Greek Deterrence Strategy

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RÉSUMÉ

L'objectif principal de cet article est de présenter un profil de la pensée stratégique grecque actuelle. Une compréhension de la pensée stratégique grecque permettra d'expliquer le comportement stratégique de la Grèce en période de paix, de crise ou de guerre.

L'article fait le point sur la menace principale telle que perçue par les décideurs grecs, nommément la menace provenant de la Turquie. La pensée stratégique grecque inclut une vision intensive et extensive de cette menace. Basée sur cette perception, la Grèce a adopté une stratégie incluant un nombre d'éléments importants tels: la dissuasion, la dissuasion extensive, la réassurance, la crise, la stabilité, le contrôle des armes et alliances.

Finalement, cet article tente de démontrer comment les décideurs grecs s'efforcent de créer une stratégie de dissuasion crédible et stable.

ABSTRACT

The main objective of the following article is to present a profile of current Greek strategic thinking. An understanding of Greek strategic thinking may help explain Greek strategic behaviour in peace, crisis and war.

This article deals with the main threat perceived by Greek policy-makers; in other words, the threat from Turkey. Greek strategic thinking includes an intensive and extensive view of this Turkish threat. Given this perception, Greece has adopted a strategy which combines a number of important elements; for example, deterrence, extended deterrence, reassurance, crisis, stability, arms control and alliances.

Lastly, this article seeks to demonstrate how the Greek policy attempts to design a deterrence strategy that is both stable and credible.

The main objective of this article is to present a profile of current Greek strategic thinking.[1] This article attempts to capture what Greek officials and analysts seem to believe about their security problems and about the role of military power in managing their security problems. An understanding of Greek strategic thinking can help explain the strategic behaviour of the country in peace, crisis and war.

«Military strategy» has traditionally referred to the planning and employment of military resources to win major campaigns against a foe or to achieve victory in war itself.[2] The traditional emphasis in military victory is today insufficient.

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Military strategy should be viewed not only as a narrow guide to combat activities but as a guide to achieve security objectives in a broader sense.[3] As Basil Lidell Hart has noted, «it is essential to conduct war with constant regard to the peace you desire. This is the truth underlying Clausewitz definition of war as "a continuation of policy by other means"—the prolongation of that policy through the war into the subsequent peace must always be borne in mind.»[4] It follows that deterrence; i.e., the prevention of war, is directly related to military strategy.

Deterrence consists of an effort by one actor to persuade an opponent not to take action against his interests by convincing the opponent that the costs and risks of doing so will outweigh the benefits he hopes to secure.[5] Under certain conditions, the mounting of permanently mobilized conventional forces in peacetime could deter attack by even a stronger enemy power (viz. asymmetrical conventional deterrence).[6] This insight has influenced Greek strategic thinking.

Military strategy is, of course, a component of «grand strategy». Grand strategy represents a still more inclusive notion that incorporates economic, psychological, demographic and other factors upon which security is based in various ways.[7] Thus, «grand strategy considers all the resources (domestic and international) at the disposal of a nation (not just military ones), and it attempts to array them effectively to achieve security in both peace and war».[8] This article is not concerned with «grand strategy» but more narrowly with military strategy and its connection with political objectives such as deterrence.

A military strat gy must identify threats and devise remedies for those threats. In this article we will first examine the Greek perceptions of threat and the asymmetries that magnify these perceptions. We will then discuss the remedies that Greece has devised to respond to the perceived threats (viz. strategy of deterrence).

Since military strategies often develop in haphazard ways and are not fully fleshed out right from the beginning, they need to be inferred from a variety of sources. To develop this profile we have relied on four types of sources: first, official declarations, speeches and documents; second, studies on Greek defense policy written by civilian and military analysts and decision-makers; third, study of the diplomatic and military practice (especially in crisis); and fourth, from the examination of the evolution of the force posture of the Greek armed forces. While discrepancies between military strategy and force posture are possible, some permanent features can provide insight into Greek strategic thinking.

Last, a word of caution is in order. For the purposes of presentation, we may have imposed more coherence on Greek strategy than is actually the case. Yet, there is a remarkable degree of continuity in Greek military strategy since 1974.[9] Discussion of these elements of continuity is particularly useful in understanding Greek strategic thinking.

This article is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the threat perceived by the Greek policy-makers, in other words, the threat from Turkey. The second part discusses the strategy that Greece has devised to deal with the Turkish threat.

I. Threat Analysis

1. Regional Instability

The collapse of the Soviet Empire and the end of the Cold War have been heralded as a harbinger for improved stability and peace throughout the world. A well-quoted article by Francis Fukuyama has announced the «end of history» and the victory of the peaceful virtues of liberal democracies.[10] Others have argued that war has become obsolete.[11]

Yet, the breakdown of the post-World War II bipolar system has actually increased instability. The erosion of the bipolar order has generated suitable conditions for the emergence of nationalism. Moreover, there is no evidence of decline in the use of force in the international system. Indeed, armed conflicts have increased in some areas; i.e., the Gulf War, the Balkan war and the war in Central Asia/Caucasus.[12] In fact, Greece and its rival Turkey are both located in the centre of what became the post Cold War triangle of instability: the Middle East, Balkans, and Central Asia.

