

**T.C. ISTANBUL KÜLTÜR UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

THE IMPACT OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TRANSFORMATIONS ON LIBYA

"ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND GEOPOLITICAL STRATEGIES: TÜRKİYE'S

ROLE IN THE LIBYAN CONFLICT" (2011-2023)

**MA Thesis by
Mutasembellah Alwarfalli**

**Department: International Relations
Programme: International Relations**

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. İbrahim Mensur Akgün

FEBRUARY 2025

**T.C. İSTANBUL KÜLTÜR UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

THE IMPACT OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TRANSFORMATIONS ON LIBYA

"ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND GEOPOLITICAL STRATEGIES: TÜRKİYE'S

ROLE IN THE LIBYAN CONFLICT" (2011-2023)

MA Thesis by

Mutasembellah Alwarfalli

**Department: International Relations
Programme: International Relations**

**Supervisor : Prof. Dr. İbrahim Mensur Akgün
Members of Examining Committee : Prof. Dr. Nazlı Çağın Bilgili
Prof. Dr. Halit Burç Aka**

FEBRUARY 2025

DEDICATION

I want to express my profound gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. İbrahim Mensur Akgün, for his invaluable guidance, patience, and support throughout my academic journey. I consider myself exceptionally fortunate to have worked with such a considerate and encouraging professor on this thesis and during my undergraduate studies. Without his willingness to facilitate this research, I would not have been able to complete my degree at Istanbul Kültür University.

I am also deeply appreciative of the members of the examining committee, Prof. Dr. Nazlı Çağın Bilgili and Prof. Dr. Halit Burç Aka. I am thankful for their insightful comments, which have been instrumental in my development as an emerging researcher. Their enlightening suggestions and encouragement provided me with a sense of connection and support to know my mistakes in the research process, which has been very valuable for me.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my parents, whose unwavering support has been instrumental in my academic journey. Their belief in my dedication to education and the ongoing pursuit of success has been invaluable.

Additionally, I extend my gratitude to Efe Altınışık, my lifelong friend, for his steadfast moral support, which has been a significant motivating factor in completing this critical stage of my educational life.

Üniversite: İstanbul Kültür Üniversitesi
Enstitüsü : Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü
Anabilim Dalı : Uluslararası İlişkiler
Programı : Uluslararası İlişkiler
Tez Danışmanı : Prof. Dr. İbrahim Mensur Akgün
Tez Türü ve Tarihi : Yüksek Lisans – Şubat 2025

ÖZET

Bu tez, önemli bölgesel jeopolitik değişimlerin ortasında Türkiye'nin önemli bir dış aktör olarak ortaya çıkışına odaklanarak, 2011'den 2023'e kadar Libya-Türkiye ilişkilerinin karmaşık dinamiklerini araştırıyor. Libya derin bir iç karışıklık yaşarken, Türkiye dış politikasını değişen çatışma ve siyasi istikrarsızlık ortamına yanıt verecek şekilde uyarladı. Araştırma, katılımın dört kritik aşamasını tasvir ediyor: Erken Libya devrimi (2011-2013), siyasi bölünme dönemi ve Türkiye'nin bunu takip eden tutumu (2014-2018), Türkiye'nin Ulusal Mutabakat Hükümeti'ni (UMH) destekleyen askeri müdahalesi (2019) -2021) ve bu katılımın bölgesel istikrar üzerindeki etkileri (2021-2023)

Bu aşamaları analiz ederek çalışma, stratejik çıkarlar, bölgesel güvenlik endişeleri ve Doğu Akdeniz'de etki arayışı dahil olmak üzere Türk politika değişimlerini yönlendiren motivasyonları ortaya koymaktadır. Türkiye'nin karmaşık Libya manzarasında gezinmede karşılaştığı zorlukların yanı sıra Libya egemenliği ve bölgesel dinamikler için daha geniş etkileri değerlendirir. Nihayetinde, bulgular Türkiye'nin katılımının, iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilerin yörüngesini etkileyen jeopolitik hırsların ve yerel gerçeklerin birleşmesi ile şekillendiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye ve Libya: Türkiye ve Libya'ya odaklanan Türk dış ilişkilerinin evrimini incelemek için çok yönlü bir metodoloji kullanılmaktadır. Bunlar iki ülke arasındaki ikili ilişkiler olduğundan, ulusal analiz düzeyi kullanılmıştır; Bununla birlikte, bazı aşamalarda, ikisi arasındaki ilişkileri etkileyen yeni oyuncuların müdahalesi nedeniyle uluslararası analiz çağrıldı ve kullanıldı.

Betimleyici analiz ve örnek olay yaklaşımı kullanan araştırma, Türk dış politikasındaki dönüşümlerin dinamiklerini anlatı içindeki yapılandırılmış bir zaman çerçevesi sistemi aracılığıyla araştırıyor. Bu analiz aracılığıyla tez, Türkiye'nin Libya'da gelişen rolüne ve bunun daha geniş bölgesel gelişmeler bağlamındaki önemine ilişkin incelikli bir anlayış sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Jeopolitik Dinamikler /Doğu Akdeniz /Libya ve Türkiye İkili İlişkileri /Tanımlayıcı Analiz /Dış Politika Değişimi /Güç Dengesi

University : Istanbul Kültür University
Institute : Institute of Graduate Studies
Department : International Relations
Programme : International Relations
Supervisor : Prof. Dr. İbrahim Mensur Akgün
Degree Awarded and Date : MA –Şubat 2025

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the intricate dynamics of Libyan-Turkish relations from 2011 to 2023, focusing on Türkiye's emergence as a key external actor amidst significant regional geopolitical changes. As Libya underwent profound internal turmoil, Türkiye adapted its foreign policy to address the shifting conflict landscape and political instability. The research delineates four critical phases of engagement: the early Libyan revolution (2011-2013), the period of political division and Türkiye's ensuing stance (2014-2018), Türkiye's military intervention in support of the Government of National Accord (GNA) (2019-2021), and the implications of this involvement on regional stability (2021-2023).

By analyzing these phases, the study reveals the motivations driving Turkish policy shifts, including strategic interests, regional security concerns, and the quest for influence in the Eastern Mediterranean. It assesses Türkiye's challenges navigating the complex Libyan landscape and its broader implications for sovereignty and regional dynamics. Ultimately, the findings highlight that Türkiye's engagement has been shaped by a confluence of geopolitical ambitions and local realities, impacting the trajectory of relations between the two nations.

This study employs a multifaceted methodology to examine the evolution of Turkish foreign affairs, focusing on two distinct national contexts: Türkiye and Libya. Since these are bilateral relations between two countries, the national level of analysis was used; however, at some stages, the international analysis was called for and used due to the intervention of new players influencing the relations between the two countries.

Utilizing descriptive analysis and a case study approach, the research explores the dynamics of Turkish foreign policy transformations through a structured time frame system within the narrative. Through this analysis, the thesis offers a nuanced understanding of Türkiye's evolving role in Libya and its significance in broader regional developments.

Keywords: Geopolitical Dynamics /Eastern Mediterranean Issue / Libya and Türkiye Bilateral Relations / Descriptive Analysis / Foreign Policy Change /Balance of Power

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	I
ÖZET	II
ABSTRACT.....	IV
LIST OF FIGURES	VII
LIST OF ACRONYMS	VIII
INTRODUCTION.....	1
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	4
THE THESIS STRUCTURE	6
1 TÜRKİYE'S NEW ERA IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS: LIBYA RELATIONS (2002-2010).....	21
1.1 TRANSFORMATION IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY	22
1.1.1 Foreign Policy Change Understanding.....	22
1.1.2 Factors driving change in foreign policy	23
1.1.3 TFP Theoretical Framework.....	23
1.2 EVOLUTION OF TÜRKİYE'S FOREIGN POLICY POST-COLD WAR.....	24
1.2.1 TFP shift towards centralization.....	25
1.2.2 Türkiye's Foreign Policy: From Caution to Strategy.....	26
1.2.3 Türkiye's geographic impact on foreign policy	27
1.3 TÜRKİYE-LIBYA DIPLOMACY: PRE-ARAB SPRING (2002-2010).....	29
1.4 LIBYA: GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMY, AND NATURAL RESOURCES OVERVIEW	30
1.4.1 Libya's Shifting Foreign Policy	31
1.4.2 Gaddafi's ideological and pragmatic foreign policy	32
1.5 THE EVOLUTION OF TURKISH-LİBYAN RELATIONS POST-2002.....	34
2 TÜRKİYE AND LIBYA: FROM GADDAFI TO REVOLUTION	38
2.1 LIBYA'S ARAB SPRING: FROM PEACEFUL PROTESTS TO ARMED REVOLUTION	39
2.2 THE EVOLUTION OF TÜRKİYE'S STANCE ON THE ARAB SPRING IN LIBYA	43
2.2.1 The First Phase: Balancing Diplomacy and International Pressures	43
2.2.2 The Second phase: From Support to Gaddafi to mediation role	44
2.2.3 The Third Phase: Embracing Change in Libya's Political Landscape	46
2.3 FALL OF THE CAPITAL	48
2.4 TURKISH PRIME MINISTER IN TRIPOLI	49
2.5 LIBYAN REVOLUTION TRIUMPH AND THE DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION	51
2.5.1 The political scene and the path to democratic transformation.....	52
2.5.2 Libya's post-2011 and economic recovery.....	53
2.5.3 Distribution of military and security forces after Gaddafi.....	54
2.5.4 NATO's military operations in Libya have come to an end.	56
2.6 THE TURKISH MODEL: AN INSPIRATION FOR THE LIBYAN POLITICAL ELITE	57
2.7 TÜRKİYE-LIBYA ECONOMIC AND SECURITY RELATIONS POST-REVOLUTION.....	59

3	LIBYA'S CRISIS AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY(2013-2020).....	62
3.1	LIBYA'S POST-REVOLUTION STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY	63
3.2	GOVERNANCE AND STATEHOOD İN POST-GADDAFİ LİBYA	64
3.2.1	CHALLENGES AND DYNAMİCS OF THE GENERAL NATIONAL CONGRESS.....	65
3.2.2	NATO INTERVENTION INTO LIBYA FROM OPTIMISM TO CHAOS	67
3.2.3	2014 LIBYAN (HOR) ELECTIONS AND LEGITIMACY CRISIS	69
3.3	PATH TO LIBYA'S POLITICAL DIVISION	71
3.4	TÜRKIYE'S ROLE IN THE COMPLEX LIBYAN CONFLICT DYNAMICS (2014).....	72
3.4.1	Türkiye-Egypt influence on Libya	74
3.5	THE LIBYAN POLITICAL AGREEMENT (2015) AND ITS REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS	75
3.6	POWER STRUGGLES AND THE RISE OF KHALIFA HAFTAR	77
3.7	TFP: THE 2019 TRIPOLI WAR AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN TENSIONS.....	80
3.7.1	Libya's political landscape and Türkiye's strategic position	80
3.8	TÜRKIYE'S FOREIGN POLICY TRIPOLI WAR ENGAGEMENT.....	82
3.9	STRATEGIC AUTONOMY	83
3.10	TÜRKIYE'S STRATEGIC INVOLVEMENT IN LIBYA BALANCING GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS AND REGIONAL ALLIANCES	84
3.10.1	To what extent has Türkiye supported the GNA?.....	86
3.10.2	Role of regional actors and Türkiye's strategic position.....	89
3.10.3	Russian and Turkish different roles in Libya	89
3.11	POST-TRIPOLI WAR AND THE NEW POLITICAL REALITY	91
3.12	TÜRKIYE'S MARITIME AGREEMENT WITH LIBYA: IMPORTANCE OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN	95
3.13	THE "BLUE HOMELAND" DOCTRINE.....	96
3.13.1	International and Regional Reactions on Türkiye-Libya Agreements.....	100
3.14	TÜRKIYE AND THE BALANCE OF POWER IN LIBYA	104
4	TFP REGIONAL NORMALIZATION POST-TRIPOLI WAR	106
4.1	TÜRKIYE'S FOREIGN POLICY SHIFT POST-TRIPOLI WAR	107
4.1.1	Normalization and Alliances (2021-2023)	107
4.2	LIBYA'S POLITICAL SCENE: A RETURN TO NEGOTIATIONS (2021).....	110
4.2.1	The new roadmap in Libya and Türkiye's position	111
4.2.2	Challenges facing the new government and the Turkish position on them.....	112
4.3	THE DILEMMA OF MERCENARIES AND FOREIGN FORCES	113
4.4	CHALLENGES UNDERMINED LIBYA'S 2021 ELECTIONS	114
4.5	POLITICAL TENSIONS IN LIBYA: TÜRKIYE'S RESPONSE.....	115
4.6	TÜRKIYE TO EAST WORDS	116
4.6.1	The Derna disaster and Ankara's political opportunity	117
4.7	LIBYA-TÜRKIYE: ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS	119
4.7.1	Türkiye's role in libya's construction sector	120
4.7.2	Trade and Investment.....	122
4.7.3	Energy sector	123
4.7.4	Financial support	125
	CONCLUSION AND RESULTS.....	127
	REFERENCES.....	132

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 : Erdogan's visit to Gaddafi with a delegation of businessmen : resource/ haber 3 (Gaddafi hosts Erdogan in his tent, 2009).....	35
Figure 2 : In Benghazi square, protesters are holding qatari, french, and american flags..	40
Figure 3 : ahmet davutoglu visits benghazi 3/july/2011/source: al jazeera news/Türkiye recognizes Libyan rebels.....	47
Figure 4 : Erdogan attended friday prayers at Tripoli's martyr square, met the interim leader, and expressed support for the last battles. Turkey pm hails 'sacrifice' of libyan people (al-jazeera, 2011)	49
Figure 5 : Bayraktar (tb2 siha) photo of one of the turkish air weapons used to support the government of national accord/source defenceturk.net.....	88
Figure 6 : Al-water: air base, which represented a strategic base that was taken by gna, where Türkiye viewed it as an important area of maneuver /source the Libya observer	93
Figure 7: Map showing the line drawn for the ceasefire(site – jufra) source al arabiya English	94
Figure 8 : The map delineates Türkiye's maritime frontiers in E.Med /source Anadolu Agency	98
Figure 9 : Türkiye-Libya agreement on maritime boundaries, Türkiye's blue homeland (mavi vatan), and the EEZ boundaries in east mediterranean	99
Figure 10 : Türkiye's team begins tasks to coordinate search rescue operations in Libya's flood-ravaged derna (photo by türkiye's disaster and emergency / Anadolu Agency via AFP).....	119

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Foreign policy change
(FPC).....

General National Congress
(GNC)

Government of National Accord
(GNA)

Libyan House of Representatives
(HoR)

Libyan National Army
(LNA).....

Libyan Political Dialogue Forum
(PDF).....

Memorandum of understanding
(MoU).....

Middle East and North Africa region
(MENA)

National Transitional Council (NTC)
(NTC).....

North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NATO

The Government of National Unity
(GNU)

Türkiye's foreign policy
(TFP).....

INTRODUCTION

Turkish foreign policy has witnessed significant transformations over the years, with a notable radical shift occurring in 2002 with the rise of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). This emergence departed from previous state approaches, as the AKP introduced innovative ideas and strategies that redefined the nation's understanding of power, economy, and geopolitics. Under its leadership, Türkiye embraced a multi-dimensional perspective emphasizing the importance of regions such as the East and North Africa. These areas were recognized for their strategic and historical significance, vital cultural connections, and lucrative economic markets.

In pursuit of harmonious and constructive external engagement, the Turkish Foreign Ministry adopted a "zero-problems" policy to foster good relations with neighboring countries and beyond. This approach was complemented by the practice of soft power, prioritizing cultural diplomacy and cooperation over conflict. Additionally, there was a strong emphasis on increasing trade and economic exchanges, pushing for exports, and broadening Türkiye's diplomatic relations in these targeted regions.

This thesis examines the evolving landscape of Turkish foreign policy, specifically analyzing its implications for Libya as a case study. It delves into the nuances of Libyan-Turkish relations, exploring how these transformations have influenced bilateral interactions and the broader regional dynamics. Through a systematic investigation, this study highlights the complexities inherent in the diplomatic engagements between Türkiye and Libya, situating these developments within the larger framework of international relations and geopolitical considerations.

While this study does not aim to dissect the historical dimensions of Turkish foreign policy exhaustively, understanding these pivotal transformations is crucial. The central focus lies on the evolving relations between Türkiye and Libya. To grasp the complexities of this bilateral relationship, one must consider the various developments in Turkish foreign policy, especially the sharp contrasts before and after 2010.

Thus, Türkiye, from 2002 to 2010, stood in stark contrast to Libya, which emerged in the following years, setting the stage for a nuanced discussion on the interplay between these two countries amid the broader tapestry of regional dynamics.

Therefore, the thesis explored Libyan-Turkish relations' dynamic and evolving landscape from 2011 to 2023, marked by significant upheaval and transformations. It contextualizes Türkiye's historical relationship with Libya and outlines the ideological foundations that influenced its foreign policy, including the balance between pragmatism and ideological sympathies toward Muslim-majority nations.

