocuous by the Greek Foreign Minister Theodore Pangalos until Tansu Ciller herself layed an official claim on the islet and began a confrontation that almost led to war. The crisis was defused through US mediation but another yet negative item was added to the overburdened agenda of Greek- Turkish problems.

The Erbakan-Ciller government of July 1996 was too preoccupied with western criticism and opposition from the Turkish military, to resume pressure against Greece in the Aegean. It was however debited with the murder of three unarmed Greek Cypriots in a series of events that brought the island into the headlines. The fall of the Erbakan-Ciller government, a year after its formation, allowed a new Greek-Turkish rapprochement to materialize, engineered by American Foreign Minister M. Albright at the Madrid Summit Meeting of NATO in July 1997. An agreement signed by Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis and Turkish President Demirel, provided that the two sides would desist from coercion and initiatives that would affect each other's vital interests and would respect the provisions of international treaties. Some commentators considered this an exchange of Greece's right to extend its territorial waters with Turkey's withdrawal of the *casus belli*.

The most important issue that continues to preoccupy Greece's foreign policy and security considerations since the demise of its military dictatorship, are relations with Turkey. Throughout the seventies and eighties, tensions revolved mainly around the continental shelf question which brought the two countries close to war in 1987. Subsequent efforts by its two prime ministers to discover a *modus vivendi* based on the peaceful resolution of differences, foundered in 1989 on the European Union's negative reply to the Turkish application for membership. Deprived from a vital incentive to pursue a Greco-Turkish detente, Ozal and his successors reverted to a series of pressures and demands on the Aegean front that inevitably led to the 1996 crisis over a barren islet of the Dodecanese.

The Gulf War enhanced Turkey's strategic value in western perceptions and the collapse of the Soviet Union opened up prospects of renewed relations with the Turkish people of central Asia. Although confronted with a hostile eastern and southern neighborhood and a host of formidable domestic problems, Turkey is encouraged by western appreciation to pursue the policy of a regional power. The threat of military force has therefore become a standard Turkish bargaining chip in Cyprus and the Aegean.

Greece's strategy in the Balkans has been to improve relations with its northern neighbors and promote its stabilizing role in the region. At the same time Greece has kept its vigilance *vis-à-vis* Turkey, while seeking opportunities for minimizing tension and improving relations. The increasing decay of the Turkish parliamentary system has impeded efforts of reconciliation and western "even-handedness" has become a constant source of frustration for Greek policy makers.

NOTES

1. Thanos Veremis, "Greek Security: Issues and Politics", **Adelphi Paper** No. 179, London: The IISS, 1982.

2. Yannis Valinakis, "Greece's Security in the Post Cold War Era", **Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik-S394**, April 1994, Ebenhausen/ Isartal.

3. Van Coufoudakis, "Greco-Turkish Relations and the Greek Socialists: Ideology, Nationalism and Pragmatism", **Journal of Modern Greek Studies**, I, no. 2 (October 1983), p. 375.

4. Statements by Turkish high officials confirmed public fears. The Turkish Prime Minister stated on 30 July 1974 "The defence of the Aegean islands should be jointly undertaken by Greece and Turkey as allies within NATO". Half a year later on 4 April 1975, the Turkish Foreign Minister went even further: "Neither the government nor Turkish public opinion can accept that the Aegean belongs exclusively to Greece. Half the Aegean belongs to Turkey and the other half belongs to Greece. This has always been the official view".

5. A division of the operational control of the Aegean would make the coordination in times of war in such a restricted area difficult to achieve without violating –national airspace or sea waters. This would be against a basic Military Committee principle (36/2) which provides that 'countries retain their sovereignty and are, therefore, ultimately responsible for the defense and security of their own territories and space.'

6. T. Veremis, "Greece & NATO: Continuity and Change" in John Chipman (ed.), **NATO'S Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenges**, London: Routledge, 1988, p. 269-270. Theodore Couloumbis, **The United States, Greece and Turkey. The Troubled Alliance**, New York: Praeger, 1983, pp. 204-206.

7. James E. Goodby, "CSCE: The Diplomacy of Europe Whole and Free", **The Atlantic Council**, Washington DC., July 1990, p. 2.

8. C. Svolopoulos, **Elliniki politiki sta Valkania 1974-81**, Athens: Euroekdotiki, 1987, pp. 74-79.

9. Panayiotis Ioakimidis, "Contradictions between Policy and Performance" in Kevin Featherstone & Kostas Ifantis (eds.), **Greece in a Changing Europe**, Manchester University Press, 1996, p. 36.

10. Thanos Veremis, "Greece," in Douglas Stuart (ed.), **Politics and Security in the Southern Region of the Atlantic Alliance**, London: Macmillan, 1988, p. 137-139.

11. Jacques Delors, "European Integration and Security," **Survival**, March/April 1991, pp. 99-110. See also Robero Aliboni, ed., **Southern European Security in the 1990s**, London: Pinter Publishers, 1992.

12. "After strenuous diplomatic efforts, the Greeks were accepted as full members of the Western European Union at last year's summit. Yet, they were also asked to provide guarantees that they will never invoke some of the security provisions in this organization, a requirement at best contradictory and at worst downright insulting against a full EC member." Jonathan Eyal, "A Force for Good in a Cauldron of Turmoil," **The European** (September 3-6, 1992).

13. Geoffrey Pridham, "Political Parties and Elections in the New Eastern European Democracies: Comparisons with the Southern European Experience," **Yearbook 1990**, Athens: Hellenic Foundation for Defense and Foreign Policy, 1991, pp. 261-268.

14. Evangelos Kofos, "Greece and the Balkans in the '70s and the '80s," **Yearbook 1990**, Athens: Hellenic Foundation for Defense and Foreign Policy, 1991, pp. 217-220.

15. **Ibid.**, pp. 220-221.

16. F. Stephen Larrabee, "The Southern Periphery: Greece and Turkey," in **Problems of Balkan Security**, ed. Paul S. Shoup and George W. Hoffman, (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1990), p. 191: "Noteworthy in this regard has been the expansion of military ties, highlighted by the visit of Deputy Defense Minister and Chief of the Bulgarian General Staff, Atanas Semerdzhiev, to Athens in April 1988."

17. Duncan M. Perry, "Macedonia: A Balkan Problem and A European Dilemma", **RFE/RL Research Report** 1. No. 25 (June 19, 1992), p. 36.

18. Interview in **Eleftherotypia**, 19 November 1991.

19. Declaration on Yugoslavia, Extraodinary EPC Ministerial Meeting, Brussels, December 16, 1991, EPC Press Release, p. 129/91.

20. Reference in Yannis Valinakis, Greece's Balkan Policy and the Macedonian Issue (Ebenhausen: **Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik**, April 1992), 27. See also John Zametica, "The Yugoslav Conflict," **Adelphi Paper** No. 270 (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1992), 55, concerning an interview with IMRO leader Ljupe Georgievski expressing irredentism regarding Greek territory.

21. Estimates of the size of the Greek minority vary. The Albanians claim that there are only forty thousand, while Greek estimates range as high as 400 thousand. The number probably lies somewhere in between the two estimates. For a discussion of the minority issue, see Larabee, "Southern Periphery," p. 191; James Pettifer, "Albania's Way out of the shadows", **The World Today** (April 1991), pp. 55-57.

22. Nicos Ziogas, "Developments in Albania in 1994", **Southeast European Yearbook 1994-95**, ELIAMEP, 1995, p. 123.

23. Nicos Ziogas, "Albania", **Southeast Europe Factbook & Survey 1996-97**, ELIAMEP, 1997, pp. 13-14.