2. Challenge from the Dominant Regional Power

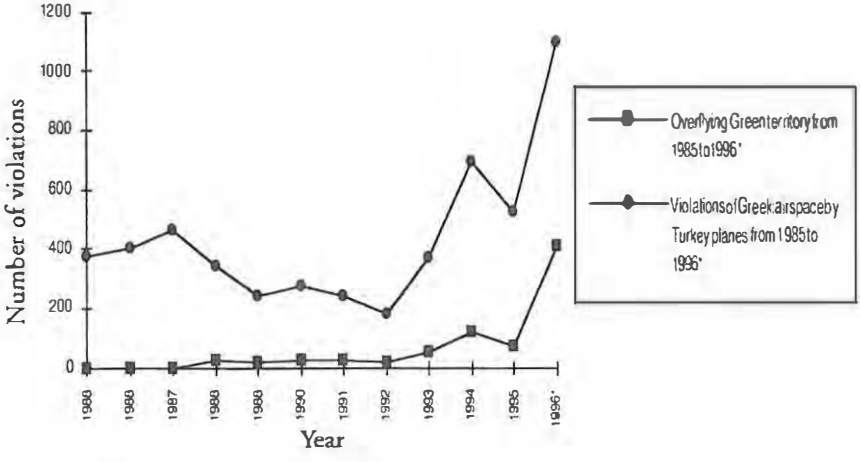
In response to perceived changes in Turkish regional and domestic environments since the early 1970s, the Turkish government has adopted a revisionist foreign policy. Its policy seeks to alter the regional balance of power in its favour, and to ensure a more important role for Turkey as a regional power within the Western Alliance and in the Eastern Mediterranean.[13]

In the eyes of Greek political analysts, this policy has assumed the dual form of a persistent challenge to the territorial status quo governing the Aegean (continental shelf, sea islands and airspace), coupled with a continuous call for renegotiation of the status quo through bilateral agreements. With the exception of the intractable Cyprus problem, these issues have dominated the agenda of Greek-Turkish relations over the past twenty years.[14]

Greek strategic analysts point to the current tension in Greek-Turkish relations, centering on the Muslim minority in Western Thrace as an indication that human rights—an issue with great and ever-growing international appeal at the moment—have been added to the panoply of resources used by Turkey to promote its broader revisionist policy in the region.[15]

This conceptualization of Greek-Turkish relations reflects two basic Greek policy premises. The first premise is that Greece has considered itself a status quo country since the end of World War II. The second is that since the early and mid-1970s a number of Turkish signals, statements and actions have lent themselves to an interpretation implicitly or explicitly prejudicial to Greek security interests. These include: a) statements by leading Turkish political figures concerning Greece or Greek-Turkish relations, that are considered threatening to Greek interests, b) Turkish diplomatic initiatives designed to undermine Greek sovereignty in the Aegean and in Western Thrace; and c) Turkish military actions regarded as having negative security implications for Greece. Examples of such actions include the overall deployment of the Turkish armed forces, as well as the creation in 1975 of a new Turkish army corps (the Aegean Army), which is equipped with a large number of landing craft, is excluded from NATO command, and is positioned primarily along Turkey's Aegean littoral.[16] Turkey, also, challenges Greece's national air space, backing up its claims by frequent and at time massive and provocative violations of the Greek air space by its military aircraft (see Table 1).

Table 1
Violations of the Greek Air Space



*It includes data from the first six months of 1996.

Data: Ministry of Defense quoted in *Kathimerini* (Daily), 12 July 1996, and *Ta Nea* (Daily), 12 July 1996.

Recently Turkey has escalated its claims and has intensified its coercion and intimidation: a) on January 31, 1996 Turkey used military force to occupy a Greek islet, named Imia. For the first time ever, Turkey is questioning Greek sovereignty over a portion of its territory, namely Imia, and a large number (approximately 100) of Aegean islets,[17] b) in June 1995 the Turkish parliament passed a resolution authorizing the Turkish government to use military force, should Greece exercise its legitimate rights concerning the extension of territorial waters from six to twelve miles (*casus belli*),[18] c) it has intensified violations of Greek air space and has increased the provocation by overflying Greek territory and thereby increasing the right of inadverted escalation (see Table 1).

Based on these threatening signals and the recent historical experience—the 1974 Turkish invasion in Cyprus—Greek strategic analysts think that Turkey is likely to adopt *fait accompli* diplomacy against Greece when the following two preconditions are fulfilled: a) the opening of the «window of vulnerability» for Greece, that is, when Greece will not be capable or willing to resist Turkish encroachment, and b) the opening of the «window of opportunity» for Turkey, that is, when it is unlikely that major powers with interests in the region will oppose a Turkish invasion.

Greek strategic analysts expect the Turkish military threat to be manifested in Cyprus (e.g. a Turkish attempt to occupy the rest of the island or to extend the existing occupation zone), the Aegean (e.g. an attempt to occupy Greece's easternmost islands) and in Thrace (e.g. an attempt to «liberate» the Muslim minority there).

Related to Greek concerns regarding Turkey's perceived role as a revisionist power in the region is the view currently held in Athens that Turkey has emerged as a beneficiary of recent international developments.[19] Most frequently mentioned in this context are the second Gulf War, the breakdown of former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union that have allowed Turkey to penetrate the Balkans and Central Asia and the transfer of allied weapons from the central front to the flanks. All of these events have adversely affected Greek interests. Such developments have enhanced Turkey's role as the dominant regional power and for as long as Greek-Turkish problems remain unresolved, they have commensurately enhanced Greece's sense of vulnerability. In addition, the balance of power in the eastern Mediterranean is rapidly changing in Turkey's favour as demonstrated in four key dimensions of power: economic resources devoted to defense, armaments, military-industrial base, infusion of modern military technology. More specifically, in the early 1990s Turkey started to implement an ambitious and wide ranging modernization and restructuring program for its armed forces, while its indigenous military-industrial base was enlarged and can now build fighters (e.g. F-16s) and transport aircraft, armoured fighting vehicles, frigates and electronic equipment. Efforts are currently being made to develop production capacity for tanks, missiles and helicopters.[20]

In short, current Greek thinking includes an intensive and extensive view of the Turkish threat. The perception of Turkish objectives and their implications for Greece cuts across party lines and forms part of a notable foreign policy consensus on the subject. This is quite remarkable for a country in which partisan differences have long been reflected in sharply divergent party orientations in foreign policy matters.