Following the Arab Spring and the subsequent fall of Muammar Gaddafi, Libya became mired in internal turmoil and political instability, prompting various external actors, notably Türkiye, to recalibrate their foreign policy strategies in response to the changing geopolitical circumstances.

Accordingly, the progression of Turkish foreign policy regarding Libya showcases its adaptability amidst the multifaceted challenges and evolving realities of the Libyan conflict. Central to this investigation is identifying four critical phases of engagement that define the trajectory of Libyan-Turkish relations.

The first phase spans the early years of the Libyan revolution from 2011 to 2013. During this period, Türkiye actively engaged with the revolutionary movements, providing diplomatic support and assistance while grappling with the repercussions of NATO's involvement in the region. In addition, it discussed how Türkiye's alignment with the Libyan opposition was driven by ideological solidarity and strategic interests, focusing on Türkiye's support for the National Transitional Council (NTC) and its efforts to position itself as a key player in the post-revolution reconstruction of Libya.

The subsequent phase, covering 2014 to 2018, highlighted the period characterized by political division and fragmentation in Libya. This section of the research delves into the complexities of the Libyan Civil War, which saw the emergence of multiple rival governments vying for legitimacy and control. In exploring Türkiye's strategic responses during this tumultuous time, the study investigated Türkiye's alignment with the Government of National Accord (GNA) against General Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National

Army (LNA). This engagement illustrated Türkiye's efforts to navigate a complex political landscape, emphasizing its diplomatic maneuvers and support for the GNA through military and logistical means.

The third phase, from 2019 to 2021, marks a watershed moment in the relationship as Türkiye undertook a decisive military intervention to support the GNA. The thesis critically examined the factors that led to this escalation, including security concerns stemming from the rising influence of Haftar, the risks posed by migrant flows into Europe, and Türkiye's aspirations to expand its geopolitical influence in the Eastern Mediterranean.

This intervention not only transformed the trajectory of the Libyan conflict but also raised critical questions regarding regional stability, international law, and the implications of such external involvement in domestic affairs. The analysis addressed Türkiye's military operations, including the deployment of troops and the provision of drone technology. It assesses their impact on battlefield dynamics and the broader implications for Libyan sovereignty.

Finally, the thesis addressed the dynamics of post-intervention from 2021 to 2023. This concluding phase reflects on the ramifications of Türkiye's actions in Libya, particularly concerning the consolidation of the GNA's power and the challenges faced by the Libyan state. It examined the evolving geopolitical landscape, the interplay between regional actors, and the shifting allegiances resulting from Türkiye's enhanced presence in Libya.

The research also reflects on Türkiye's strategic policy choices in the context of shifting alliances and current developments in the region. Through a nuanced analysis of these phases, the research unveils the motivations behind Turkish policy shifts, encompassing core strategic interests, security concerns, and aspirations for influence in the Eastern Mediterranean. The study adeptly assessed Türkiye's myriad challenges while navigating the intricate Libyan landscape, emphasizing the interplay between its geopolitical ambitions and local realities.

Historical background

The historical relationship between Libya and Türkiye spans over five centuries, beginning with Libya's incorporation into the Ottoman Empire. This geopolitical alliance transitioned dramatically following the Ouchy-Lausanne Agreement on October 3, 1912, which marked the beginning of Italian colonial rule in Libya. Throughout the subsequent years, the Ottoman Turks supported Libyan resistance movements against the Italian occupation, a commitment that persisted until 1919. However, this support diminished as the Ottoman Empire increasingly concentrated on internal reforms, culminating in the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye in 1923. Consequently, diplomatic relations between Libya and Türkiye experienced a period of stagnation that lasted until after World War II, which occurred from 1939 to 1945.

The post-World War II context saw the United Nations advocate for self-determination, inciting a broad decolonization process across various regions. This era facilitated the emergence of former colonies' independence, with transitions varying in nature from peaceful to violent, often manifesting through nationalist movements. Libya, eager to assert its autonomy following the dissolution of Italian rule, actively engaged in United Nations deliberations regarding self-determination. Concurrently, Türkiye utilized its diplomatic influence to assist Libya in its pursuit of independence and self-governance.

Following Libya's independence in 1951, the newly sovereign state strengthened its affiliations with Türkiye. During this monarchic phase, Türkiye extended substantial economic and technical assistance to Libya, contributing significantly to developing its modern state infrastructure. Nevertheless, the bilateral relations encountered a setback following the coup d'état in Libya in 1969, which ushered in a new political regime and temporarily disrupted the previously established ties.

The period leading up to 2010 marked a notable phase in Türkiye-Libya relations, characterized by a substantial increase in trade, which reached approximately 9.8 billion dollars. Libya's declaration of intent to invest 100 billion dollars in Turkish firms by 2013 further underscored the burgeoning economic partnership. In particular, Turkish

investments within the construction sector were significant, aggregating about 15 billion dollars, and in 2010, 16 Turkish development projects were initiated across Libya.

Before the February 2011 revolution outbreak in Libya, Türkiye strategically focused on solidifying its regional economic presence. This pursuit witnessed Turkish companies securing approximately 304 commercial agreements with Libyan counterparts, resulting in a marked enhancement of capital flow and investment opportunities in the Libyan market.

The ascendance of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to power in Türkiye in 2002 catalyzed a transformation in the nation's foreign policy framework, signaling Türkiye's ambition to establish itself as a key regional actor. This shift was integral to Türkiye's strategy of asserting regional dominance while expanding its influence on the global stage. In response to evolving political and security dynamics, the AKP's foreign policy adaptations revealed a complex interplay between maintaining traditional ties with Western nations and fostering stronger regional connections.

During the latter half of the AKP's tenure, a paradigmatic shift occurred in Türkiye's foreign policy, encapsulated by the adoption of the strategic depth doctrine. This strategic pivot facilitated a move away from a mere alignment with Western interests, recognizing the necessity of an independent foreign policy to address emerging regional challenges. The evolving security landscape required a multifaceted approach that sometimes involved military engagement.

In analyzing Turkish foreign policy post-AKP accession, it is crucial to delineate the contours of this policy without overly relying on a historical narrative. Instead, a contextual understanding of the pre-Arab Spring era illuminates the emergence of new foreign policy paradigms, such as the adoption of soft power approaches, the concept of neo-Ottomanism, and the strategic depth doctrine. These frameworks collectively informed Türkiye's response to the regional upheavals characteristic of the Arab Spring, demonstrating the complexity and dynamism of its foreign relations.

THE THESIS STRUCTURE

The thesis is organized into four comprehensive chapters. The first chapter delves into the rise of Türkiye's Justice and Development Party, detailing its innovative approaches to foreign policy, particularly its engagement with Libya. It meticulously details the evolution of Libyan-Turkish relations from 2002 to 2010, before the Arab Spring. It highlights the transformation in Turkish foreign policy, including its new conceptualization, such as "zero problems" and strategic depth, further exploring the substantial economic and political connections between Libya and Türkiye.

The subsequent chapter focuses on Türkiye's stance and involvement in Libya during the tumultuous Arab Spring, which lasted from 2011 to 2013. This section notably highlights Türkiye's acknowledgment of the Libyan revolution, its staunch opposition to NATO's intervention, and the ensuing developments in Libyan-Turkish relations following the fall of the Gaddafi regime.

The narrative then progresses to the Libyan Civil War, covering 2014 to 2019 in the third chapter. It scrutinizes the Turkish Foreign Ministry's position concerning the civil strife and division, acknowledging the adversity Turkish interests faced and the critical function Turkish diplomacy undertook to mediate the crisis. The chapter then narrows to the Tripoli War, spotlighting the Turkish Foreign Ministry's significant influence.

The fourth chapter extends into the aftermath of the war, discussing the formation of a new government and the complex dynamics of power negotiations, theorizing the balance of power Türkiye maintained by its military intervention. It highlights the regional and international contest for influence in Libya and Türkiye's nuanced approach to supporting the Tripoli government amidst Russian-Turkish relations.

It concludes by synthesizing the study's primary conclusions and articulating the researcher's hypothesis. It draws attention to the latest bilateral relations developments in the two countries and offers insights into the evolving geopolitical landscape.

1. Importance of research :

The research highlights the key factors that shape Turkish policy towards Libya, situating it within the broader context of Türkiye's perspective and those of international and regional stakeholders. It also emphasizes the challenges that impede Türkiye's policy and its economic and political aims in Libya, which play a crucial role in Türkiye's decision-making processes. The significance of this research can be summarized as follows:

- A. Contributing to understanding Turkish-Libyan relations, which have gained importance in the region for various reasons in recent years.
- B. Addressing and correcting existing misconceptions regarding Turkish foreign policy towards Libya.
- C. Illuminating the opportunities and challenges that characterize the Turkish-Libyan relationship.

2. Objectives of research :

This thesis investigates the hypothesis that Libyan-Turkish relations are grounded in mutual interests and cooperation across various sectors. It aims to clarify the role of Turkish foreign policy in Libya, particularly in recent years, with a specific focus on the sea border agreements. To analyze Türkiye's engagement in Libya during the Arab Spring and the years that followed a periodization approach is adopted to trace the evolution of Turkish foreign policy towards Libya, transitioning from a passive stance to a more proactive involvement, including military intervention.

The study emphasizes understanding the evolving policies between Libya and Türkiye and seeks to articulate the foundational principles of Turkish foreign policy regarding Libya. Furthermore, it aims to enhance understanding of Türkiye's international relations with Arab and North African nations that affect Türkiye-libya relations.

3. Reasons behind choosing this topic :

There is a significant gap in the literature concerning Türkiye's involvement in Libya, a particularly noteworthy deficiency considering Türkiye's prominent position within the regional geopolitical landscape. This scholarly inquiry is further informed by the researcher's firsthand experiences during the Arab Spring in Libya and an academic tenure in Türkiye.

These formative experiences have led to critical questions regarding the dynamics of Libyan-Turkish relations, which are situated within the broader context of international relations.

4. Methodology :

This thesis employs a multifaceted methodological framework that integrates analytical and descriptive approaches alongside a historical perspective when necessary. It aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Libyan-Turkish relations while subsequently investigating specific years within the 2011-2023 timeframe to address the identified research problem. The analysis is situated primarily within international relations and foreign policy disciplines, explicitly focusing on the international context and examining the various actors and dynamics that influence Libyan-Turkish interactions.

Qualitative data was enriched through the research studying Libyan-Turkish relations, employing a suite of methodological tools of description, analysis, deduction, and interpretation. The research is predominantly qualitative in nature, grounded in theoretical frameworks; however, it may also incorporate relevant economic data as necessary to enhance the analysis and provide a more nuanced understanding of the geopolitical landscape.

In this regard, the researcher conducts an in-depth analysis of Turkish foreign policy towards Libya, systematically gathering and utilizing various sources, including scholarly articles, empirical studies, institutional reports, and published works from official state institutions. In addition, the researcher employed a multi-faceted approach to data collection by conducting a series of interviews utilizing both telephonic and face-to-face methodologies. The interview subjects included notable figures in Libyan politics, specifically politicians who play significant roles within the framework of the Libyan state. Additionally, the cohort comprised academics and analysts well-versed in the political landscape of Libya. The following individuals were among those interviewed:

Abdul Rahman Shalgam a prominent Libyan diplomat and politician who held the position of Libya's permanent representative to the United Nations. In the course of the research, direct communication was established through a phone call with Mr. Shalgam, facilitating a valuable exchange of insights regarding his perspectives and experiences in international diplomacy. The researcher conducted an interview with Mr. Shalgam to investigate the factors contributing to the protracted stance of Turkey regarding the recognition of the Libyan revolution and the subsequent implications of this delay. Mr. Shalgam, recognized as a prominent figure within the former Jamahiriya regime, provides valuable insights into the political dynamics at play during this critical period.

The researcher engaged in a series of face-to-face interviews with Professor Al-Sanussi Al-Basikri, an esteemed academic specializing in Libyan political history and the director of the Libya Center for Studies and Policy Making. These meetings facilitated the collection and subsequent analysis of qualitative data, which significantly contributed to the depth of the research. Particular emphasis was placed on understanding the influence of regional actors in Libya, with a specific focus on the role of Türkiye. This approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the complex dynamics at play in Libya's political landscape.

The research conducted included a telephone interview with Mr. Fathi Tarbil, a prominent Libyan human rights advocate and former member of the National Transitional Council during the Libyan revolution. This interview provided critical insights regarding Turkey's involvement in supporting state-building efforts following the collapse of the Gaddafi regime. The discussion highlighted the implications of international assistance in post-revolutionary governance and the dynamics of foreign influence in Libya's transitional phase.

In addition to Dr. Abdul Hafeez Ghoga, a distinguished former member of the Transitional Council and a legal scholar at the University of Benghazi, the researcher engaged in a telephonic discussion with Dr. Ghoga concerning the democratic transition in Libya.

This dialogue particularly focused on the political dynamics introduced by the various parties that emerged in the aftermath of the revolution and their subsequent impact on the Libyan political landscape.

In the context of security and military considerations, particularly concerning the delineation of maritime borders between Libya and Türkiye, the researcher conducted a telephone interview, complemented by a brief in-person meeting in Istanbul with Major General Youssef Al-Mangoush. General Al-Mangoush, a prominent military figure who served as the Chief of Staff in Libya following the Libyan revolution, provided insights on various critical issues. The researcher meticulously documented the discussion, ensuring that the transcription accurately reflected the viewpoints articulated by Mr. Al-Mangoush.

As for the Islamic parties that imitate the ideas of the ruling party in Turkey, the researcher corresponded via email with the head of the Libyan Justice and Construction Party, who is considered the figure representing the wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya. The writer tried to discuss with Mr. Muhammad Sawan the idea of how Turkey could be a model for Libya. This information was taken, analyzed, and then transferred verbatim in an attempt to link it to other political visions in the context of Libyan-Turkish relations.

5. Study hypothesis :

The present study posits that Turkish foreign policy towards Libya is fundamentally motivated by a framework of objectives that have been consistently adhered to since 2002. These objectives predominantly revolve around the pursuit of economic and political interests, as articulated through bilateral agreements designed to foster political and economic cooperation.

Consequently, a discernible and irrefutable positive correlation can be established between the dynamics of the Turkish domestic economy and its consequential effects on foreign policy orientations towards Libya. Moreover, it is imperative to acknowledge that various external factors in the region exert a substantial influence on Turkish foreign policy, as Türkiye actively endeavors to promote and safeguard its economic interests within the Libyan context.

6. Sub-hypothesis :

The more Turkish involvement in Libya, the more significant economic interests Türkiye will achieve, increasing Turkish influence in the region. This heightened influence gives Türkiye valuable opportunities to maneuver in key regional political issues, particularly concerning the Eastern Mediterranean problem. Conversely, any decline in Türkiye's presence in the Libyan file will inevitably reflect negatively on Türkiye's role as a significant regional power in the Middle East and North Africa.

However, it is crucial to note that economic factors outweigh conflicts with ideology and security concerns in Türkiye's foreign policy orientation toward Libya. In this context, there exists a clear and positive relationship, with the independent variable being crucial political events and developments since 2010, such as the Arab Spring and the Eastern Mediterranean issue, and the dependent variable being the transformation in Turkish foreign policy itself.

7. The study questions :

Why was Türkiye initially opposed to the departure of the Gaddafi regime at the start of the Arab Spring, and what factors eventually led the Turkish Foreign Ministry to support the revolution?

What are the key drivers and influences behind Turkish foreign policy towards Libya?

What significant factors caused the Turkish Foreign Ministry to transition from its traditional diplomatic role and utilization of soft power to employing hard power and pragmatism in dealing with the conflict in Libya?

What outcomes has Türkiye achieved through its involvement in Libya and backing the internationally recognized Government of National Accord in 2019?

Where does Türkiye stand concerning other stakeholders in Libyan territory, and what role does it play on the map of international relations in Libya?

What obstacles, challenges, and opportunities affect Libyan-Turkish relations?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research concerning this thesis has predominantly been categorized into two main areas: the internal developments and transformations within Turkish foreign policy itself, and studies focusing on Turkey's involvement in Libya, particularly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. A significant portion of the existing literature emphasizes the evolution of Turkey's stance regarding the Libyan crisis, with diverse interpretations among scholars. Some researchers argue that Turkey shares mutual interests with Libya, indicating a collaborative relationship. Conversely, other scholars contend that Turkey may be leveraging the Libyan crisis primarily to advance its own political and economic agendas. Additionally, there are perspectives suggesting that Turkey's foreign policy approach towards Libya is characterized by a linear trajectory, adapting in response to the dynamic changes within Libya itself. This divergence in interpretations highlights the complexity of Turkey's foreign policy and its implications within the broader geopolitical context.

To thoroughly understand Turkish foreign policy toward Libya, it is essential to analyze the bilateral relations between the two countries before the onset of the Arab Spring. Prior scholarly works have offered varied interpretations of Türkiye's role in Libya and its broader implications within the region.