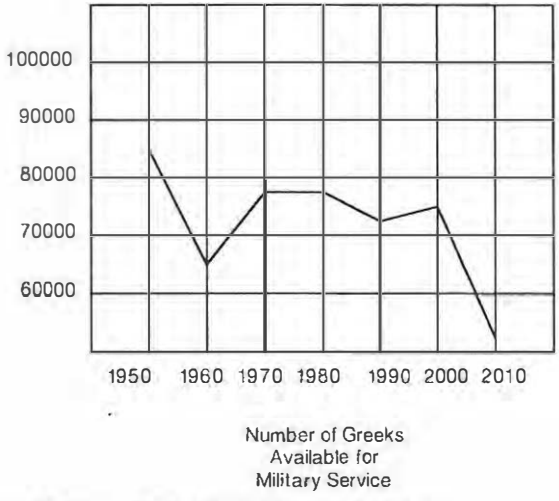
3. Asymmetries

Threat, of course, is not perceived in a vacuum. Greek strategic thinking has been influenced by four important asymmetries: Greece's small population compared to that of Turkey, Greece's geography, Greece's comparatively meager economic resources and great power interests in the region. A brief review of each of these basic asymmetries follows.

Population

There are only ten million Greeks in Greece, with limited human military and economic resources. In contrast, Turkey's population is approximately 60 million. It is projected that by the turn of the century, 11 million Greeks will have to face approximately 70 million Turks.[21] Greece is, therefore, vastly outnumbered in terms of sheer manpower. Furthermore, Turkey has been able to maintain a huge standing army of approximately 650,000 (excluding paramilitary forces). This army is potentially capable of making a swift transition to attack from its peacetime position. This army has a vast numerical superiority over its Greek counterpart. Furthermore, long term demographic trends are disturbing. Table 2 shows the drastic fall-off of conscripts in the first decade of the twenty-first century. (To alleviate the shortage of conscript availability, Greece has been recruiting gradually more and more long-term service volunteers).

Table 2
Number of Greeks Available for Military Service: 1955 - 2015



Source: Ministry of Defense, *Ta Nea (Daily)*, December 13, 1994.

These manpower limitations make Greece vulnerable on the one hand to surprise attack and, on the other, to extended strategies for attrition. Greek strategic analysts have concluded that one way to contain a surprise Turkish attack is to maintain a large standing force in peacetime.

Geography

The geographical configuration of a conflict region helps to determine defense requirements. For example, certain characteristics of space, topography, vegetation, hydrography and surface geology impede the movement of military forces, while other characteristics are conducive to attack. Greek geography hardly lends itself to defensive arrangements. This absence of strategic depth in the east (and the north) and the tremendous relative length of the border have plagued Greek strategists for a long time. Geography creates problems for Greece in all possible theatres of war with Turkey. Cyprus lies 600 miles away from Greece, but only 60 miles from Turkey. Furthermore, major Greek islands are very close to the Turkish mainland. Important Greek population centres and military installations are within Turkish artillery range.

In particular, the following characteristics of Greek territory have a direct impact on the formulation of Greek military strategy:

•«The long boarder line (1000 km from the north) which requires appropriate organization and deployment of increased numbers of forces in order to effectively cover the national territory.

• The lack of depth for effective defense, requiring forward defense in the boarder line.

• The inadequacy of a road and rail network due to geographical constraints, requiring shelf-sufficiency of the forward commands.

• The extended beaches, which provide great possibilities for infiltration, dictating the need for establishment of an appropriate surveillance system.»[22]

To complicate matters, air defense of the Greek islands is extremely difficult because of the short warning time available for the interception of penetrating enemy aircraft. Lastly, Greece's land border with Turkey in Thrace is far away from the main Greek strategic centres and access to that border is limited by the existing transportation network. In short, the geography of the Greek-Turkish land and sea borders do not give Greece the advantage of interior lines, that is, they do not provide Greece with the capacity to concentrate forces rapidly on the one front and then shift them to another.

Economic Asymmetries

Given the sheer size of Turkey, Greece has always faced a disparity of economic resources. Until recently, Greeks believed that they might compensate for this

disparity by generating a more advanced economy. Their hope has diminished over the last fifteen years due to Turkey's rapid economic growth and Greece's economic woes.

Currently the Greek GNP is approximately 50% smaller than the Turkish one (see Table 3). The smaller the GNP, the fewer the resources devoted to the output of military goods even if the proportion of productive capacity so allocated is very high. Uneven economic growth since 1980 has had crucial long-term impact upon the relative military power of Greece and Turkey. It has helped Turkey to swing the balance of power in its favour. The shift in military power balance has followed the alteration in the productive balances between the two countries (see Table 3).

Table 3
Ratio of Greek to Turkish GNP
and Ratio of Greek to Turkish Military Expenditures

1980	0.77	1.01
1985	0.65	1.07
1986	0.62	0.85
1987	0.56	0.99
1988	0.58	1.07
1989	0.60	0.87
1990	0.54	0.75
1991	0.56	0.67
1992	0.53	0.66
1993	0.48	0.58
1994	0.52	0.61
1995	0.49	0.61

Source: NATO and DECD data quoted in B. Stavrinos, «Comparative Analysis of Greece's and Turkey's Military Expenditures», Athens, Institute of International Relations, May 1996, p.21-22 (Mimeo, in Greek).

Great Power Interests

External actors have a substantial impact on Greek-Turkish relations in various direct and indirect ways. The most important external actor is the US, which has had a strong interest in both sides. It seems, however, that Turkey is systematically considered more important than Greece in the American order of priorities.[23]

The American involvement is therefore asymmetrical; in other words, the US tilts in favour of Turkey in almost every crisis. Greece's partners in the European Union try to approach the Greek-Turkish conflict from a position of «neutrality» since they have interests in both countries. As a rule, they pressure Greece to delink the issue of EU-Turkish relations from Greek security concerns (e.g. the recent pressure upon Greece to agree to the customs union of Turkey with the EU). In short, great power interests in the area have conditioned Greek security concerns and have defined the international constraints of the country.

II. Greek Strategy

Greece's strategy in handling the Turkish threat includes a number of important elements. The most important among these elements are alliances, deterrence, strategic coupling with Cyprus, reassurance, crisis stability and arms control.

1. The Limits of Reliance on External Support

After the end of the World War II, Greece dealt with its security concerns solely within the Western Alliance.[24] The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and the ensuing Greek-Turkish confrontation caused Athens to reconsider its traditional defense posture. At the root of this change in policy lay NATO's essential inaction during the Greek-Turkish crises and the perception, deeply held among Greek civilian and military elites, that such inaction would leave the country dangerously exposed to a threat from the East in case of a renewed conflict with Turkey.[25]

This realization led to a significant restructuring of Greek defense and foreign policy options. At the level of foreign policy, after 1974, Greece gradually sought to diminish its erstwhile one-sided dependence on the United States. Greece slowly turned to Europe for support of its foreign and security policies. The European orientation was consolidated upon Greece's entry into the European Community in 1981. In the words of Constantine Karamanlis, considered by many the chief architect of the 1974 Greek «shift toward Europe», membership in the European Economic Community (EEC) meant that «Greece, instead of remaining small and isolated, at the margins of international life, will become a part of the decision-making centers that have an impact on our fortune.»[26]

The tilt toward Europe could not in itself solve the country's defense and security problems. But even in the absence of concrete security guarantees, the Greek presence in European institutions (e.g., EU, Western European Union [WEU]) has been viewed as an asset to the extent in which it increases the diplomatic costs and risks associated with an attack against the country.

Yet, the humiliation of the 1974 crisis clearly demonstrated the limits of reliance on external support. The perceived Turkish threat consequently undermined the post-World War II Greek premise of relying on allies and contributed to the Greek search for a more autonomous defense policy. Thus, the underlying premise of post-1974 Greek defense policy became the principle that the country had to develop a more autonomous security policy, drawing upon its indigenous resources to deal with the Turkish threat. In international relations theory, this principle is commonly referred to as a strategy of internal balancing.[27] Hence, the country replaced external balancing (the expectation of allied reinforcements) with internal balancing (mobilization of the country's own resources).

2. The Strategy of Deterrence

As a status quo country, Greece wants only to deter its opponents. Thus, the broad purpose of the Greek strategic posture is the deterrence of Turkish aggression.

Deterrence is a policy that seeks to persuade Turkey that the costs of using military force against Greece outweigh the benefits. More specifically, the Greek policy of deterrence seeks to present Turkey with a credible threat to exact a very high price in the event of aggression. This price can take many forms, including denial of battlefield objectives, damage to military forces and other national assets through retaliation.

The credibility of the deterrent threat depends upon Greece being perceived as possessing (a) the military capability to inflict a burdensome cost on Turkey and (b) the will or the intention to use that capability as and when necessary.

Deterrence is stronger when a state invests in cultivating its military might. In line with this principle, the post-1974 Greek governments, as a rule, invest on defense. Indeed, compared to any other NATO country Greece currently spends the highest percentage of its gross domestic product (4% - 5%) for defense purposes.[28] Another dimension of resource allocation which must be taken into account is the share of manpower devoted to defense. Greece allots more manpower to its defense—approximately 5% percent of the labor force—than any other NATO country.[29]

The quest for quantitative symmetry with Turkey, however, has inherent limitations. As then Greek Premier Andreas Papandreou mentioned in Parliament in January 1987, «our competition with Turkey along the quantitative dimension leads nowhere. Hence, emphasis should be given primarily to the qualitative improvement of our defense system in its entirety.»[30] In fact, Greece seeks to achieve qualitative superiority over Turkey. Towards this end, the Greek

governments have taken measures which, *inter alia*, include: intensification of military training; emphasis on combined arms operations; use of capital-intensive systems of warfare; maintenance of a relatively modern arsenal; increased readiness and sustainability; use of force multipliers such as Command, Control, Communication and Intelligence (C3I) systems and reduction of turnaround time for sorties.[31]

Deterrence threats work better when accompanied by the military capacity to defend or to impose great costs on potential attackers through punishment. In other terms, deterrence threats work better when the side threatening holds the military advantage or is able to maintain a sufficient balance of power. It is becoming increasingly difficult for Greece to maintain a sufficient balance of power. Turkey, after the end of the Cold War, initiated a huge rearmament program designed to change both the quantitative and the qualitative balance of power in its favour. Greek defense planners, therefore, worry that deterrence may fail if Turkey calculates Greece's weakness to maintain the balance and takes advantage of this weakness. The Greek policy remedy is to strengthen defense. In line with this analysis, the current Greek government plans to spend $12 billion for the 1996-2000 rearmament plan.[32] The emphasis of this five-year plan is to regain qualitative superiority over Turkey. At the same time, Greek strategists try to develop multiple options for responding to the outbreak of different kinds of conflicts, with forces and strategies approximate to each kind. If a low- or medium-level provocation (e.g. occupation of islets) breaks out, Greece should not be forced to resort to all out war. Before such an all out war breaks out, Greece should not need to resort to threatening unlimited escalation—a threat so extreme that Turkey might not believe it would ever be carried out. In accordance with this doctrine, any Turkish provocation will be responded to at an equal level. Greece plans to develop «rapid deployment forces» to put into effect this doctrine of «flexible response». [33]

Response to possible Turkish provocation at the low or medium level can take two forms: symmetrical and asymmetrical. Symmetrical response involves reaction to threats at the same location, time and level of the original provocation. Assymetrical response involves shifting the location or nature of one's reaction onto terrain better suited to the application of one's strength against adversary weakness.