In the pre-Arab Spring context, Turkish foreign policy was predominantly characterized by emphasizing soft power, prioritizing economic engagement, trade partnerships, and the establishment of strategic alliances. However, this approach underwent a notable transformation following the Arab Spring. Analyzing the dynamics of the Türkiye-Libya relationship during Muammar Gaddafi's tenure offers valuable insights into the repercussions of the Arab Spring. It elucidates Türkiye's strategic objectives in its interactions with Libya. Therefore Several studies and research efforts were utilized, including the following :

Ziya öniş (2012). Turkey and the Arab Spring between Ethics and Self-interest.

Ahmad Daifullah Algarni (2021). Turkey's Influence in Libya's Crisis: Political and Security Implications Inside and Outside Libya.

Sıyat Abdı Maalım (2023) Implications of realistic defensive foreign policy towards a Turkish intervention in Libya during the first and second Libyan crisis.

Andras Malnassy (2022) discusses Turkey's military role in Libya and its wider strategic interests in the Eastern Mediterranean Basin.

Serdar Erduramaz and Hüseyin Bağci (2018) Libya and Turkey's expansion Policy in Africa.

Bilgin Ayata (2015) Turkish foreign policy in a changing Arab world :Rise and fall of a regional actor.

Ahmet Yayla (2020). Erdogan's Libyan Adventure: Turkey, Russia, Gas Pipelines and Missiles.

Henri J. Barkey (2011) : Turkish Foreign Policy and the Middle East.

Meliha Benli Altunışık and Lenore G. Martin (2023) Turkey and the Middle East and North Africa under the AKP: A Three-level analysis of foreign policy change.

Ergün Demirel (2021). Cooperation between Turkey and Libya on maritime transport.

The complexities of Turkey's foreign policy, particularly to the Middle East and North Africa during the Arab Spring and the Libyan crisis, have garnered significant scholarly attention. Two notable studies, Ziya Öniş's "Turkey and the Arab Spring between Ethics and Self-interest" (2012) and Ahmad Daifullah Algarni's "Turkey's Influence in Libya's Crisis: Political and Security Implications Inside and Outside Libya" (2021), provide comprehensive analyses of Turkey's changing diplomatic strategies and its broader geopolitical ambitions in the region.

Öniş's examination focuses on Turkey's aspirations for regional leadership under the Justice and Development Party (AKP), emphasizing the nuances of its interactions with Arab nations during a pivotal period marked by revolutionary movements. The study highlights the inherent conflict between ethical considerations and national self-interest that Turkish policymakers faced, especially in their responses to the upheaval in countries like Egypt, Libya, and Syria. Öniş underscores Turkey's shift from a "zero problems with neighbors" policy to a more complex and often strained diplomatic approach, driven by a desire to balance stability, economic interests, and the promotion of democracy in the region.

Algarni's work complements Öniş's findings by delving into Turkey's specific involvement in the Libyan crisis. He presents a nuanced analysis of Turkey's military support for the Government of National Accord, its strategic ambitions in the Maghreb, and the ramifications of its intervention for both regional and international politics. The research reveals Turkey's calculated approach to leverage the Libyan conflict as a means of enhancing its geopolitical influence while navigating the intricate dynamics of its relationships with powers such as Russia.

Both studies collectively highlight key findings regarding Turkey's role and the implications of its foreign policy actions. Öniş emphasizes Turkey's increasing influence in the Middle East, attributing it to improved relations with Arab states and the country's advocacy for the Palestinian cause. Simultaneously, Algarni illustrates Turkey's direct military intervention in Libya as a strategy to intensify regional conflicts and disrupt political settlements, further asserting its presence in North Africa.

Moreover, both analyses underscore the economic ramifications of Turkey's foreign policy. Öniş notes the challenges faced by Turkey in fostering reform while maintaining its economic interests, notably in the context of trade with the Middle East and North Africa. Algarni echoes this sentiment, indicating that Turkey's involvement in Libya could enhance its economic footprint despite the risks associated with deteriorating relations with neighboring countries.

The studies also reveal the interplay between domestic and foreign policy considerations. Öniş discusses how Turkey's regional engagements have ramifications on its domestic politics and democratic principles, while Algarni emphasizes the geopolitical aftermath of Turkey's actions in Libya, particularly in relation to its influence on broader Middle Eastern power structures.

The synthesis of Öniş's and Algarni's research illustrates the evolving landscape of Turkey's foreign policy amidst significant regional challenges. Both studies provide valuable insights into the delicate balance Turkish policymakers strive for between ethical imperatives and self-interest, the complexities of regional alliances, and the implications of Turkey's military and diplomatic strategies in shaping the future of its engagement in the Middle East and North Africa.

Through this literature review, it becomes evident that understanding the intricacies of Turkey's foreign policy is essential for comprehending the broader geopolitical dynamics at play in a tumultuous region.

Sıyat Abdı Maalim (2023) delves deeply into Türkiye's involvement in Libya during both the First and Second Libyan Crises. Abdı Maalim emphasizes the implications of a realistic defensive foreign policy, exploring the motives behind Türkiye's intervention and its impact on the relationship with Libya. Additionally, she highlights the utilization of Bayraktar drones as a component of Türkiye's military strategy, as well as the broader geopolitical consequences of its actions in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Andras Malnassy (2022) expands on this theme by examining Türkiye's strategic interests in the Eastern Mediterranean Basin following the Arab Spring. Malnassy addresses the multifaceted aspects of Türkiye's foreign policy, encompassing military support, economic relations, maritime agreements, and security sector reforms. His work contextualizes Türkiye's various actions and investments in the region within the broader framework of post-Arab Spring dynamics.

The historical relationship between Türkiye and Libya is thoroughly investigated by Serdar Erdurmaz and Hüseyin Bağcı (2018), who focus on the two nations' policies aimed at African expansion. Their research looks back at key historical periods, including Gaddafi's leadership and the subsequent political turmoil following his downfall. They argue that Libya serves as a critical access point for Türkiye's ambitions in Africa, emphasizing diplomatic, economic, and cultural connections between the countries.

Moreover, the authors analyze Türkiye's humanitarian support to Libya during the Arab Spring and subsequent backing of the UN-endorsed Government of National Accord (GNA), underscoring the significance of these ties in shaping Türkiye's African strategy.

Bilgin Ayata (2015) contributes to this conversation by detailing Türkiye's early hesitations regarding military intervention in Libya amidst the Arab uprisings. Ayata's research highlights Türkiye's substantial economic interests in Libya, as well as its efforts to mediate between opposing factions. The study also chronicles Türkiye's evolving stance on military engagement, reflecting a shift towards more direct involvement in the region post-conflict.

Ahmet Yayla (2020) builds upon this discourse by highlighting Erdoğan's strategic maneuvers in the Libyan conflict. Yayla investigates the implications of the agreements signed between Türkiye and the Government of National Accord (GNA), addressing how these arrangements intersect with Eastern Mediterranean gas pipeline politics and reflect Türkiye's broader geopolitical ambitions. This study underscores how Erdoğan's military support for the GNA aims to bolster Türkiye's economic interests while countering rival projects in the region.

Together, these studies present a comprehensive understanding of Türkiye's strategic objectives and foreign policy maneuvers in Libya. They highlight the interplay of historical ties, geopolitical aspirations, and security concerns that drive Türkiye's actions, suggesting that strengthening relations with Libya is crucial for Türkiye's broader ambitions in Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. The literature underscores the complexities of Libya's political landscape and challenges faced by Türkiye in navigating its foreign policy within this context.

This collective body of work illustrates how Türkiye's involvement in Libya is not merely a bilateral relationship but part of a broader strategic framework aimed at enhancing its influence on the African continent and addressing critical regional issues.

For Henri J. Barkey The evolution of Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East, particularly under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) since 2002, has become a focal point for scholars examining regional dynamics and international relations. Henri J. Barkey (2011) provides a comprehensive analysis of Türkiye's rising engagement in the Middle East, attributing it to various motivations such as economic growth, political aspirations, and the aim to establish Türkiye as a prominent global player. synthesizes key insights from multiple studies to highlight the trajectory, challenges, and influences shaping Türkiye's foreign policy in the region.

Barkey's examination underscores a significant transformation in Türk's foreign policy, moving from an inward-looking approach to an outward-focused, export-led economic model, currently the 16th largest globally. The AKP's initiation of the “zero problems with neighbors” strategy aimed at fostering peaceful relations with countries in its vicinity, notably Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Russia. This shift reflects a broader commitment to enhancing Türkiye's international standing through proactive diplomacy.

Meliha Benli Altunışık and Lenore G. Martin (2023) further delineates this evolution into distinct eras. It presents a clear chronological progression, starting with Türkiye's initial focus on European integration and gradual shift towards a more assertive role in the Middle East. Each era, from engagement with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) to support for the Muslim Brotherhood and robust military actions in Syria and Libya, emphasizes the changing nature of Türkiye's foreign policy and its growing assertiveness regionally.

Barkey identifies two crucial phases in the AKP's foreign policy. The early phase (2002-2007) was characterized by alignment with European standards and mediating regional conflicts.

In contrast, the later phase (2007-present) marked a transition to a bolder, more independent diplomatic strategy, wherein Türkiye expanded its economic reach and aimed for greater global influence.

This historical context sets the stage for understanding the implications of significant events like the Arab Spring, which posed challenges to Türkiye's strategies in neighboring countries.

The emergence of the Arab Spring introduced substantial complexities to Türkiye's foreign policy. As detailed by Barkey, Türkiye faced significant dilemmas, particularly concerning its strong ties with nations like Libya and Syria. The need to navigate these uprisings while safeguarding economic interests demanded a reassessment of the "zero problems" policy. The crisis in Syria, in particular, compelled Türkiye to adopt new strategies and foster international cooperation rather than relying solely on its prior diplomatic frameworks.

The interrelationship between Türkiye's economic growth and its foreign policy initiatives is pivotal. The substantial increase in exports to the Middle East highlights how economic considerations significantly shape international relations. This economic lens complements Barkey's narrative by illustrating how Türkiye's economic prosperity has facilitated its growing diplomatic presence, particularly in light of shifting trade markets beyond the EU.

The role of diplomatic initiatives is critical in strengthening Türkiye's image abroad. Notably, Barkey references Türkiye's mediation efforts, including negotiations between Israel and Syria, and agreements regarding nuclear research, as evidence of its commitment to enhancing bilateral ties. The establishment of visa-free travel and significant trade deals are also indicative of Türkiye's active pursuit of regional diplomacy, seeking to ameliorate relations with neighbors.

Finally, both Barkey's analysis and the investigation by Altunışık and Martin highlight the intricate web of political, economic, and strategic relationships that Türkiye maintains with key regional players like Iran, Syria, and Iraq. The competitive dynamic, particularly with Iran post-Arab Spring, illustrates the complexities defining Türkiye's foreign policy landscape. The interplay between domestic political factors and regional developments

further emphasizes the need for Türkiye to adapt its strategies to maintain influence amid evolving power structures.

The literature surrounding Türkiye's foreign policy in the Middle East presents a multifaceted narrative shaped by historical context, economic imperatives, and evolving diplomatic relationships. The interplay of these elements reveals a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities that Türkiye encounters as it navigates its role on the regional and global stage. The insights provided by Barkey, Altunışık, and Martin serve as crucial contributions to this ongoing discourse, highlighting the dynamic nature of Turkish diplomacy and its implications for regional stability.

What distinguishes this thesis from previous studies?

Existing scholarship has predominantly concentrated on Türkiye's recent military intervention in the Libyan crisis, the legal and political ramifications of the maritime borders agreement between Türkiye and Libya, and the framework of bilateral relations. However, this study seeks to illuminate that Türkiye's involvement in Libya is not a contemporary phenomenon, as some narratives suggest. Instead, it has its roots dating back to the onset of the Libyan crisis.

This research addresses the underlying factors and motivations that have contributed to the evolution of Türkiye's role in Libya, transitioning from a primarily diplomatic approach to an explicit utilization of military force. Furthermore, the study will examine the responses of various Libyan factions to Türkiye's actions, particularly in the context of the ongoing political fragmentation within Libya. Through this analysis, the paper intends to comprehensively understand Türkiye's strategic interests and the implications of its engagement in the Libyan conflict.

CHAPTER I

1 TÜRKIYE'S NEW ERA IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS: LIBYA RELATIONS (2002-2010)

INTRODUCTION

The chapter discusses Türkiye's significant transformation in foreign policy, particularly during the specific period of **2002-2010**, focusing on the factors influencing its diplomatic activities. It explores how Türkiye's foreign policy evolved under the Justice and Development Party (AKP), especially its diplomatic interactions with Libya before the Arab Spring. The analysis aims to define Turkish foreign policy post-2002, highlighting the significant changes during this period and their impact on Türkiye's international relationships, with a particular emphasis on Libya.

The chapter uses descriptive analysis to examine the Libyan regime's nature by identifying areas of cooperation with Türkiye before the Arab Spring. It also evaluates Türkiye's foreign policy drivers towards Libya, such as trade and investment flows, geographical considerations, and Türkiye's broader foreign policy goals. Additionally, the analysis highlights how Türkiye's strategic interests in Africa and Gaddafi's policies resonated with Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Prime Minister of Türkiye at the time.

Therefore, this chapter's research requirements were categorized into two principal segments. The initial segment explores the significant transformation in Türkiye's foreign affairs following the emergence of the Justice and Development Party. It delves into the comprehensive changes and the driving factors behind the foreign policy's new direction. The second segment focuses on the diplomatic and political relations between Libya and Türkiye before the onset of the Arab Spring, examining the nuances and dynamics of their interactions before this pivotal period.

1.1 TRANSFORMATION IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

1.1.1 Foreign Policy Change Understanding

Foreign policy refers to the actions and strategies a nation uses to achieve specific external objectives, both immediate and long-term. Understanding it requires defining what foreign policy is and how it differs from related concepts. Key aspects include its directions and functions, shaped by the nation's goals and ethical stance. A country might lean towards a regional or global approach based on its geographical location and essential interests, aiming to secure a regional or global role that helps it achieve its strategic objectives. This process might include efforts to create or modify the existing state of international affairs to match its strategic plans and serve its national interests.

Analyzing foreign policy refers to a state's objectives in its interactions with other states, influenced by domestic and international factors. Diplomacy is the primary tool, and manifestations can include war, alliances, and global trade. (Britannica, 2024)

Foreign policy analysis examines the factors influencing a state's decisions, divided into external and internal dimensions. External factors include the international environment, global dynamics, and actions of other states, shaping how countries respond on the world stage. In contrast, internal factors include domestic elements such as political systems, public opinion, interest groups, and leadership, which fundamentally inform a state's foreign policy. Understanding both influences is essential for a comprehensive analysis of foreign policy behavior. (Kaarbo, Lantis, & Beasley, 2013)

Therefore, the study of foreign policy bridges international relations and domestic politics, offering a comprehensive view that accounts for internal and external factors affecting state behavior. This dual focus enriches our understanding of foreign policy, providing a more nuanced and complete picture of the reasons behind states' actions in the international arena. However, why do countries' foreign policies change, and for what considerations?

1.1.2 Factors driving change in foreign policy

Tim Haesebrouck and Joly (2021) highlight that foreign policy changes can occur through various mechanisms influenced by multiple factors. These changes are categorized as Adjustment Change, which involves minor method changes while retaining the same goals; Program Change, entailing shifts in strategies to achieve objectives; Goal Change, representing significant changes in aims; and Fundamental Change, indicating a complete transformation in a country's global stance. Catalysts for such changes include global factors like conditions in the international system and crises, national elements such as political shifts and advocacy group influence, and personal traits of leaders.