3. Strategic Coupling with Cyprus

Greece's national interests extend beyond its borders to include the security of another state, namely Cyprus. As a result, when Cyprus is threatened by Turkish military action, decision-makers in Athens must prepare to come to the island's defense by threatening retaliation against Turkey. This is the essence of the Greek

strategy of extended deterrence. Yet to project the shadow of one's military forces into another country is a difficult task. As Thomas Schelling explains, «the difference between the national homeland and everything "abroad" is the difference between threats that are inherently credible, even if unspoken, and threats that have to be made credible.»[34]

The credibility of such an extended deterrence threat depends upon Greece's capacity to deny Turkish objectives in Cyprus; that is, to employ adequate forces in a timely fashion in Cyprus. In this regard, the governments of Greece and Cyprus have recently initiated a major rearmament program, designed to reduce the strategic vulnerability of the island.[35] The main elements of the program include: (1) a long-term modernization program, ranging from areas of C3I (command, control, communications, intelligence), through air defense, armor, fire power to the areas of electronic warfare and logistical support; (2) raising manpower levels (e.g. 5000 volunteers mostly from Greece will join the armed forces of the Republic of Cyprus); (3) defense expenditures have been raised; (4) intensification of military training and initiation of joint military exercises; (5) construction of new military bases and predisposition of military equipment; (6) joint strategic planning and coordination of procurement; (7) improvement of the logistical support infrastructure in Southern Greece and (8) strengthening of the naval and air components of the Greek armed forces, in order to project power in the Eastern Mediterranean. However, denial is not easy to achieve in this specific theatre of war, since it is rather fat away from Greece and much closer to Turkey. Hence, the credibility of Greece's extended deterrence in Cyprus is also based on the threat of an all out war against Turkey. This is the meaning of the concept of «horizontal escalation» in current Greek strategic thinking. According to this concept, response to Turkish aggression in Cyprus need not to be totally symmetrical (in the sense of reacting to the threat in the same theatre and at the level of the original provocation). «Horizontal escalation» implies an asymmetrical response which involves shifting the location or nature of one's reaction into a domain or tetrain better suited to the application of one's strength against the adversary's weakness (e.g. attack on Turkish islands).

The credibility of the extended deterrent threat also depends on the will to fight, if necessary. Indeed, extended deterrence threats work better when the side making them has a track record of effectively defending its interests in similar situations in the past. In this regard, Greece's credibility suffers from its past behaviour. Clearly Greece's performance was not up to par in 1974, hence the country damaged its reputation for defense. To re-establish the credibility of Greece's deterrence in Cyprus, Greek governments have adopted the following strategies:

• *Casus Belli*: Greek governments have clearly drawn the «red line» on Cyprus. As then Premier Andreas Papandreou declared in the Parliament in 1987: «in order to avoid misunderstanding, it should be known to friends and enemies

alike that in case of an attack or invasion against the Greek-Cypriot positions, Greece will not stay out. I have warned that this is a *casus belli*. We hope that our partners in the EEC and our allies in NATO will understand the sincerity of our decision to defend Cyprus because if Cyprus is lost, Greece eventually will be lost."[36]

• *Trip-wire*: Greek forces have been stationed in Cyprus. Hence, any Turkish attack on that island would automatically involve the Greek forces positioned there (e.g. officers, non-commissioned officers, regulars, troops and volunteers). Naturally, this would drastically raise the likelihood of an all-out Greek-Turkish war.

4. Deterrence and Reassurance

As already mentioned, Greek strategists try to find ways to strengthen the Greek deterrence strategy and the extended deterrence in Cyprus. At the same time, they worry that deterrence may fail by slipping to provocation. Finding the balance between deterrence srability and deterrence credibility is a very demanding task. Since threats of escalation designed to strengthen the credibility of deterrence may create a sense of inevitable war, the best possible remedy is to couple deterrence with reassurance. They try, therefore, to design a deterrence strategy that is both credible and stable. In other words, a stable deterrence strategy must maintain a delicate balance between demonstration of firmness and the readiness to use force on the one hand, and on the other hand not to provoke the opponent.

Reassurance strategies, as a rule, can be conceived of as a set of strategies that adversaries use to reduce the likelihood of resorting to the use of force. In the Greek context, reassurance takes the form of restraint. Restraint can be important in reducing the likelihood of miscalculation, when adversaries find themselves caught up in the escalating series of threats and military deployments. For example, in January 1996 Greece and Turkey found indeed themselves caught up in a cycle of escalating threats and military deployments. The tension began to escalate when Turkish journalists removed the Greek flag from the Imia islets in the Dodecanese and raised a Turkish one. Immediately, Greek forces reinstated the Greek flag. Turkey responded by gathering a large number of surface combatants to the area. They were soon met by equivalent Greek units. The tension peaked on January 31, when a small contingent of Turkish commandos occupied one of the Imia islets. At that critical moment, the Greek government reacted with restraint and opted for de-escalation. With American mediation, Greece and Turkey reached an understanding that both countries would withdraw their forces from the area of Imia islets.[37]

Restraint, however, may turn out to be dangerous for those who use it. After the Imia crisis, Greek strategists fear that Turkey may misinterpret the caution shown by the Simitis government as weakness and lack of resolve, and conclude that in the next crisis Greece would tolerate the use of force. The Greek strategic dilemma—whether to seek to prevent miscalculated escalation through restraint or to deter a premeditated challenge through threat and demonstration of resolve—is a recurrent problem in choosing a strategy of conflict management. The dilemma is compounded by the fact that strategies designed to prevent the occurrence of one, often tend to exacerbate the likelihood of the other. Greek strategists, therefore, try to design a mixed strategy of deterrence and reassurance and to avoid both miscalculated escalation and calculated challenge to Greek national interests.