Conversely, barriers to change are presented by global challenges like existing treaties and international norms, alongside national opposition from political factions and bureaucratic resistance. Future research directions suggest studying foreign policy changes in various contexts to develop comprehensive explanatory frameworks. Domestically, drivers of change include leadership transitions, political power shifts, advocacy for new policies, and public opinion. At the same time, inhibitors consist of political resistance, bureaucratic delays, veto players, and coalition government dynamics. (Haesebrouck & Joly, 2022)

1.1.3 TFP theoretical framework

In the Turkish foreign policy case, theoretical frameworks operate on multiple levels, with two predominant theories significantly influencing the transformation of Türkiye's foreign policy. These theories provide a lens through which the dynamic shifts and adaptations in Türkiye's international relations can be examined and understood, first the new-ottoman theory. At the same time the other is the strategic depth theory :

Inaç and Hadji (2022) explain that **Strategic Depth Theory** posits a reassessment of Türkiye's relations with neighboring countries, advocating for viewing them as opportunities rather than threats. Ahmet Davutoğlu, in "Strategic Depth," argues that Türkiye should adopt an equidistant approach to regional actors to enhance reassurance about its foreign policy. Key objectives of this strategy include fostering positive relations and promoting stability in the region. Balancing freedom and security is crucial to ensuring the rights of Turkish citizens while maintaining national safety. This approach involves actively engaging with all regions connected to Türkiye's historical legacy rather than limiting interactions to one area. By implementing proactive peace strategies, Türkiye aims to resolve potential conflicts before they escalate, all while adhering to the principle of "zero problems" in relations with neighboring countries. (Inaç & Hadji, 2022)

Neo-Ottomanism is a vision for Türkiye's renewal that emerged during the 1980s under President Turgut Özal and is endorsed by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and various scholars. It is based on three pillars: reconciling Türkiye's Islamic heritage with its multicultural Ottoman legacy, fostering Ottoman pride in foreign policy, and maintaining balanced relations with the West and the Islamic East. Domestically, it aims to uphold secular citizenship principles while enhancing state-society relations. Externally, it promotes a mix of soft and hard power to achieve Türkiye's foreign policy goals, as former Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu articulated, emphasizing reintegration with neighboring regions and bridging divides among Arab and Islamic communities. (Inaç & Hadji, 2022)

1.2 EVOLUTION OF TÜRKIYE'S FOREIGN POLICY POST-COLD WAR

The collapse of the Cold War paradigm marked a significant turning point in global geopolitics, compelling nations to reassess and redefine their foreign policy objectives in an increasingly dynamic international landscape. Türkiye, strategically situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, undertook a transformative journey in its foreign relations, recalibrating its historical alliances and forging new connections. (Kirişçi, 2016).

(Aydin, 2013) Türkiye was found economically and strategically unprepared to navigate the new geopolitical landscape in the aftermath of the Cold War. Between 1990 and 2000, Türkiye faced significant security challenges, exposing a lack of psychological readiness, logistical infrastructure, and tactical preparation. This highlighted the urgent need for Turkish policymakers to reassess their approach.

This era was characterized by Türkiye's endeavors to reimagine and solidify its position on the global stage, striving for a delicate equilibrium between maintaining its established connections with the West and pursuing a more pronounced presence within its geographical vicinity through regional influence and economic integration. The strategic significance of Türkiye, serving as a pivotal bridge linking Europe and Asia, alongside its influential role in ensuring regional security, was underscored and magnified against the backdrop of the evolving post-Cold War geopolitical terrain. (Öniş, Turkey in the Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity, 1995)

With the ascent of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) to power in 2002, Türkiye's foreign policy (TFP) has experienced a pronounced shift from a stance of restraint towards one of active regional involvement. The JDP's strategic objective has been to elevate Türkiye's role on the global stage by balancing pragmatic approaches with ethical considerations, thereby aspiring to foster stability amidst a complex geopolitical environment. (Oğuzlu, 2020)

1.2.1 TFP shift towards centralization

While some analyses have attributed these shifts to ideological and religious motivations or characterized them as indicative of a Euroasian or Eastern geopolitical stance, a more nuanced review suggests that Türkiye has crafted a coherent and integrated approach to foreign policy. This approach can be aptly described as embodying a realistic foreign policy with a value axis, evidencing a harmonious balance between pragmatism and moral values.

The foreign policy vision of Türkiye in the post-Cold War era was centered around the concept of being a "center-state." İsmail Cem initially introduced this vision and later adapted by Ahmet Davutoğlu. The idea was for Türkiye to assert its European identity while also playing a central role in the developing Eurasian reality. This multidirectional foreign policy approach aimed to balance Türkiye's Eastern and Western identities and actively participate in both regions.

Being a "center-state" was seen as a way to enhance Türkiye's relations with the East and the West. Emel Parlar Dal argued that Türkiye's involvement in the Middle East during the early 2000s complemented its ties with the West. This multidirectional approach aimed to strengthen Türkiye's position as an active and order-building player in non-Western regions, ultimately benefiting its relations with Western allies. This approach demonstrated that countries can adopt multidirectional to improve their relations with specific areas or alliances in their foreign policies. (Kiraz, 2023)

Hence, foreign policies are influenced by various factors impacted by the international system and changes within a specific country. This is particularly evident in Türkiye, where political decisions are shaped by shifts in global and regional developments, mainly due to its significant geographical location.

1.2.2 Türkiye's Foreign Policy: From Caution to Strategy

Altunışık and Martin (2023), in their study of TFP transformation, show that Türkiye's foreign policy has been cautious and practical since its establishment, particularly in the Middle East. This approach was partly influenced by the remnants of its Ottoman past, which taught Ankara the risks of becoming overly involved in the region's contentious politics. After 2002, Turkish foreign policy underwent a significant transformation.

Scholars analyzed the new approach and divided it into two periods. The first period spans from the ascent of the Justice and Development Party to power until 2007, during which there was a noteworthy shift in Türkiye's approach to foreign policy. It also noted that the AKP has implemented significant changes in its foreign policy.

These changes are not just adjustments or fine-tuning but represent substantial transformations in goals and orientation. However, complete overhauls in a state's foreign policy are uncommon, particularly in states governed by the same party. Therefore, the frequency and depth of the AKP's foreign policy changes are remarkable.

Despite some disagreements with Western countries, Türkiye primarily sought to align itself with Europe. This was evident during the AKP's initial term, 2002-07, where emphasis was placed on aligning with EU standards to facilitate membership. However, Türkiye's strategy markedly shifted in its subsequent term 2007-11 (Altunışık & Martin, 2023)

Under the guidance of Ahmet Davutoğlu, Erdoğan's chief advisor who later became the foreign minister, and his concept of "strategic depth," Türkiye turned its attention towards its immediate surroundings. The goal was to establish itself as a key and stabilizing player in the area, acting as a fair mediator while extending its economic influence across the region (Cornell, 2012)

1.2.3 Türkiye's geographic impact on foreign policy

Türkiye's unique geography plays a pivotal role in shaping its foreign policy, endowing it with a strategic position with significant influence across multiple regions. Some define it as a Middle Eastern country, while others see it as a European one; however, according to previous Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu's definition of Türkiye's geography and regional importance in the context of new Turkish foreign policy.

According to Ahmet Davutoğlu (2007), Türkiye is strategically nestled at the crossroads of the Afro-Eurasian landmass, boasting a central position that bridges diverse regions, including the Middle East, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Caspian region, the Mediterranean, the Gulf, and the Black Sea areas. This unique placement grants Türkiye a multifaceted regional identity and enables it to act as a dynamic interface for various cultural, economic, and political exchanges. The country's prime location elevates its significance as a critical player in ensuring regional stability and security.

Türkiye's strategic importance is accentuated by its ability to influence pivotal cross-continental dynamics as a vital conduit between Asia and Europe, with proximate access to Africa via the Eastern Mediterranean.

Davutoğlu added that Türkiye, geographically positioned as an essential link in the East-West energy corridor, Türkiye's territory is a critical transit route for global energy supplies. The prominence of projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and the Nabucco gas pipeline underscores Türkiye's pivotal role in bolstering energy security and facilitating the flow of vital resources. The rich tapestry of Türkiye's cultural and historical heritage is deeply intertwined with its geographical diversity. Iconic cities like Istanbul, which straddles two continents, are living testaments to the country's storied past and its role as a melting pot of civilizations. This cultural plurality adds to its allure and enhances Türkiye's diplomatic and cultural influence on the global stage.

Leveraging its geographical advantages, Türkiye actively fosters and expands its relations with neighboring regions and beyond. Its strategic outreach extends Türkiye's influence across the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, reinforcing its position as a critical regional power. The strategic leverage afforded by Türkiye's geography facilitates the pursuit of a multi-dimensional foreign policy.

This enables Türkiye to maintain a balanced and complementary relationship with major global powers, including the United States, the European Union, and Russia, amplifying its voice and influence in international affairs. Türkiye's geographical positioning bestows it a distinctive status as a central country, empowering it to actively and constructively shape regional and global dynamics. (Davutoğlu, 2008)

Thus, till this point, Davutoglu explained the need for an integrated foreign policy that interacts with all policy issues, stressing the importance of Turkish interests being rooted in strategic depth while responding appropriately to changing circumstances.

However, it should be noted that while noteworthy, Davutoglu's foreign policy vision was shared in its emphasis on a multilateral approach. Similar views had been expressed by other Turkish politicians, such as Özal, who first advocated for this vision in the late 1980s, who believed Türkiye should pursue a more assertive foreign policy and claim a leading regional role. İsmail Cem, Türkiye's former foreign minister, echoed this sentiment a decade later in the 1990s. (Örmeci, 2011)

This indicates that influential political figures across the Turkish political spectrum shared the crux of Davutoglu's views. However, the convergence of favorable domestic and international circumstances following the rise of the AKP to power allowed for a heightened expression of these views. What truly set Davutoglu's foreign policy thesis apart was his endeavor to portray Türkiye as a soft power and advocate for resolving internal and bilateral conflicts, recognizing its obstructive role in transforming Türkiye into a global actor.

So, in Türkiye's case, understanding foreign policy requires recognizing its connection to international relations and domestic politics. Changes in foreign policy can occur through various mechanisms, from minor adjustments to fundamental shifts in goals. Critical catalysts for these transformations include global developments, national political dynamics, and leaders' attributes. This complexity highlights that the language of interest is central to the dynamics of international relations.

1.3 TÜRKIYE-LIBYA DIPLOMACY: PRE-ARAB SPRING (2002-2010)

The new shift in Turkish foreign policy post-2002 has facilitated better ties with Libya's Jamahiriya regime, also known as the Gaddafi regime. This improvement is mainly due to the Gaddafi regime's mutual discontent with the West and Türkiye's strategic interest in deepening connections with Eastern nations. Furthermore, Türkiye's foreign policy has increasingly recognized the significance of Africa in its diplomatic pursuits. Before the onset of the Arab Spring, Türkiye and Libya enjoyed a robust relationship marked by economic and political collaboration, despite initial frictions.

A notable moment of tension occurred in 1996 when Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's visit to Muammar Gaddafi led to a diplomatic spat due to Gaddafi's offensive comments about the Turkish populace, momentarily souring the relationship. (Hüseyin Bağcı & Serdar Erdurmaz, 2017)

Nonetheless, Bağcı and Erdurmaz (2018) noted that the period leading up to the Arab Spring markedly improved Türkiye-Libya relations, propelled by shared economic interests and significant diplomatic interactions. The relationship was characterized by heightened trade, financial, and political cooperation. High-level exchanges and agreements aimed at enhancing collaboration across various domains were prevalent. Turkish construction firms embarked on numerous projects in Libya, and trade between the two nations grew from 1.4 billion USD in 2008 to 2.2 billion USD in 2009. Key agreements were executed, covering areas such as visa exemption, agricultural and banking cooperation, joint investments in Africa, and transport.

1.4 LIBYA: GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMY, AND NATURAL RESOURCES OVERVIEW

Libya, located in North Africa within the Maghreb region, is bordered by Egypt, Sudan, Chad, Niger, Algeria, and Tunisia. It spans about 1,760 thousand square kilometers, making it the 16th largest country in the world, with a population exceeding six million, a quarter of whom live in Tripoli's capital. The country's landscape is predominantly desert, which limits most of its population to two coastal regions. Libya's economy heavily relies on the oil and gas sector, which has been pivotal since the discovery of oil in 1957, significantly contributing to GDP and export earnings. With an average crude oil production of 1,314.56 BBL/D/IK from 1973 to 2022, Libya's oil is valued for its quality and proximity to major markets. Despite ongoing political instability, Libya has one of Africa's highest per capita GDPs.

It is also rich in natural resources, including one of Africa's largest iron ore deposits and significant natural gas reserves, along with gypsum, silica, phosphate, and limestone. It presents opportunities for economic development pending improvements in extraction and management sectors. (Kiprop, 2019)

Therefore, taking into consideration the importance of Libya's geopolitics, which is multifaceted and rooted in its strategic location, significant oil reserves, demographic patterns, and regional connections, These elements collectively underscore Libya's role as a key player in North African and Mediterranean, and broader international affairs, affecting everything from energy markets to migration and regional security dynamics.

1.4.1 Libya's Shifting Foreign Policy

According to Joffé and Paoletti (2011), Libya under King Idris I showcased a centralized monarchy that balanced traditional governance with the challenges of modern statecraft after gaining independence in 1951. However, this changed dramatically in 1969 when Muammar Gaddafi led a coup, dismantling the monarchy and introducing the Jamahiriya system based on his Green Book.

This system aimed to merge socialism with direct democracy, emphasizing people's congresses and committees, although its execution often fell short of democratic ideals. Gaddafi's influence extended to Libya's foreign policy, which was shaped by his ideologies and strategic interests. The country's heavy reliance on oil exports brought wealth but also made its foreign policy vulnerable to global market fluctuations, driving a continuous search for favorable trade agreements and foreign investment to sustain economic growth.

Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's pivotal role must be considered when examining Libya's foreign policy. His leadership significantly shaped the nation's governance structure and approach to international relations. The distinctive nature of Libya's political system and the character of the state under Gaddafi's rule create a complex backdrop for understanding the country's foreign policy dynamics.

Muammar Gaddafi's regime has been critical for a comprehensive understanding of Libya's foreign relations, encompassing its character, political ideologies, and decision-making processes.

Gaddafi's foreign policy was notably personalized, often revolving around his leadership rather than being institutionalized within structured governmental frameworks. (Joffé & Paoletti, 2011)

Libya's strategic location in North Africa provided significant geopolitical leverage, which Gaddafi skillfully utilized to enhance the country's influence through alliances and confrontations. His foreign policy, shaped by Libya's colonial past and anti-imperialist stance, supported anti-colonial movements and aimed for leadership in the global south, mainly through Pan-Africanism and Pan-Arabism. Gaddafi's ideology was intertwined with regional dynamics, as he participated actively in politics, forming alliances and engaging in conflicts. Thus, Libya's transformation from monarchy under King Idris I to Gaddafi's republic illustrates the complexities of state-building and its international relations (Cecil,1965)

1.4.2 Gaddafi's ideological and pragmatic foreign policy

Qaddafi's tenure as Libya's leader was characterized by a dynamic and multifaceted approach to foreign policy, deeply influenced by a blend of ideological fervor, pragmatism, and evolving international contexts.

Qaddafi was initially a staunch advocate for pan-Arabism and later for pan-Africanism. Qaddafi sought to position Libya as a central figure on both the Arab and African stages, driven by a robust anti-imperialist stance, especially against Western powers. His foreign policy was notably marked by support for various liberation movements and insurgent groups worldwide, leveraging Libya's oil wealth to extend its influence and champion anti-colonial struggles.

However, his policies often led to international isolation. A significant shift occurred in the early 2000s when Qaddafi sought reconciliation with the West, leading to a cautious reintegration of Libya into the global community, underscoring a complex legacy marked by ambitions of influence and the challenges of navigating international politics. (Mitchell, 1982)

Mitchell (1982) noted that there are several vital elements marked Colonel Muammar Qaddafi's foreign policy:

- Pan-Arabism and Pan-Africanism: Qaddafi strongly advocated for Arab unity and later shifted his focus towards African unity. He sought to position Libya as a leader in the Arab world and Africa.
- Anti-Imperialism: Qaddafi's foreign policy was heavily anti-Western, particularly against the United States and former colonial powers. He opposed Western influence in the Middle East and Africa.
- Support for Liberation Movements: Qaddafi supported various liberation movements and insurgent groups worldwide, including the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and various African liberation movements.
- Oil Diplomacy: Libya's vast oil reserves significantly influenced Qaddafi's foreign policy. He used oil revenues to fund domestic and international agendas and influence other countries.
- Conflict and Isolation: Qaddafi's policies often led to conflicts with neighboring countries and strained relations with many Western nations.
- Reconciliation and Re-engagement: In the early 2000s, Qaddafi sought to improve relations with the West. Libya took responsibility for the Lockerbie bombing, paid compensation to victims' families, and dismantled its weapons of mass destruction programs, leading to the lifting of international sanctions. Qaddafi's foreign policy was complex and often contradictory, reflecting his ambitions and the changing geopolitical landscape.

1.5 THE EVOLUTION OF TURKISH-LIBYAN RELATIONS POST-2002

Based on what has been reached so far, the transformation of Turkish foreign policy, influenced by international and regional dynamics changes and Türkiye's internal politics, significantly impacted its relations with Libya. Moreover, the rise of Islamic parties in Türkiye, which sought to build alliances with countries sharing the Ottoman heritage, marked a pivotal shift in Turkish foreign relations. (Calabrò, 2017)

With its rich Ottoman heritage, Libya emerged as a focal point in this redefined foreign policy strategy. An example of the visit of Necmettin Erbakan to Libya underscored a philosophical and strategic realignment towards these Islamic nations. Erbakan's rhetoric vividly encapsulated this vision, signaling a departure from previous policies and emphasizing a shared ideological and cultural heritage. (Magazin, 1997)

Gaddafi's criticism of the international system and its relations with Western countries has been noted in his long-standing efforts. (Charbonneau & Haddadin, 2009) To reorient Türkiye away from Western influence, Gaddafi perceived the rise of new political parties and Islamists in Türkiye as aligning with his political ideas. This perspective was also deeply rooted in historical grievances, including the 1974 Cyprus conflict, which significantly affected the Turkish Cypriots at the time in which Gaddafi played an unlimited role in supporting Türkiye. (Simsek, 2024)

The post-2002 era was a testament to Türkiye's dynamic foreign policy strategy, especially with the new approach to Turkish Foreign policy and the rise of the Justice and Development Party, particularly vis-à-vis Libya. For Türkiye, it had been a narrative of strategic realignment, ideological affinities, and a shared legacy that has not only reshaped the bilateral relations between Türkiye and Libya but also underscored Türkiye's evolving role in the regional arena.