In developing such a mixed strategy, Greek planners have ruled out two strategic options: a) intransigent strategy, that is adoption of firm and unyielding position toward Turkey; and b) appeasement strategy, that is adoption of a strategy of unilateral concessions toward Turkey.

The problem with the intransigent strategy is that Greece's deterrence credibility is maximized at the expense of deterrence stability. This means that the chances of escalation are high. In addition, an intransigent Greek stance can discredit the moderate policy-makers in Turkey, who advocate compromise, and thus enhance the position of hard-liners (e.g. the military establishment).

On the other hand, appeasement strategy avoids the problems associated with an intransigent stance and in this manner strengthens deterrence stability. However, unilateral concession may encourage further Turkish demands. This is especially true when:

- a retreat takes Greece past a salient point

- the concession is made in a way which indicates that Greece would sacrifice a great deal to avoid war; and

- Greece retreats even though the costs of doing so are very high.

Appeasement can be an effective strategy a) if the adversary does have a common perception of fair play and reciprocation, b) if the adversary is motivated solely by defensive goals. Turkey, however, does not meet these standards. Greek policy-makers have thus concluded that the policy of sacrificing a great deal to avoid war (that is appeasement) is dangerous.[38] The credibility of Greece's commitment would be weakened and thus Turkey might be tempted to attempt further coercion.

For Greece, the most practical stance is a mixed strategy of deterrence and reassurance in which opposition to the demands of Turkey is coupled with restraint and conditional compromise. A typical example of this policy was

adopted in the March 1987 crisis. At that time, Greece demonstrated its determination to escalate (that is mobilization and preparation of pre-emptive strike) and subsequently accepted a compromise to break the deadlock (it gave assurances to Turkey that it too would refrain from drilling in «disputed» areas). The Greek conditional offer of compromise signaled to the Turkish leadership the possibility of taking the necessary step backward without damaging its bargaining reputation and its domestic position.

5. Crisis Stability, Deterrence and Arms Control

«Crisis stability» refers to the absence of incentives to pre-empt the adversary in time of crisis. Crisis instability is clearly a problem in the Aegean, as demonstrated in the crises that erupted in March 1987 and January 1996 between Greece and Turkey. During the March 1987 crisis, for example, the Greek armed forces were mobilized and rushed towards the border with Turkey. The notion of rushing towards the frontiers suggests the belief on both sides that there might be an advantage to be gained by striking first in the event of a war breaking out. Such pre-emptive incentives increase the likelihood that war would erupt during a severe crisis. Arms control measures can theoretically contribute to the elimination of any incentive to launch a war of choice by arranging the forces of the opponents in such a way that neither side thinks that it can initiate war with a reasonable probability of success. Arms control measures may also help establish mutually agreed upon rules of behaviour and reduce some uncertainty which can at times lead Turkey to miscalculate. Greece and Turkey did therefore attempt to develop explicit understanding of the limits of competition in 1988.[39]

Based on the experience of the March 1987 crisis, in an effort to back away from the brink of war, the Greek and Turkish Prime Ministers initiated a bilateral dialogue in 1988. This talk led to what is called the Davos Agreement. Among the agreements signed within the framework of the Davos talk were: (a) a Memorandum of Understanding on Confidence-Building Measures, signed in Athens in June 1988 (the Athens Memorandum); (b) Guidelines for the Prevention of Incidents on the High Sea and International Airspace, signed in Istanbul in September 1988 (see Appendix for the Istanbul Guidelines). The Athens Memorandum outlined ways to reduce misunderstanding or miscalculation during military exercises in the Aegean Sea. The Istanbul Guidelines require Greek and Turkish naval units to «refrain from acts of harassment of each other while operating in the high seas, in accordance with international law and customs».

Furthermore, Greece made an attempt to move beyond confidence and security-building measures (CSBMs). In the early 1990s the Mitsotakis government proposed the withdrawal of all offensive weapons from the area adjacent to the

Greek-Bulgarian-Turkish boarders in order to enhance crisis stability by reducing the possibilities of a surprise attack. Turkey, however, rejected this proposal on the grounds that it failed to consider other areas of confrontation such as the Aegean.

As it turned out, the CSBMs agreed upon with Turkey for the Aegean were unsuccessful partly because the formal documents masked significant disagreements and differences in interpretation. If anything, the unrealistic expectations they aroused, the dispute over the interpretation of the documents, the consequent allegation of cheating and the ensuing distrust has actually made it more difficult now for Greece to discuss new CSBMs in the Aegean.

After the late January 1996 crisis, however, and under growing pressure of the US, Greek defense analysts and policy makers once more are increasingly examining the porential impact of specific CSBMs on regional stability and Greek national security. In developing a policy on CSBMs at least three requirements have been identified:[40]

a) CSBMs are inextricably linked to Turkey's willingness to respect the existing status quo and adhere to existing treaties. CSBMs should not be used to erode Greek sovereignty in the Aegean but only to improve stability;

b) as long as the threat of Turkey exists, the potential benefits of CSBMs will be balanced against the potential weakening of Greek deterrence.

c) CSBMs or other agreements must be structured in such a way that if Turkey was to suddenly abrogate the terms, such actions would nor endanger Greek security.

In short, even with CSBMs that are consistent with the above requirements, Greece has to maintain sufficient military capability to deter Turkey.