This was apparent in the Turkish strategy towards Africa in 2005 when the Turkish government declared the "Year of Africa." During this time, Türkiye was granted observer status at the African Union, demonstrating its renewed focus on the continent. This was followed by the inaugural Türkiye-Africa Summit in 2008, which brought together representatives from 50 African countries to discuss development opportunities and strengthen economic ties. (Kaya, 2020) .

Moreover, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that since 2009, Türkiye has consistently contributed 1 million US dollars annually to the African Union. (Idriss, 2020) The interconnectedness of Turkish-African relations and Libyan-Turkish dynamics significantly influences the Turkish Foreign Ministry's foreign policy approach toward Libya. This relationship is particularly relevant considering Muammar Gaddafi's strong commitment to African unity and his genuine advocacy for continental issues. (Trend news agency, 2009)



FIGURE 1 ERDOGAN'S VISIT TO GADDAFI WITH A DELEGATION OF BUSINESSMEN : RESOURCE/ HABER 3 (GADDAFI HOSTS ERDOGAN IN HIS TENT, 2009)

Türkiye's strategic diplomacy took a notable turn as it forged new communication channels with the Gaddafi regime. This move significantly reshaped the bilateral relations between the two nations across both political and economic dimensions. In 2009, during

a landmark visit to Libya, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan embarked on an ambitious mission to strengthen economic ties. This initiative was rooted in Türkiye's broader strategy to expand its foreign trade and venture into new markets, reflecting its aspirations to bolster its regional influence.

Erdogan's visit was marked by high-profile meetings and discussions to explore various avenues for collaboration, including trade agreements, infrastructure projects, and investment opportunities. This engagement highlighted Libya's importance as a key partner for Türkiye in North Africa. It served as a testament to Türkiye's commitment to diversifying its economic partnerships amidst the evolving geopolitical landscape. The dialogue fostered during this visit laid the groundwork for a favorable environment, allowing both nations to capitalize on their strengths and resources.

He announced, "We want to raise trade with Libya to \$10 billion in the next five years." During his visit, several agreements were signed, including a memorandum of understanding on joint investments in Africa and an agreement to remove visa requirements for the two countries' nationals. Erdogan added, "We discussed more agreements, including eliminating double taxation and establishing a high-level cooperation council." (Dünya, 2009).

These relations laid the foundation for various bilateral construction, investment, and trade exchange agreements. In 2010, reciprocal visits between Libyan and Turkish officials facilitated expanded opportunities for mutual economic relations, investments, and trade. During one of the official visits by the Turkish Minister of Economy Zafer Çağlayan to Libya in 2010, "A new era has started in Turkish-Libyan relations. "We paid a one-day visit to this country upon an invitation from al-Mahmudi. The Libyan Prime Minister had addressed Turkish contractors there. Libya opens its doors to Turkish business people. This country has decided to give USD 15 billion of projects to Turkish companies in the construction sector "Caglayan.¹

¹ Zafer Çağlayan Turkish official served as Minister of Industry and Trade in the Government and then as Minister of State Responsible for Foreign Trade in 2009: source (The investment office of the presidency of the Republic of Turkey)

Consequently, Turkish contractors successfully captured a significant share of these opportunities. They have undertaken projects valued at over \$15 billion, and more than 20,000 Turkish nationals, primarily employed in construction, reside in Libya. Moreover, Türkiye's exports to Libya rose significantly, reaching \$2 billion in 2010. (Kardas, 2011)

In 2010, Gaddafi honored Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and granting him the Human Rights Award; this Award came in the context of Erdogan's support for the Palestinian cause, as Gaddafi described Erdogan's behavior as brave Motion (2010) Despite the harsh criticism many observers spoke about since the Gaddafi regime considered as a dictatorship regime. The award, including a \$250,000 prize, has been previously given to figures like Nelson Mandela and Hugo Chavez. It honors individuals or institutions that advocate for human rights and peace globally. (Üstündağ, 2010)

Another indication of the strengthening relationship between the two countries is Gaddafi's invitation to Erdogan to attend the Arab summit held in Sirte, Libya, in 2010 as a guest participant. Some observers interpreted this invitation as Gaddafi's attempt to leverage Türkiye's symbolic importance to promote his three-dimensional policy, which encompasses African, Arab, and Islamic dimensions (Arab Center for Research and Political Studies, 2011)

CHAPTER II

2 TÜRKIYE AND LIBYA: FROM GADDAFI TO REVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines Türkiye's role in Libya before, during, and after the 2011 revolution, highlighting its foreign policy shifts amidst regional political upheaval. Initially adhering to a "zero problems" approach, Türkiye supported Muammar Gaddafi, prioritizing economic interests. However, as the conflict evolved, Türkiye adopted its stance, endorsing the revolutionaries a change driven by its growing emphasis on democracy and regional stability.

The analysis employs a periodization framework, identifying three phases: Türkiye's initial support for Gaddafi, its mediation in his removal, and its comprehensive engagement in the post-Gaddafi landscape. This chapter critically assesses the political, security, and economic systems that emerged following the revolution, exploring the implications for Libya's democratization.

The methodology focuses on descriptive and analytical interpretations, utilizing contemporary news reports and the author's reflections to enrich the understanding of Türkiye's involvement in Libya during this pivotal period.

2.1 LIBYA'S ARAB SPRING: FROM PEACEFUL PROTESTS TO ARMED REVOLUTION

The Arab Spring in Libya commenced shortly after the ousting of Tunisia's ex-President Ben Ali on February 14, 2011. During a televised address, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi expressed his concerns about the possibility of a similar upheaval (Guardian, n.d.) Protests erupted in Benghazi on February 15 in response to the detention of human rights activist Fethi Tarbel. What began as a peaceful demonstration quickly descended into chaos, culminating in a declared Day of Rage on February 17. Protesters showed remarkable defiance, utilizing looted bulldozers filled with dynamite to raid government armories. As the demonstrations spread to cities like Tripoli, anti-government militias began to emerge, and officials defected from Gaddafi's regime.

However, Gaddafi's forces regrouped and initiated a fierce counter-offensive. On February 22, he ordered his troops to suppress the uprising, employing heavy military equipment and foreign mercenaries, which further intensified the conflict and created more significant uncertainty about Libya's future.

Libya found itself at a critical crossroads regarding public dissent against the Gaddafi regime, which had maintained power for over four decades. Initially, the protests centered around calls for reforms, as the author asserts, and he actively participated in these demonstrations. As a Libyan protester at the time, Our demands included freedom of expression, the establishment of a democratic framework, a new constitution, equitable wealth distribution, improvements to the education and health sectors, broader civil rights, and enhanced living conditions.²

However, the Gaddafi regime's response was one of lethal force, branding demonstrators as traitors and vowing to pursue them. On state TV being rebroadcast and translated on CNN, he said that "rats" and agents of "foreign intelligence services" are behind the unrest

²The events surrounding the protests against the Gaddafi regime were marked by significant violence and repression. As an eyewitness, the author assert present during these protests and actively participated in them. It is vivid in memory how the regime resorted to the use of live ammunition in an attempt to quell the revolutionary fervor. This brutality was particularly evident in front of a security battalion linked to Gaddafi's forces, known explicitly as the Fadhil Bou Omar Battalion. This battalion's involvement exemplifies the lengths the regime would go to maintain its grip on power during widespread dissent.

in Libya. Saying that "this is my country" and that he and others have "irrigated it with our blood," Gadhafi proclaimed he would "be a martyr at the end." (Memcott, 2011)

This escalation transformed the protests from a peaceful movement into a full-fledged revolution, particularly after the casualties intensified. This turning point galvanized many Libyans to view the situation as a pivotal opportunity to dismantle the longstanding regime, leading to a collective uprising from various segments of society.



FIGURE 2 IN BENGHAZI SQUARE, PROTESTERS ARE HOLDING QATARI, FRENCH, AND AMERICAN FLAGS.

Having lived in Benghazi, the epicenter of the uprising, the author directly observed these developments from their inception. For instance, they witnessed the populace's assault on military camps and the subsequent acquisition of arms to resist Gaddafi's loyalist forces. What began as nonviolent demonstrations swiftly evolved into an armed conflict, ultimately necessitating international intervention to quell Gaddafi's oppressive regime.

The central square, previously known as a site for political sit-ins, transformed into a venue where flags of supportive nations were prominently displayed. International backing quickly aligned with the newborn National Transitional Council, which was recognized as the legitimate governing body in Libya as the Gaddafi regime faltered.

Notably, countries such as France and Qatar emerged as critical supporters. Ironically, Türkiye had no role in that early period, as shown in Figure 3, indicating the flags the demonstrators were raising and thanking the countries supporting the uprising. Instead, Türkiye's response can be characterized as passive. This analysis will delve into the rationale underlying this stance by examining the three distinct phases of Turkish positions, highlighting the various stages of evolution that influenced these responses.

When the conflict and confrontations intensified, Gaddafi escalated his use of excessive force in his famous speech. "the whole world looked up to Libya and that protests were serving the devil." He urged his supporters to attack the cockroaches, who were demonstrating against his rule. As events developed, the United Nations decided to address the events and developments in Libya After confirming reports indicating that Gaddafi may have targeted civilians.

March (2011) United Nations "Demanded an immediate ceasefire in Libya, including an end to the current attacks against civilians, which it said might constitute crimes against humanity, the Security Council imposed a ban on all flights in the country's airspace — a no-fly zone — and tightened sanctions on the Qadhafi regime and its supporters Adopting resolution 1973 (2011) by a vote of 10 in favor to none against, with five abstentions (Brazil et al.), the Council authorized Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, to take all necessary measures to protect civilians under threat of attack in the country, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory requesting them to inform the Secretary-General of such measures immediately."

On March 22, NATO (2011) initiated operations to enforce an arms embargo against Libya following a UN request, aiming to prevent weapons and mercenaries from reaching the country. Moreover, it implemented a no-fly zone to safeguard civilians from air attacks, as per UN Security Council Resolution 1973.

On March 31, NATO assumed full command of military actions, which encompassed enforcing the arms embargo, implementing the no-fly zone, and targeting military forces threatening civilians, all grounded in principles of legality, regional support, and necessity.

However, questions linger regarding Türkiye's stance on these events, its connections with Gaddafi, and its role as a NATO member in international interventions. (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2011)

The escalation and conflict, which required international intervention, prompted questions about Türkiye's position during these events, especially given its prior strong ties with the Gaddafi regime. It is important to explore how the changing political dynamics in Libya and the broader effects of the Arab Spring have shaped Türkiye's foreign policy and strategic interests in the region.

Before the February 2011 uprising, Türkiye was primarily focused on strengthening its economic interests in Libya. 2010 Turkish companies secured many construction contracts, investing billions of dollars in the sector. They signed around 304 commercial agreements in Libya. When the Arab Spring began, it seemed like a great challenge and opportunity for Türkiye. Initially, Türkiye opposed NATO's military actions against Colonel Gaddafi's regime due to its economic interests. However, Türkiye later changed its position and supported the Libyan revolution. (Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2020)

"Türkiye did not favor the complete removal of the Gaddafi regime. Instead, it advocated for the government to implement specific reforms and respond to the people's demands. Türkiye's involvement in the Arab Spring concerning Libya differed notably from its approach in other Arab Spring countries. The decade before the Libyan revolution had fostered significant economic and political progress between the two nations. Economic interests were a significant factor, with Türkiye emphasizing the need to protect them, particularly in its strategy and vision for North Africa. Türkiye's opposition to international intervention also stemmed from concerns about its potential impact on regional security. Consequently, the Turkish stance was shaped by multiple considerations, leading to a delay in making initial decisions regarding the uprising "(Abdul Rahman Shalgam, telephone interview , September 28, 2024)

This early neutrality positioned Türkiye as a mediator and aligned with its broader diplomatic objectives. However, as Gaddafi faced increasing isolation, Türkiye's continued support adversely affected its international reputation. Ultimately, mounting pressure and changing dynamics compelled Türkiye to shift from a neutral stance to one aligned with the insurgents, reflecting the untenable nature of the status quo for its ambitions on the global stage (Málnássy, 2022)

Consequently, Türkiye's role evolved into three phases: siding with the regime by opposing international intervention, mediating, and shifting to a new policy by calling for the Libyan regime to step down.

2.2 THE EVOLUTION OF TÜRKIYE'S STANCE ON THE ARAB SPRING IN LIBYA

2.2.1 The first Phase: balancing diplomacy and International Pressures

Türkiye, a critical NATO member, opposed international calls for a no-fly zone over Libya, with Prime Minister Erdogan arguing that military interventions would be counterproductive. His comments came as France and Britain sought support for the intervention at a G8 meeting. At the same time, the U.S.

suggested that such decisions should originate from the U.N. Erdogan stressed the historical risks of foreign military actions and supported the Libyan people's right to self-determination. As the U.N. Security Council discussed the no-fly zone, Erdogan indicated Türkiye might abstain from votes on military intervention and recounted his efforts to engage with Gaddafi, suggesting a leadership choice for Libya's transitional phase. (Yackley, 2011)

Türkiye's relations with Libya evolved during the Arab Spring, from initial reluctance to endorse regime change due to its significant economic interests and a notable presence in Libya to reluctant participation in the NATO intervention amid rising international pressure.

While initially criticized for being passive towards Muammar Qaddafi's regime, Türkiye eventually joined the effort, though it maintained a limited role compared to France and Britain. This shift highlights the ethical dilemmas and self-interest in Turkish foreign policy as it navigated the complexities of supporting regime change. (Öniş, 2012)

Türkiye did not take an active role in the combat operations conducted under the NATO mission, which had a United Nations mandate to safeguard civilians under threat in Libya. Intense clashes in the beleaguered coastal cities of Misrata and Benghazi led to numerous injuries and a shortage of functioning medical facilities.

In collaboration with the conflicting parties, the Turkish government sent a hospital ship to evacuate the critically injured to Türkiye and organized their care at Turkish hospitals. Türkiye prioritizes civilian protection and calls for an immediate ceasefire and effective humanitarian aid delivery in Libya. The country was engaged in humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Libyan people and actively contributed to international efforts coordinated by the United Nations and NATO. (ICRC, 2011)

However, they later recognized that the situation was increasingly unfavorable for Gaddafi. Türkiye contributed positively by helping to prevent conflict and facilitating discussions with the Gaddafi regime. Recep Tayyip Erdogan quickly changed his position in an attempt to find a role for Türkiye in Libya after the inevitable fall of the government, which can be understood as the second phase of the Turkish position towards the Arab Spring in Libya.

2.2.2 The second phase: From Support to Gaddafi to mediation role

The political discourse of the Turkish leadership and political elite towards the regime in Libya has started to change at this phase, and its features have begun to take a different path. The proposal is for a peaceful resolution to the deadlocked conflict, involving a withdrawal by Muammar Gaddafi's forces from cities held by the rebels and democratic reform.

Recognizing the situation's fragility, Türkiye transitioned into the role of mediator, striving to facilitate dialogue amidst the chaos. This shift was not merely diplomatic; it marked a profound change in Türkiye's foreign policy approach. In addition, it has mapped out the fundamental tenets of its policy regarding Libya, underscoring the importance of preserving the unity of Libyan territory and advocating for political transformation that aligns with the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people. As a significant force representing the Libyan people's aspirations, Türkiye adopted a stance rooted in political realism.

In his press conference in April 2011, Prime Minister Erdogan recognized that the issue could not be resolved solely through military means; it was essential to achieve a ceasefire and initiate a political process that reflects the aspirations of the Libyan people." From the beginning of the crisis, we have communicated with the Libyan Administration in Tripoli, delivering our sincere messages to Muammar Qaddafi. We have consistently called for his resignation and advocated for a leader the Libyan people chose to restore peace and stability—garnering support from the international community.

In our recent roadmap, we made it clear that Qaddafi must step down to enable a transition to constitutional democracy. Unfortunately, the Tripoli administration has disregarded our calls for action. Rather than heeding our warnings and working to avoid bloodshed, Muammar Qaddafi chose violence against his people." (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011) The Turkish Prime Minister presented a roadmap initiative that included :

- "1. An immediate ceasefire, withdrawal of military forces from cities, lifting of sieges, and restoration of essential services.
2. The establishment of secure humanitarian zones for the free flow of aid to all Libyan citizens.
3. Urgent initiation of an inclusive democratic process that considers the interests of the entire population." (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011)

With this newfound perspective, Türkiye sought to establish pragmatic and open relations with the NTC.