Epilogue: Lessons for Small States

This paper has made an attempt to examine the calculus of asymmetrical conventional deterrence from the standpoint of a small state, that of Greece.[41]

Seeking allies is a time-honoured way to compensate for a state's small size. External balancing, namely the added strength in «borrowing» the power of rhe other states, may be used for deterrence, as well as for defense if deterrence fails. Protection is, therefore, the primary motivation for seeking allies. However, the small state has every reason to wonder whether, if the need arises, the great power ally will honour the commitmenr ro defend its smaller partner. Past experience suggests that this is an uncertain prospect. The Greek experience, in particular, suggests that the Atlantic Alliance was either unwilling or unable to provide Greece with protection against the threat from Turkey.

Yet, participation in international institutions such as NATO and WEU may be an asset to a small state such as Greece, even in the absence of secure guarantees. This holds true to the extent that such participation increases the diplomatic costs and risks associated with an attack against the country. Hence, it indirectly strengthens deterrence.

The safest way to increase the cost of aggression to an opponent is by internal balancing; i.e., through mobilization of the country's own resources. This, however, implies heavy emphasis on military spending, allocation of significant manpower to defense, and so on. Naturally, emphasis needs to be placed upon deployment of cost effective methods to limit the financial burden.

The utility of military manpower can be maximized by choosing weapons technology that tends to maximize the efficiency of fighting men. Qualitative superiority is one way to get the most out of a small population. Maximizing deterrence without having to match the forces of the adversary quantitatively requires deployment of superior technology, military organization, tactics, operational methods and strategy.

Lastly, a small state can deal with asymmetry and compensate for small size by maintaining a high state of readiness to fight. This presupposes a capacity for total defense, rapid mobilization, deployment of reserves and maintenance of high levels of military stock.

To conclude, small states trying to develop their own national security strategies have fewer options and less freedom than the great powers. Indeed, very few small states (namely Sweden, Switzerland, Finland and Israel) have actually managed to develop their own original strategies. Small states usually develop an original strategy after realizing that the strategies of the bigger powers have only limited applicability to their problems. This is precisely what happened to Greece.

In the final analysis, the anarchical nature of the international system creates a serious security problem for all states and those with limited capabilities operate within narrow margins. Yet, even in asymmetrical confrontations small states may succeed in dissuading possible aggression, provided they adopt certain strategies. How small states bargain, adopt and implement their national security strategies can make a difference between success and failure, between winning and losing. Choosing a clever mix of strategies - one that is best tailored to unique conditions and circumstances - is the key to success for small states like Greece.

Appendix

Memorandum of understanding on confidence-building measures,

Athens, 17 May 1988

The two parties have agreed on the following confidence-building measures:

Both parties recognize the obligation to respect the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of each other and their rights to use the high seas and international airspace of the Aegean.

In conducting national military activities in the high seas and the international airspace, the two parties shall endeavour to avoid interfering with smooth shipping and air-traffic as ensured in accordance with international instruments, rules and regulations. This would contribute to the elimination of unwarranted sources of tension and reducing the risks of collision.

The two parties have agreed that the planning and the conduct of national military exercises in the high seas and the international airspace which require the promulgation of a NOTAM or any other notification or warning should be carried out in such a way as to avoid also to the maximum extent possible the following:

the isolation of certain areas.

the blocking of exercise areas for long periods of time.

their conduct during the tourist peak period (1 July - 1 September, for 1988, 7 July - 1 September) and the main national and religious holidays.

It is understood that the planning and execution of all national military activities will be cancelled out in accordance with the existing internarional rules, regulations and procedures.

With the view ro achieving the above, and without prejudice to the existing international regulations and procedures, the two sides will proceed, when required, to due communication through diplomatic channels.

The provisions of this memorandum of understanding shall have effect and be implemented in full conformity with the provisions of the Davos joint Press Communique.

Karolos Papoulias	Mesut Yilmaz
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Hellenic Republic	of the Republic of Turkey

Guidelines for the prevention of accidents and incidents on the high seas and in international airspace,

Istanbul, 8 September 1988

The military and other activities carried out by the ships and aircraft of both countries on the high seas and international airspace will be conducted in accordance with international law and international custom, instruments, rules, regulations and procedures.

In accordance with the above:

The naval units of the parties will abide by the following guidelines:

They will refrain from acts of harassment of each other while operating in the high seas in accordance with international law and custom.

They will act in full conformity with international law, rules, regulations and procedures as well as military custom and courtesy.

Naval units engaged in the surveillance of ships of the other party during firing operations and other military activities in accordance with international law shall maintain a position which would not hamper their smooth conduct.

The air force units in conducting military activities in the international airspace will abide by the following guidelines:

They will act in full conformity with international law and in particular international custom, instruments, rules, regulations and procedures.

Pilots of the aircraft of the parties shall display utmost caution when in proximity of aircraft of the other party and shall not manoeuvre or react in a manner that would be hazardous to the safety of the flight and/or affect the conduct of the mission of the aircraft.

To promote the climate of confidence, whenever there are claims of acts contrary to the above, the sides will in the first place inform each other through diplomatic channels prior to releasing official statements.

Karolos Papoulias
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Hellenic Republic

Mesut Yilmaz
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Turkey

NOTES

1. For an earlier attempt to develop the profile of Greek strategic thinking see, Athanassios PLATIAS, «Greece's Strategic Doctrine: In Search of Autonomy and Deterrence» in Dimitri CONSTAS, (edit). **The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External Influences** (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 91-105.

2. See, Karl von CLAUSEWITZ, **On War** (eds), Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

3. See, among others, Edward LUTTWALK, **Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace** (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).