It engaged with the revolutionaries to support a transition to a more democratic governance framework while safeguarding its regional strategic interests. This evolution in Türkiye's diplomatic posture underscored the delicate balance of power and the unpredictable nature of international relations during the upheaval in Libya.

2.2.3 The third phase: Embracing Change in Libya's Political Landscape

During the shifting political tides in Libya, Türkiye ultimately reached a pivotal conclusion regarding its relationship with the Gaddafi regime. As the once-powerful Colonel Gaddafi's grip on power faltered, the reality of his impending downfall became increasingly apparent. Despite numerous diplomatic overtures to foster cooperation and stability, Türkiye recognized that engaging with Gaddafi's government was no longer feasible. Realizing the futility of supporting a regime in decline, Türkiye strategically decided to sever ties with Gaddafi. (Barkey, 2012)

Instead, it started to re-approach its policy, lately acknowledging the National Transitional Council (NTC). The political opposition entity, which was established in early March 2011, is a coalition of local rebel factions, a leadership group in Benghazi that announced its objectives to serve as the military leadership for the rebellion, represent the Libyan opposition, deliver services in areas controlled by the rebels, and oversee the country's shift towards a democratic government. (Britannica, 2011) As the legitimate representative of the Libyan people.

This move signified a bold shift in Türkiye's foreign policy, as it aligned itself with the aspirations of those seeking a new political order, marking a decisive break from a past increasingly seen as unstable and untenable. In addition, this transformation highlighted Türkiye's commitment to supporting a unified Libya while responding to its citizens' urgent demands for change, illustrating the complexity and dynamism of the region's political landscape.



FIGURE 3 AHMET DAVUTOGLU VISITS BENGHAZI 3/JULY/2011/SOURCE: AL JAZEERA NEWS/TÜRKIYE RECOGNIZES LIBYAN REBELS.

In a diplomatic move towards Libya's National Transitional Council (NTC), Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu announced a 138 million euro aid package to support the Libyan opposition. He proposed a comprehensive plan for resolving the crisis, which included an immediate ceasefire, humanitarian access, the withdrawal of foreign forces, and the removal of Muammar Gaddafi. Davutoglu highlighted the need for reforms and national unity. Additionally, in response to UN sanctions, Turkish authorities took control of the Libyan-Turkish bank A&T, replacing its leadership, signaling Türkiye's recognition of the opposition as rebel forces advanced toward Tripoli. (RFI, 2011)

The decision reflects Türkiye's support for the Council's role in the political transition and highlights the evolving dynamics of foreign involvement in Libya's internal affairs. This recognition underscores the complex interplay of national interests and regional stability in Libya's struggle for peace and governance.

2.3 FALL OF THE CAPITAL

Harding and Borger (2011) explain that Tripoli fell as rebel forces entered Gaddafi's compound, symbolizing liberation. The rebels' victory was highlighted by their actions against a gilded bronze head of Gaddafi, representing the dismantling of his oppressive regime. Flames consumed his opulent tent, marking the destruction of his 42-year dictatorship and reflecting the aspirations of a populace seeking freedom and democracy. This moment was pivotal for Libya's socio-political landscape, signaling significant change for the nation.

The dramatic fall of Tripoli epitomized the climactic culmination of the Libyan conflict; historically a bastion of Muammar Gaddafi's regime, the city became the focal point for intense confrontations and the indomitable will of those advocating for political and social transformation. The loss of Tripoli signified a strategic setback for the Gaddafi administration and a critical erosion of its legitimacy in the eyes of both domestic and international observers.

The city became a significant locus of revolutionary activity with its rich historical heritage and vibrant public spaces. It represents a pivotal moment in the broader narrative of resistance against autocratic rule. This sequence of events illuminated the precarious nature of political power and highlighted the unyielding determination of individuals and groups striving for autonomy and democratic governance. Ultimately, the fall of Tripoli serves as a salient reminder of the complexities involved in pursuing freedom and the ongoing struggle against systemic oppression. (Harding, Luke and Julian Borger, 2011)

2.4 TURKISH PRIME MINISTER IN TRIPOLI

Türkiye's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan then visited Libya following French and British leaders, who were welcomed for their roles in overthrowing Muammar Gaddafi. During Friday prayers at Martyr Square in Tripoli, he was received by Mustafa Abdul Jalil, chairman of the Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC). In a joint press conference," Erdogan praised the Libyan people's struggle for freedom and urged unity among regions. Moreover, He encouraged the people of Sirte to join the movement, which some read as a Turkish call for unity among different regions in Libya, emphasizing the importance of coming together during this transitional period (Aljazeera news, 2011)



Figure 4 Eerdogan attended friday prayers at tripoli's martyr square, met the interim leader, and expressed support for the last battles. turkey pm hails 'sacrifice' of libyan people (Al-jazeera, 2011)

Turkish enterprises engaged in operations within Libya expressed optimism that the National Transitional Council (NTC) would fulfill outstanding payments contingent upon the unfreezing of related assets.

In a statement reflecting the potential for renewed **Collaboration**, Taner Yildiz, the Turkish Minister of Energy, articulated a desire for the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) to recommence oil exploration and production activities in Libya, providing a stable security environment. This context highlighted the intersection of economic interests and geopolitical stability in the region, suggesting that the resumption of Turkish investment in Libya's energy sector was closely linked to the country's overall security situation. (Daily sabah, 2011)

"Erdogan's visit highlighted Türkiye's intention to strengthen ties with Libya. Erdogan's participation in the Friday prayers at Martyr Square was a symbolic gesture of solidarity with the Libyan people. It was also noteworthy that he praised the efforts and sacrifices of the Libyan people for their freedom. That meant he indicated the position of Türkiye as a supporter of Libya's democratic transition" (Fathi Terbel, personal communication, phone interview October 26, 2024)

2.5 LIBYAN REVOLUTION TRIUMPH AND THE DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

The collapse of the Colonel's authoritarian regime marked a significant shift in power dynamics in Libya, with the Transitional Council establishing itself as the de facto authority amidst a tumultuous political landscape. This transition was bolstered by support from the international community and regional allies as diplomatic efforts intensified, mainly through engagements between Turkish officials and the Transitional Council, indicating a collective pursuit of a new political era.

The National Transitional Council's announcement of Libya's liberation from Gaddafi represented a significant shift in the country's political landscape. This moment sparked optimism among Libyans for a democratic experience starting in 2012, as citizens anticipated elections and the formation of representative governance. However, it highlighted the complexities and challenges of moving from autocratic rule to democracy.

The path ahead was fraught with significant challenges that loomed over every aspect of the new government politically, economically, and regarding security. Qadhafi's security state collapsed with him, meaning there was no extensive and enduring internal security apparatus to contend with (Randall, 2015)

Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance (2011) on the Liberation Declaration of October 23, 2011, the NTC, Declaring The Liberation of October 23, 2011, emphasizes

1. Immediate implementation of transitional governance.
2. Rebuilding the National Army for national security.
3. Commitment to international agreements and cooperation.
4. Promotion of peace and reduction of global tensions.
5. Building respectful regional relationships.

Therefore, the aftermath of the Gaddafi regime left Libya with a lack of functioning institutions and an absent constitutional framework, complicating governance. Nevertheless, the initial post-revolution years experienced a surprising degree of relative stability. Communities began to rebuild, fostering a spirit of resilience as Libyans endeavored to actualize their democratic aspirations. This period was characterized by a blend of hope and uncertainty as the nation navigated its path toward self-determination, forming a new narrative in the wake of its tumultuous history. It aims for stability and development in post-revolution Libya.

2.5.1 The political scene and the path to democratic transformation

The NTC organized the elections for a caretaker Parliament with 200 seats, tasked with forming a new government and drafting a constitution for public approval in 2012. Libya held its first free elections, with a hopeful atmosphere as citizens voted, marking a significant political shift.

The 2012 election marked a significant milestone in the country's transition as it was the first free national election in over 40 years. Notably, the National Forces Alliance, the secular coalition, captured 40% of the vote, while the leading religious party received only 7%, reflecting a preference for secular governance. The election results included various smaller parties and a notable representation of independent representatives. Remarkably, women comprised 39% of Parliament, a significant achievement for gender equality in the region. This new chapter in Libyan history fostered optimism for an empowered democracy that could meet the aspirations of all citizens. (El-Kikhia, 2013)

After the NTC lifted Gaddafi-era restrictions on forming political parties in the wake of the revolution, dozens of parties with different orientations emerged. Moderate Islamists, nationalists, liberals, and leftists formed parties, while others reflected—local, tribal, or regional references.

These political parties have played an essential role in parliamentary elections as part of a proportional representation system. Despite the successful execution of the election, Libya continued to grapple with challenges such as political fragmentation, security issues, and regional rivalries. These have impacted the stability and effectiveness of the transition process, underscoring its complexities and difficulties later on.

2.5.2 Libya's post-2011 and economic recovery

The Libyan economy experienced a significant decline during the 2011 revolution and conflict, which was part of the Arab Spring. This deterioration was particularly evident in the oil sector, compounded by the freezing of Libyan state assets abroad, which had a detrimental impact on the overall economic situation. However, the situation quickly changed after the regime fell, and the economic conditions started to improve.

In 2012, Libya started to experience a significant economic recovery. The country restored over 90% of its oil production, reaching approximately 1.4 million barrels daily, a notable rebound from just 166,000 barrels per day during the conflict. This recovery contributed to a projected 122% increase in Libya's real GDP, following a nearly 60% drop in 2011. (Al-Abouz, 2013)

A comprehensive study conducted by the International Monetary Fund (2012) shows that the post-revolution of Libya's hydrocarbon sector, which accounts for a substantial portion of the country's GDP and exports, played a central role in this recovery. The remarkable surge in crude oil production, which escalated from 22,000 to an average of 980,000 barrels per day by the end of 2011, alongside expected growth in natural gas output, laid the groundwork for Libya's economic resurgence in 2012.

Libya's crude export revenues also surpassed \$30 billion in the year's first seven months, signaling a positive shift in the country's economic landscape. This positive trajectory was accompanied by substantial public spending on reconstruction and improved oil revenues, contributing to a budget surplus and signaling a hopeful shift in Libya's economic prospects. (International monetary fund, 2012)

2.5.3 Distribution of military and security forces after Gaddafi

The country's fragile security situation was the most immediate challenge to Libya's transition. Tens of thousands of armed rebels, organized into dozens of self-proclaimed militia brigades, were able to establish a network of control across the country.

Exercising authority over these armed brigades was extremely difficult. In the early stages of the fighting, the NTC created the National Liberation Army. However, it operated less as an army than as an amalgamation and coordination of independent brigades formed by former officers and ordinary citizens. (France-Presse, 2011)

Salem and Kadle (2012) illustrate the landscape of insecurity and fragmentation in Libya's transitional phase, driven by the independent militias and a fragile relationship with the nascent government, creating daunting hurdles in achieving political stability and national unity. This fragmentation of power points to a significant obstacle to establishing a unified and effective governing authority. In their extensive analysis, both scholars recognize that the security situation in Libya after Gaddafi is rooted in the political facade that characterized the revolution. Additionally, it is essential to note that the Libyan revolution was fundamentally armed, and Gaddafi's security framework relied heavily on his security battalions rather than a conventional national army.

Reliance on non-traditional military structures contributed to the instability witnessed in the years following, leading to the rise of armed terrorist groups and the widespread proliferation of weapons. Consequently, the security situation significantly affected internal stability and its implications for neighboring countries and the wider region. These fundamental issues posed challenges during the transitional period, as follows:

1. Power Dynamics: Numerous self-led brigades indicated a shift in power dynamics post-revolution. Rather than forming a cohesive national army, the National Transitional Council (NTC) struggled to exert authority over these armed groups.

The National Liberation Army, intended to unify the fighters, became more of a collection of independent factions. This lack of cohesion hampered the establishment of a strong central government, as various brigades operated autonomously based on their local interests and agendas.

2. **Distrust and Fragmentation:** The brigades' distrust of the transitional government and one another underscored a profound lack of political unity. In a post-revolutionary context, this distrust led to further fragmentation and conflict as different groups vied for power or resources. It raised questions about the NTC's ability to enforce law and order or promote a sense of national identity and shared goals among the militias.

3. **Challenges to Governance:** The transitional government faced an uphill battle establishing legitimacy and control. With various militia groups operating independently, governance became incredibly complicated. Unable to unify these groups under a single command impeded national reconciliation and security stabilization efforts.

4. **Implications for the Future:** The prevailing distrust among militias and between the brigades and the government posed long-term risks for Libya's political future. With a concerted effort to integrate these armed groups into a national framework, Libya could avoid falling into further chaos or conflict, potentially undermining the very goals of the revolution.

With low probabilities of armed conflict between the East and West, lawlessness promotes gang-like behavior among armed groups, including smuggling and extortion. An estimated 200,000 individuals claimed revolutionary status, many seeking benefits rather than genuine allegiance. The National Transitional Council adopted an integration strategy, offering stipends and job training for former rebels to join state security forces. However, limited success in assimilation persisted, leaving many militias active. In Tripoli, rival brigades like the Tripoli Revolutionary Council and the Tripoli Military Council coexist uneasily, complicating security and governance efforts and highlighting the need for a cohesive political strategy to foster stability. (Salem & Kadlec, 2012)

As a result, Libya's transition following Gaddafi's downfall was significantly hindered by a fragmented security landscape dominated by numerous autonomous armed militias. The National Transitional Council struggled to exert control, resulting in a lack of political unity and challenges to governance.

The pervasive distrust among militia groups and their independent operations complicated national reconciliation and stability efforts. Without a cohesive strategy to integrate these factions into a unified framework, Libya faced ongoing risks of chaos and conflict, undermining the revolution's objectives and prospects for political stability.

2.5.4 NATO's military operations in Libya have come to an end.

The triumph of the Libyan revolution, culminating in the overthrow of Gaddafi, was undeniably subsidized by the international community. The global consensus against the regime's brutal tactics during the uprising significantly bolstered this revolution. The recognition of the NTC as the legitimate authority in Libya rallied numerous nations and organizations to facilitate a smoother transition of power to this newly formed governing body. This collective support illustrates how international backing was critical in times of upheaval, shaping a nation's journey toward democracy and governance.

As Libya has navigated this transformative period, the interconnected roles of the NTC, NATO's support, and international recognition have been crucial in realizing the aspirations of a peaceful and democratic state, reinforcing the significance of collaboration on both national and global levels.

On October 31, after seven months of operations both at sea and in the skies, NATO officially concluded its mission in Libya—the primary objective to safeguard civilians from threats successfully fulfilled. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen's visit to Tripoli on October 31 marked a historic moment, illustrating the vital role that NATO and its partner nations played in assisting Libya. The atmosphere during this visit was filled with hope and renewal, symbolizing a significant turning point for Libya as it looks forward to a brighter future. (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2024)

Lt. General Bouchard emphasized that the mission's cooperative nature could positively affect NATO's future. He noted that the mission's success demonstrated the ability to swiftly mount operations, unify efforts towards common objectives, and successfully achieve those goals. (Aljazeera, 2011)

Basikri (2023) argues that after the revolution, international NGOs played a vital role in Libya's democratic process, building institutions, raising community awareness, and establishing fundamental principles for a functioning state. Around 80 international organizations were active in the country, demonstrating strong support for its recovery and development.

Basikri noted that the peak year for this international engagement was 2012, when 38 diverse organizations operated within Libya, each bringing unique expertise and support tailored to the needs of the emerging society. Among these were 25 official international organizations, including vital branches of the United Nations, which brought a wealth of resources and knowledge. Various UN agencies, funds, and programs, such as the International Organization for Migration, were engaged in addressing the urgent humanitarian needs of the Libyan populace.

Moreover, there was a significant emphasis on the rule of law, cultural enrichment, tourism development, infrastructure improvement, and housing projects, all essential for a stable and prosperous Libya. (Basikri, 2023)

However, among all of this international presence in Libya post-Gaddafi, In a significant move to signal its commitment, Türkiye became the first country to reopen its embassy in Libya, a gesture underscored by the appointment of a special envoy. Various strategic interests drove this proactive approach. The subsequent diplomatic efforts marked a pivotal moment for Türkiye as it navigated its role in the evolving landscape of Libyan politics. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011)

2.6 THE TURKISH MODEL: AN INSPIRATION FOR THE LIBYAN POLITICAL ELITE

Between 2010 and 2012, public opinion surveys conducted by the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) revealed a significant trend: approximately 60 percent of the Arab populace viewed Türkiye as an exemplary model, considering its experiences could positively influence the region's evolution. Türkiye's remarkable economic performance was a direct factor in this perception. (Sofuoglu, n.d.)