4. See Basil LIDDELL HART, **Strategy** (New York: Praeger, 1972), p. 366.

5. See Thomas SCHELLING, **The Strategy of Conflict**, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

6. For an analysis of asymmetrical deterrence, see Athanassios PLATIAS «Asymmetrical Deterrence» in Aharon KLIEMAN and Ariel LEVITE, (edit) **Deterrence in the Middle East: Where Theory and Practice Converge** (Tel Aviv: Jaffa Center for Strategic Studies, 1993), pp. 45-62.

7. See, Batry POSEN, **The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain and Germany Between the World Wars** (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 13. See also Edward LUTTWALK, **The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from First Century AD to the Third** (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1976); Paul KENNEDY ed. **Grand Strategies in War and Peace** (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991); Charalambos PAPASOTIRIOU, **«Byzantine Grand Strategy» Ph.D. Dissertation**, Stanford University, 1991.

8. See Richard ROSECRANCE and Arthur STEIN (edit.) **The Domestic Bases of Grand Strategy** (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992).

9. For an extensive discussion of this point, see Athanassios PLATIAS **«High Politics in Small Countries: An Inquiry into the Security Policies of Greece, Israel and Sweden» Ph.D. Dissertation**, Cornell University, 1986.

10. Francis FUKUYEMA, «The End of History», **National Interest**, Summer 1995. Also his **The End of History and the Last Man**, New York: Free Press, 1992.

11. See, for example, John MUELLER, **Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolence of Major War**, New York: Basic Book, 1989.

12. For an analysis in Greek see Athanassios G. PLATIAS, **The New International System: Realist approach of International Relations**, Athens, Papazisis, 1995

13. For an analysis, see **White paper** (Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Defense, 1995), pp.17-18.

14. For a comprehensive review of the issues that have dominated the agenda, see Andrew WILSON «The Aegean Dispute», **Adelphi Paper 151** (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1979). See also, Van. COUFOUDAKIS, «Greek-Turkish Relations 1973-1983». «The View from Athens», **International Security**, Spring 1985.

15. See, for example, Baskin ORAN, «The Sleeping Volcano in Turco-Greek Relations: The Western Thrace Minority» in Kemal KARPAT (ed) **Turkish Foreign Policy: Recent Developments**, Madison, Wisconsin, 1996, pp.119-138

16. For an analysis of the threat indicator, see PLATIAS, «Greece's Strategic Doctrine», pp.92-95.

17. Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mr Omer Akbel on January 31 1996 declared:

«Turkey said from the beginning that the issue was not merely the ownership of Kardak [Imia] rocks, which Turkey claims as its own under international law. These are hundreds of little islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean and their status remains unclear, due to the absence of a comprehensive bilateral agreement between the two countries». See **Turkish Daily News**, February 1, 1996. See also similar declarations by then Prime Minister Tansu Ciller in **Milliyet** and **Cumhuriyet** on February 4, 1996.

18. See Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, «The Imia Files - January 1996», **Hellenic Studies**, (Spring 1996), p.108.

19. See, for example, Graham FULLER, Ian LESSER, et al, **Turkey's new Geopolitics: From Balkans to Western China**, Boulder: Westview Press/A Rand Study, 1993.

20. For an analysis of the Turkish rearmament program, see Thanos DOKOS and Nikos PROTONATARIOS, **The Military Power of Turkey: The Challenge for Greek Security**, (Athens: Tourikis, 1994) (in Greek).

21. For the projection of the Turkish population, see **Turkey: A Country Study** (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1988), p.378.

22. George KATSIRDAKIS «Military Postures and Doctrines of the South-East European Countries» in **European Security in the 1990s: Problems of South-East Europe** (New York: Unidir, 1992), p.82.

23. See for example, Jed SNYDER, **Defending the Fringe;: NATO, the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf** (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987).

24. Yiannis ROUBATIS, «**The US Involvement in the Army and Politics in**

Greece, 1946-1967». PhD Dissertation (John Hopkins University, 1980).

25. See PLATIAS, High Politics in Small Countries, pp.146-175.

26. Kathimerini (Daily Newspaper), January 1, 1981.

27. See Kenneth WALTZ, Theory of International Politics (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 168.

28. See White Paper, pp. 56,101.

29. See «Documentation: Defense Expenditures of NATO Countries», NATO Review, January 1996, p. 32.

30. See Journal of Parliamentary Debates (Greek), January 23, 1987, p. 2914.

31. See White Paper. Also Theodore STATHIS, National Defense (Athens: Livanis, 1992), pp.47-49.

32. According to a government decision on November 13, 1996 Greece plans to spend 6 trillion Drachmas for the next rearmament plan over a ten years period (or approximately $24 billion). See Kathimerini (Daily), November 14, 1996, p.5.

33. See Statements of A.TSOCHANTZOPOULOS, Minister of Defense, Ta Nea, October 22, 1996. See also his speech in the Parliament in Journal of Parliamentary Debates (Greek), October 12, 1996.

34. Thomas SHELLING, Arms and Influence, (New Haven, C,T: Yale University Press, 1966), p.36.

35. See White Paper, p.22.

36. Journal of Parliamentary Debates (Greek), January 23, 1987, p.2914.

37. See Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, «The Imia Files». Also, «Confrontation in the Aegean Waters: Greece and Turkey Teeter on the Brink of War», Cosmos, Institute of International Relations Athens, February-March 1996.

38. See, for example, Andreas PAPANDREOU, Journal of Parliamentary Debates (Greek), January 29, 1987, pp.2914 - 5.

39. For an analysis see Athanassios PLATIAS, «Naval Arms Control in the Eastern Mediterranean» in Naval Arma Control After Gorbatchev, London: Oxford University Press/SIPRI, 1992.

40. Interviews with policy makers at the Ministry of Defense, February 1996.

41. See also PLATIAS, «Assymetrical Deterrence», op.cit.