The Turkish model emerged as an inspiring framework in the Middle East and North Africa, reaching Western nations. At its core lies a unique structure characterized by a secular constitution, which coexists with a political party rooted in Islamic principles, creating a balance of diverse ideological perspectives in governance. (Kirişci, 2013)

On the political elite level, after Libya underwent democratic transformation and produced the General National Congress, which we referred to previously, this period saw the emergence of various political factions, including movements inspired by political Islam and liberal and secular parties that held significant influence. Notably, despite their differing political perspectives, many of these groups viewed Türkiye as a potential model for their development. They admired Türkiye's ability to blend democratic governance with elements of Islamic culture, seeing it as an example worth emulating in their national context. This transferred ambition to forge a democratic path while navigating their distinct ideologies marked a crucial chapter in Libya's political evolution.

Mahmoud Jibril, head of the National Alliance, was pivotal as Prime Minister during Libya's National Transitional Council period. He viewed Türkiye's economic renaissance as a compelling model for growth and development. Jibril advocated the adoption of Turkish strategies to achieve economic success.

In an interview with Anadolu Agency during the Istanbul World Forum in October 2012, he articulated his vision for Libya's future leadership. He proposed that the incoming leader should be an independent candidate, unencumbered by party affiliations, supported by the National Alliance.

Jibril praised Türkiye as an exemplary Islamic nation with consistent GDP growth, expressing confidence that its economic strategies could guide Islamic societies, including Libya, toward revitalization and progress. (Anadolu Agency , 2012)

On the other hand, "Islamic political parties, like the Muslim Brotherhood, also praised the Turkish experience. mainly the political and governance model. They emphasize the significance of fostering a partnership with Türkiye, highlighting shared interests between Libya and Türkiye that could bolster their agendas. They suppose the relationship with

Türkiye is crucial for enhancing their political standing and addressing national issues within Libya".(Mohammed Sawan, personal communication, March 25, 2024)

2.7 TÜRKIYE-LIBYA ECONOMIC AND SECURITY RELATIONS POST-REVOLUTION

The economic relationship between Türkiye and Libya has been fundamental to their bilateral ties. Even during Libya's turbulent revolution and democratic transition, the two countries maintained their trade and diplomatic exchanges. Surprisingly, rather than diminishing, their cooperation expanded, particularly in military support. Türkiye took the initiative to train Libyan personnel, highlighting a more profound commitment to assist Libya's stabilization.

In its efforts to safeguard its interests in Libya, Türkiye aimed to collaborate with a recognized and legitimate political entity. Following the elections that established the General National Congress, Türkiye was proactive in elevating the relationship between the two nations. This involved engaging in various sectors, including politics, security, military, and economic cooperation, to foster a robust partnership. This reflects Türkiye's strategic aim to build a strong alliance with Libya amidst the country's evolving political landscape.

Öztaş and Polat (2019) illustrate that the significant increase in trade volume characterized the economic relations between Türkiye and Libya. According to the data, Turkish exports to Libya saw a substantial rise in 2012-2013, with exports reaching \$2.14 billion in 2012 and \$2.753 billion in 2013. This period marked a positive trade relations trend despite Libya's political instability. The trade balance also shifted in favor of Türkiye during these years, indicating a strong economic partnership between the two countries.

The trade volume between Türkiye and Libya increased from \$888 million in 2011 to \$2.556 billion in 2012. This represents a significant rise in trade relations between the two countries during that period.

Economic relations between Türkiye and Libya focused on revitalizing and continuing projects the 2011 uprising had disrupted. Turkish companies had significant investments in Libya, particularly in the construction sector. Despite the political upheaval, Türkiye aimed to maintain and expand its economic ties with Libya. During this period, Turkish exports to Libya included jewelry, textiles, furniture, medicine, carpets, cement, and other construction materials. Libyan exports to Türkiye primarily consisted of crude petroleum, liquid petroleum gas, gold, scrap metals, aluminum, mineral oils, methyl alcohol, and fertilizers. (Öztaş and Polat , 2019)

Efforts were made to address the challenges faced by Turkish businesses in Libya, including the impact of the conflict on ongoing projects. High-level meetings and discussions were held to find solutions and ensure the continuation of economic activities between the two countries.

In April 2012, Türkiye and Libya entered into a bilateral agreement focused on defense and security cooperation. The agreement aimed to bolster the capabilities of the Libyan military as part of a broader European Union effort to assist in the reconstruction of the Libyan Army and reinforce national defense institutions that had been substantially weakened during the civil unrest that led to Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's ousting in October 2011.

This agreement included Türkiye's commitment to training approximately 3,000 Libyan military personnel, facilitating Libya's stabilization and development in a post-revolution context. A significant milestone in this collaboration occurred when 220 Libyan Army soldiers began a 14-week training course at the Isparta Domestic Security Training Centre in western Türkiye, where they engaged in theoretical and practical exercises to enhance their tactical skills and operational readiness, guided by experts from the U.S. and the European Union. This initiative was essential for strengthening Libya's defense capabilities and fostering greater international military cooperation. (Nkala, 2013)

By formalizing a strategic agreement to bolster Libya's military capabilities. Under this pact, the Turkish Army extended technical assistance to the Libyan military, which enhanced the security of the nation's land, sea, and air borders. This collaboration was

mainly focused on safeguarding key oil installations located in the eastern region of Libya, an area vital to the country's economy and stability. The agreement signified a deepening partnership between Libya and Türkiye, highlighting Türkiye's role as a supportive ally in stabilizing and securing Libya amidst its complex geopolitical landscape. (Cousins, 2012)

Moreover, the graduation of 804 Libyan police officers who completed a seven-month training program in Türkiye highlights a significant collaboration between Türkiye and Libya, reflecting broader geopolitical dynamics and mutual interests in strengthening security forces in post-revolution Libya. (Anadolu agency, 2013)

The graduation ceremony of students trained at the Adile Sadullah Mermerci Police Vocational High School was held in Istanbul's Halic Congress Center. Ali Zeidan, Prime Minister of Libya's Interim Government, attended the ceremony hosted by Interior Minister Muammer Guler. Zeidan said that Libya owed much to its Turkish brothers. Türkiye supported the Libyan people during the revolution in medical, food, military, and training aspects," Zeidan said at the ceremony. (Dünya Gazetesi, 2013)

Therefore, training Libyan police officers and military forces has been more than just an achievement in training. It served as a symbol of growing bilateral relations to ensure stability in Libya. It reflects Türkiye's dedication to supporting Libya's development and its aspirations to strengthen its geopolitical foothold. This collaboration aimed to stabilize a key North African country "Libya "and position it as a pivotal player in regional security matters.

CHAPTER III

3 LIBYA'S CRISIS AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY(2013-2020)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the factors contributing to Libya's democratic transition's failure, emphasizing Türkiye's pivotal role in the crisis. It explores two interrelated areas: Türkiye's support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya, the interplay among political elites in both nations and their regional implications. The discussion begins with Türkiye's involvement in the 2014 Libyan civil war and the 2015 political agreement, addressing Libya's internal stagnation amid shifting regional dynamics, particularly the emergence of military regimes and political Islam.

Additionally, the chapter contrasts the competing regional efforts, with Türkiye and Qatar backing one faction and Egypt, the UAE, France, and Russia opposing them. This geopolitical analysis sheds light on how these conflicts influence Türkiye's foreign policy and its exclusion from the East Mediterranean Gas Forum.

The latter part examines the evolution of Türkiye's foreign policy toward Libya, focusing on significant security and maritime agreements with the Tripoli government. The chapter evaluates the implications of Türkiye's military intervention in Libya, questioning whether it serves immediate interests or aligns with a broader strategic vision. The analysis encompasses political, military, and security dimensions, investigating the coherence of Türkiye's strategy in achieving its objectives within the larger geopolitical framework.

3.1 LIBYA'S POST-REVOLUTION STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

Libya's journey toward democracy is marked by its unique circumstances, particularly its unstable security situation. The armed uprising against Gaddafi led to chaos and ongoing power struggles. Gaddafi's removal created a power vacuum, resulting in intense factional disputes and complicating the country's path to stability and democracy.

Many attribute post-Gaddafi turmoil to his long reign, which created divisions and mistrust that undermined governance. The new leaders faced a legacy of instability defined by loyalty over competence, leading to incompetence and power struggles, complicating Libya's quest for democracy. Local actors, driven by personal ambitions and historical grievances from Gaddafi's reign, played a key role in the nation's destabilization. External powers further complicated the situation, interfering in internal dynamics and obstructing unified governance. The aftermath of the revolution featured hasty decisions that deepened divisions, with militia factions competing for resources. The National Transitional Council struggled to unify these factions and quickly lost control as militias took over critical assets in the capital. (Wehrey, 2016)

The nascent democratic experience in Libya following the revolution encountered considerable obstacles attributable to various factors. As referenced in prior studies and discussed in previous chapters, it is evident that specific impediments significantly hindered the initial strides toward establishing a democratic system in Libya.

1. A poor security environment and weak military and security institutions.
2. The composition and political outcomes of the General National Congress.
3. Failure of the International Community in Responsibility for Protection and Reconstruction Post-Regime Fall (Ineffective international interventions)
4. Legitimacy crisis and power struggle
5. International and regional competition, conflict of influence, and foreign agenda toward Libya

These issues contributed to the failure of Libya's first attempt at democracy, ultimately leading to civil war in 2014, and highlighted the role of regional interventions, including the Turkish role.

3.2 GOVERNANCE AND STATEHOOD IN POST-GADDAFI LIBYA

The GNC, formed after the 2012 election, struggled with internal divisions and an unstable security environment, which hindered its governance. It mainly comprised the National Forces Alliance (NFA) and the Justice and Construction Party (JCP), the wing representing the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya. Members from Islamist groups faced accusations of misappropriating government funds for military activities. (Anjum, 2022)

Sawani (2020) highlighted that Libya struggled to establish a functioning state after the revolution. Weak civic practices and the rise of marginal regions weakened central authority, leading to significant political challenges. Additionally, the politicization of government, widespread marginalization, and growing distrust contributed to crises and conflicts, resulting in a decline in the state's presence and its institutions.

During the uprising, resistance to military and security reforms emerged, with human rights abuses justified by the fight against the former regime. The rise of armed militias and weak state institutions increased conflict, favoring established actors over a unified governance vision. The push for elections in 2012, without addressing key issues like governance and representation, deepened social polarization and undermined conflict resolution, hindering state-building, economic recovery, and sustainable development. (Sawani, 2020)

3.2.1 CHALLENGES AND DYNAMICS OF THE GENERAL NATIONAL CONGRESS

Basikri (2023) analyzes the General National Congress (GNC) and reveals that Libya's challenges transcend typical political divisions of democratic systems. Despite high citizen participation in the 2012 elections, the GNC failed to establish political stability following the February Revolution.

The Transitional Council's (the pre-election political entity representing the rebels) ineffective plan highlighted long-standing societal issues worsened by poverty and the lingering impact of the Gaddafi regime on civic awareness. Internal conflicts within the GNC further perpetuated dysfunction, undermining its ability to draft a constitution, build institutions, foster societal consensus, and manage armed groups. This fragmentation and external pressures ultimately contributed to a cycle of instability and marked failures in initiating a successful democratic transition.

Basikri noted that the GNC's preparation for the subsequent House of Representatives reflected its inadequacies, setting the stage for further crises and damaging state and societal cohesion. Overall, internal divisions and external challenges led to a regression in Libya's transition, underscoring the Congress's failure to meet its foundational goals.

Abdul Hafeez Ghoga explains, " The previous regime's ban on parties and its legacy of lack of political upbringing and participation shaped Libya's political landscape and, therefore, the creation of the General National Congress, representing previously marginalized interests. This new political space enabled diverse groups, including secular factions and Islamic parties like the Muslim Brotherhood, to express their concerns and aspirations, which paved the way to other issues such as the structure of the state, the nature of governance, and the influence of religion." (personal communication – phone call interview , November 6, 2024)

In this context, diversity in democratic systems is healthy for the political process but manifests as profound political conflicts in Libya. These conflicts have often escalated to intense confrontations, culminating in armed clashes.

Consequently, The rise of political Islam, or what some call) the Muslim Brotherhood(in Libya, coincided with a broader regional trend of Islamic political mobilization, partly supported by external actors. Türkiye, in particular, played a crucial role in backing such parties through its ruling party, JDP. This support was motivated by Türkiye's desire to extend its regional influence and foster alliances with like-minded groups.

Turkish foreign policy officials anticipate strengthening ties between the Justice and Development Party (JDP) and the Muslim Brotherhood could significantly impact the Middle East. By aligning with the Brotherhood, Türkiye aims to enhance its regional leadership and influence political dynamics in neighboring countries. This relationship is seen as a strategic opportunity to foster regional integration, encourage economic partnerships, and promote stability, ultimately reshaping the geopolitical landscape under Türkiye's leadership. (Bekaroglu, 2015)

Although the Muslim Brotherhood is less prominent in Libya than in Egypt and Tunisia, it operates in a politically unstable and fragmented environment. The lack of a stable state has restricted opportunities for Islamic movements, including the Brotherhood. Nevertheless, there was an increasing consensus among various political factions, even those opposed to Islamist ideologies, on the necessity of incorporating Islam as a reference point for governance.

The overarching narrative espoused by the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya has emphasized its Islamic foundation, positioning Sharia as a central thematic element in its political discourse. Initial discussions centered around Sharia's objectives, which served as a pivotal starting point for engaging diverse political perspectives. However, in the course of its evolution, the significance of Sharia in the party's rhetoric has diminished. This shift does not denote a repudiation or neglect of Sharia but rather signifies a strategic pivot toward prioritizing development and political participation within the electoral framework. (Krikish, 2016)

The Libyan Muslim Brotherhood has drawn inspiration from the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP), using its successes as a political participation and development framework. This alignment reflects a broader trend among Islamist movements seeking to reconcile their religious foundations with modern political realities.

For the Turkish Foreign Ministry, the JDP leadership viewed the 2011 Arab uprisings as a chance to boost Türkiye's regional influence, especially with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) viewing the JDP as a model. Following Mubarak's ousting, Türkiye provided \$2 billion in aid to Egypt, reaching a trade volume of \$5 billion in 2012. Erdoğan identified MB leader Mohamed Morsi as a key ally ahead of the 2012 presidential elections, with the AKP backing his campaign.

Morsi's election was celebrated as a success, and their relationship was highlighted during his appearance at the AKP congress. Türkiye's support for the MB strengthened ties with Qatar, and both countries pushed for closer political and economic cooperation. (Aydın, 2014). Given Egypt's key regional role, the dynamics between Türkiye and Egypt are significant for Libya. This interaction has a considerable impact on Libyan politics.

3.2.2 NATO INTERVENTION INTO LIBYA FROM OPTIMISM TO CHAOS

The aftermath of the 2012 elections catalyzed increased political engagement and foreign intervention to protect interests linked to the former regime and stabilize Libya. Nations adopted various strategies, some supporting the transitional government and others seeking influence due to Libya's strategic location and natural resources. A critical question has emerged regarding the effectiveness of international intervention: Were these interventions successful and supported the transition, or did they exacerbate the chaos following Gaddafi's fall?

The NATO intervention in Libya exposed the conflict between strategic interests and moral claims. While NATO acted under a UN resolution for civilian protection, it also pursued the geopolitical goals of its member states, especially regarding Libya's oil.

After Gaddafi's fall, the National Transitional Council struggled to govern, leading to fragmentation and power struggles due to ineffective leadership from the General National Congress. This highlighted NATO's failure to establish a coherent long-term strategy following the intervention. (Shupak, 2023)

Detractors argued that by supporting Libyan protesters, NATO acted with the ulterior motive of regime change rather than solely protecting civilians. This suggested a complex moral dilemma regarding the principle of humanitarian intervention versus pursuing political objectives.

Contrary to the criticisms, NATO's intervention stemmed from a genuine demand for regime change by the Libyan people themselves. The uprising on February 17, following successful movements in Tunisia and Egypt, demonstrated a significant aspiration for political reform. This framing positioned the Libyan people as active agents in their struggle rather than passive subjects of external intervention.

The intervention in Libya was a turning point, marked by political and popular support for NATO's actions. On March 19, 2011, France launched NATO's first airstrikes, which were backed by Libyans seeking change. However, this optimism quickly faded after Colonel Gaddafi's fall, as the international community withdrew support, leaving Libya vulnerable. This abandonment led to chaos, escalating violence, and the rise of various terrorist factions.

The security situation in Libya worsened significantly as weapons proliferated among the population and political chaos ensued. The absence of international support created a vacuum, contributing to civil strife in 2014. Consequently, the withdrawal of NATO, the U.S., and other international powers was a key factor in Libya's descent into conflict.

As former President Obama noted, this factor significantly influenced Libya's chaos in 2012 and beyond. When asked about his "greatest mistake" during a Fox News interview, he stated it was "failing to plan adequately for the aftermath" of the intervention in Libya. The 2011 NATO operation that ousted Muammar Qaddafi left the nation unstable. In 2014, Obama acknowledged that he and European allies underestimated the need for a

comprehensive approach to rebuilding society post-Qaddafi, despite Libyans' initial optimism and gratitude. (Tierney, 2016)

3.2.3 LIBYAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS (2014) AND LEGITIMACY CRISIS

The General National Congress (GNC), which faced significant challenges in effectively governing Libya, enacted the Political Isolation Law in 2013. This legislation sought to preclude substantial segments of the populace from occupying governmental positions if they had prior affiliations with the Gaddafi regime. Although the GNC was initially scheduled to conclude its mandate in February 2014, it opted to extend its term beyond the previously established deadline. This decision prompted discussions about the legitimacy and efficacy of the GNC's governance and its implications for Libya's political landscape. (Salyk-Virk, 2020)

After the 2014 elections, the National Congress resisted transferring authority, worsening tensions among political factions and highlighting the challenges of governance in a pluralistic environment. The Islamist parties, rejecting the legitimacy of the House of Representatives (HoR), established a rival parliamentary body in Tripoli called the new General National Congress (GNC).

Two Libyan militia groups have urged parliament to cede power, claiming the General National Congress's mandate expired and accusing it of promoting dictatorship. Other factions, however, are backing the GNC, risking further conflict. (Aljazeraa.net, 2014)

In 2014, the city of Benghazi witnessed a troubling sequence of assassinations targeting both current and former personnel associated with the military and security agencies, in addition to members of the judiciary and civil society activists. This wave of violence sparked significant concern regarding the stability and security of the region.

This scene made the former military figures take the initiative and announce the dissolution of the National Congress. A military figure like Khalifa Haftar, who began

his military career by participating in the 1969 coup that overthrew King Idris Gaddafi, was appointed commander-in-chief in the conflict against Chad.

However, after a significant defeat in 1987, Haftar was captured. Following Gaddafi's betrayal, he defected to the U.S., where he gained ties with American intelligence.

In 2011, during the uprising against Gaddafi, Haftar returned to Libya and became a prominent opposition leader. Initially allied with Islamist groups, he later turned against them. In February 2014, he proposed a plan to "save the country," calling for a revolt against the "General National Congress" (BBC News (2017)). He has become known for opposing Islamist factions, holding these groups responsible for assassinations, and expressing his intent to eliminate Islamist and revolutionary elements in Benghazi using military force under the name of "Operation Dignity." This highlights the escalating conflict and complexities of power struggles in post-revolutionary Libya. (Alharathy,2021)

Khalifa Haftar developed his power base in Libya through strategic alliances, foreign support, and a blend of coercion and cooperation, beginning in 2014 with a loose coalition of armed groups. He gradually centralized authority by overcoming local loyalties and interests, with significant foreign support unmatched by any other faction in Libya playing a crucial role in his success. This approach enabled him to transform opportunistic backing into a centralized power structure primarily upheld by economic interests and personal loyalties. Over time, Haftar built a core of loyal units, many led by his sons, relatives, and close confidants, further consolidating his control. (Lacher, 2020)

The situation significantly shifted when Türkiye evacuated its nationals from Tripoli and Benghazi. Moreover, various workers and companies operate within Libya. Coincided with General Khalifa Haftar's accusations directed at Türkiye, alleging its support for terrorism. At that time, Muhammad Hijazi, the spokesperson for Operation Dignity, publicly articulated that both Qatari and Turkish nationals should vacate a designated area extending from Musaid, situated on the border with Egypt, to the city of Sirte in central Libya.

Furthermore, Hijazi asserted that Haftar's forces would bear no responsibility for the presence of individuals holding these nationalities on Libyan territory. This situation underscores the complex interactions and heightened tensions among local and international actors in the Libyan conflict.(Aljazeera net, 2014)

3.3 PATH TO LIBYA'S POLITICAL DIVISION

In February 2014, Haftar, discontented with a recent announcement, proclaimed the dissolution of the General National Congress (GNC). By May of that year, he commenced a coup attempt referred to as "Operation Dignity," which aimed to eradicate radical Islamists from Benghazi. On the political level, the elections held in June 2014 resulted in a significant defeat for the Islamists who had previously held power in the government. However, voter turnout was under 50% of those eligible, and the ongoing violence led to numerous fatalities.

Consequently, the House of Representatives was formed in eastern Libya. "Operation Libya Dawn" was initiated in July to support the outgoing GNC. This militia-driven effort thwarted the House of Representatives from gaining control in Tripoli, forcing them to establish a government in the eastern city of Tobruk. By November, Libya's Supreme Court deemed the House of Representatives invalid, which was rejected by HoR (Donaghy, 2015).

The struggle between the GNC and the House of Representatives intensified, creating two rival governments in Libya: one in Tripoli in the West and the other led by the House of Representatives in Tobruk in the East. Each of these factions possessed its parliament, militia, and ties to the Central Bank.

Activist Fathi Al-Warfali offered a critical overview of Libya's political landscape," attributing the back then conflict to the convergence of various factions, including individuals sidelined by the political isolation law, former regime loyalists, and those unsuccessful in securing political positions, who formed a coalition seeking retribution against their adversaries under the guise of the war on terror.

Complementing this view, political researcher Ibrahim Hamami "described the strife as a confrontation between two opposing forces: those who participated in the 2011 revolution that ousted Muammar Gaddafi and factions associated with his regime, alongside some liberal and secular groups.

He noted the significant influence of external actors like Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi in attempts to suppress revolutionary sentiments, arguing that the conflict was not merely chaotic or random, nor simply a struggle among NATO-affiliated revolutionaries, but rather a profound struggle between revolutionary forces and counter-revolutionary elements, reflecting deeper socio-political divides within Libyan society."

Thus far, several reasons have been identified for the failure of the democratic process and the transition to a democratic system in Libya. The regime's legacy of lack of political upbringing led to a power struggle within the first political body established in Libya after the revolution. Additionally, the international community's abandonment of Libya after the regime's fall further contributed to this crisis, paving the way for regional powers and intervention

The interplay of sociopolitical factors transformed Libya into a battleground of two opposing factions. This division worsened due to the rise of terrorist organizations that exploited the political vacuum and limited international intervention. As a result, regional alliances shifted, with key actors like Türkiye, Qatar, Egypt, the UAE, and France playing significant roles in the Libyan crisis. This highlighted the complex local and international influences on Libya's sociopolitical landscape.

3.4 TÜRKIYE'S ROLE IN THE COMPLEX LIBYAN CONFLICT DYNAMICS (2014)

The aftermath of the Arab Spring marked a counter-revolutionary phase in Libya, particularly after 2014, as political Islam gained traction across the region. Türkiye, a supporter of these emerging regimes, faced significant geopolitical consequences, raising concerns among neighboring states and Western powers.

This shift led to a transition from the "Arab Spring" to "Arab Autumn," prompting Türkiye to adapt its foreign policy and respond to the evolving political landscape.

These dynamics have shaped Türkiye's approach to the Middle East, particularly regarding the situation in Libya, highlighting the complexities of contemporary geopolitics in the region.

The geopolitical dynamics of post-revolutionary Libya are closely linked to the Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the Justice and Construction Party (JCP). General Khalifa Haftar aims to dismantle the Brotherhood's structure, which suffered under Muammar al-Qaddafi. Since its establishment in March 2012, the JCP has struggled to build strong electoral support after the revolution. (Ahram, 2014)

A journalist and Libya analyst, Mary Fitzgerald, notes that the prolonged suppression of the Brotherhood has damaged its public image and electoral prospects, especially given its regional decline following its Middle Eastern setbacks. Moreover, The decline of the Brotherhood's influence, particularly after July 2013 in Egypt, greatly affected Libya's political scene.

Mohamed Morsi's ousting fueled anti-Islamist sentiments, which Libyan armed forces and allied militias used to marginalize the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya. Türkiye's support for the Muslim Brotherhood has irritated most Gulf States, except Qatar, further fueling opposition to the JCP within Libya. Following Egypt's coup in 2013, General Fatah Al Sisi, alongside the UAE and other anti-Brotherhood nations, supported Operation Dignity, signaling the complex interplay of regional dynamics and local power struggles in Libya.

As some observers argued, Türkiye's involvement in the Libyan conflict substantially influenced its dynamics by exacerbating instability through the provision of arms and logistical support to Islamist militias, notably in Misrata and Tripoli, thereby violating the UN arms embargo. This assistance empowered these militias, contributing to their control of key regions and prolonging the conflict by undermining peacebuilding efforts.

Türkiye's motivations for supporting Islamist groups stemmed from a desire to enhance strategic influence in North Africa, align with ideological sympathies under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, secure economic interests in Libya's energy and reconstruction sectors, and counter the influence of rival powers such as Egypt and the UAE. Ultimately, Türkiye established military cooperation with such groups. (Burweila, 2019)

On the other hand, the chaos in Libya, intensified by militia factions and external interference after Egypt's military coup in 2013, escalated with General Khalifa Haftar's military offensive in early 2014. In response, Türkiye supported rival factions opposing Haftar. This move sparked a debate: Did Türkiye's involvement help protect its interests, or did it exacerbate the conflict and prolong regional instability? This question continues to generate discussions on the effectiveness of Türkiye's strategy in Libya. In 2014, Türkiye sought to rebuild ties with Libya amid the chaos following Gaddafi's fall, facing \$15 billion in unpaid contracts. (Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2020)

Haftar's Operation Dignity evolved from a limited conflict into a strategic campaign supported by the UAE, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and France, which undermined Libya's democratic goals. In response, Türkiye and Qatar backed the Tripoli government with military aid. This internal discord intensified international alliances and polarized the conflict as Eastern Libyan authorities sought to expel Turkish companies. The situation in Libya highlights the profound influence of international involvement on regional conflicts post-Arab Spring.

3.4.1 Türkiye-Egypt influence on Libya

The Turkish-Egyptian relationship deteriorated significantly following the removal of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi in July 2013. Morsi, a Muslim Brotherhood member, had aligned closely with Türkiye, particularly under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Erdoğan's support extended to diplomatic visits and public endorsements, positioning Türkiye as a key ally to Morsi's government.

Morsi's consolidation of power and rising protests led to political instability, prompting General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to oust him. This caused Türkiye's relationship with Egypt to deteriorate, with Erdoğan condemning Sisi as a tyrant and accusing the interim government of state terrorism while fostering pro-Muslim Brotherhood sentiments that heightened tensions.

In the aftermath, Egyptian authorities accused Türkiye of supporting terrorism, and bilateral engagements diminished substantially, (Sakr, 2019) highlighted by the expulsion of the Turkish ambassador from Cairo in late 2013 Aljazeera (2013) The subsequent shift in alignment had broader implications for regional dynamics, particularly evident in the contrasting Egyptian and Turkish positions on the Gaza conflict in 2014. Each nation advanced competing peace initiatives, reflecting their divergent foreign policy objectives.

Geopolitical developments involving Libya, Egypt, and the UAE supporting General Khalifa Haftar against Islamist militias showcase a complex regional power dynamic. Türkiye's support for these militias deepens this rivalry. In November 2014, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi held a trilateral summit with Cyprus and Greece to promote exporting natural gas from Cyprus to Egypt, aiming to counter Turkish influence in the Eastern Mediterranean and address broader energy resource contests. (Gagaptay & Sievers, 2015)

3.5 THE LIBYAN POLITICAL AGREEMENT (2015) AND ITS REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2259, which endorses the Libyan Political Agreement signed in Skhirat, Morocco, on December 17, 2015. The resolution calls for establishing a Presidential Council to form a Government of National Accord within 30 days and emphasizes collaboration among all parties to support this new government.

It also urges UN Member States to assist in enhancing Libya's governmental capacity, effective weapon management, and accountability for those threatening peace and stability in the country. UNSMIL (2015) The UN facilitated negotiations between Libya's

warring parties to reach a power-sharing deal, establishing a Government of National Accord (GNA) to end the civil war.

The agreement aimed to resolve the conflict between competing parliaments by creating a Presidency Council to form a unity government and an advisory High State Council. Integrating armed militias and promoting national reconciliation were key goals.

The December 2015 agreement aimed to establish a unified governing framework and promote stability in Libya. However, its implementation has faced significant obstacles, contributing to deeper divisions as support and opposition to the accord have polarized the conflict. Renewed negotiations involving key security stakeholders are necessary to create a more equitable unity government and execute the agreement's roadmap effectively. (Lacher, 2015)

Türkiye supported the Libyan Political Agreement from December 2015, reinforcing its commitment to the GNA and Libya's stability. Key visits between Turkish and Libyan officials have strengthened diplomatic ties, with Türkiye actively promoting national reconciliation and providing assistance to foster a democratic and stable Libya. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015)

The agreement, backed by the United Nations and approved by the House of Representatives, garnered support from most Libyan political factions. However, General Khalifa Haftar opposed it due to clauses allowing the Presidential Council to dismiss him. This prompted him to rally his parliamentary supporters, led by Aguila Saleh, to block its implementation and delay the ratification of the Government of National Accord. (International group crisis, 2020)

Türkiye aimed to minimize direct military involvement in the Libyan conflict, advocating for a political process and dialogue among parties. In this period, Türkiye avoided becoming a party to the conflict and defended the view that the problems should be resolved based on national consensus. This approach was epitomized in the first visit of Emrullah İşler, Türkiye's Special Envoy, to Libya in October 2014 (Kekilli & Öztürk, 2020).

Two rival governments and various independent security groups complicated the situation. Türkiye supported the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) against Khalifa Haftar's faction, which received support from countries like the UAE, Egypt, and France. In response to the ongoing arms embargo, Türkiye provided military assistance to the GNA, solidifying its role in Libya's geopolitical landscape.

International players like France and Russia and regional supporters such as the UAE and Egypt backed Khalifa Haftar and the eastern parliament, reflecting their geopolitical interests in Libya. This external support complicated the domestic conflicts. In contrast, Türkiye and Qatar supported the internationally recognized government of Fayez al-Sarraj, showcasing a competing vision for Libya's future. Türkiye's emphasis on diplomatic solutions suggests a focus on unity, creating a complex web of alliances that hampers the pursuit of a peaceful, unified Libya.

3.6 POWER STRUGGLES AND THE RISE OF KHALIFA HAFTAR

Between 2016 and 2018, Libya's political landscape remained stagnant despite a ceasefire and a United Nations-sponsored agreement to stabilize. The country experienced deep divisions, with rival government entities and parliaments, which made it difficult for stakeholders to reach a unified political agreement. This highlighted the complexities within Libya's political arena. Additionally, regional actors significantly influenced Türkiye's relationship with Libya, impacting Turkish foreign affairs. Foreign powers exacerbated tensions by supporting competing factions, which prolonged hostilities and hindered political compromise.

These foreign interventions significantly complicated the Libyan conflict, making the prospect of a political solution increasingly elusive. The blending of local grievances with international interests raised the risk of a prolonged proxy war, where the ambitions of powerful external actors overshadowed the aspirations of the Libyan people.

Dalaa (2020) thoroughly examines the complexities of the Libyan crisis. Underscores the multifaceted nature of the situation, particularly highlighting the involvement of various external actors who aim to exert influence over the Libyan context and secure substantial interests. This dynamic underscores the challenges of resolving the crisis, as competing agendas complicate regional stabilization and governance efforts.

Outlines a series of diplomatic efforts and meetings aimed at resolving the political crisis in Libya, centered around two key figures: Khalifa Haftar and Fayeze al-Sarraj. The analysis highlights the significant events, objectives, and broader implications for Libyan governance and stability.

Libya's 2014-2018 conflict has led to a fragmented political landscape. The Government of National Accord (GNA) was supported internationally while facing internal opposition, primarily from Haftar and allies. Therefore, the power struggle significantly affected national cohesiveness and regional and international relations. The international and regional efforts to establish a unified government in Libya underscore the necessity of accommodating the competing parties' interests. These initiatives have illuminated the complex nature of regional dynamics and the divisions that permeate the Libyan crisis.

1. Paris Meeting (July 25, 2017): This initial meeting marked a high-profile effort to unify the warring factions. The agreement to a cease-fire and a commitment to hold elections in spring 2018 demonstrated optimism and set a timeline that soon faced challenges. Macron's support for Haftar suggested balancing international interests and local allegiances.

2. Paris Conference (May 29, 2018) The follow-up conference reflected the urgency of establishing a political framework following the failure of the 2018 elections. The participation of 20 countries indicated the international community's vested interest in stabilizing Libya. However, the procrastination by pro-Haftar MPs and their imposition of conditions to block elections revealed the entrenched divisions and the difficulties in achieving consensus.

3. Palermo Conference (Nov. 12-13, 2018): The Italian-led initiative signaled a shift in support dynamics, with Italy seeking to mediate. The agreement to conduct elections in spring 2019 underscored the persistent narrative of "holding elections" as a solution despite previous failures. The broadened participation of 38 nations indicated an increasing recognition of Libya's geopolitical significance.

Türkiye officially withdrew from the international conference on Libya in Palermo, as announced by Vice President Fuat Oktay. He expressed concerns over the lack of consensus among countries, blaming unilateral actions that exploited the forum. Oktay stated that such measures hindered stability in Libya and criticized an unofficial meeting earlier in the day for misrepresenting key stakeholders. (Reuters, 2018)

4. Abu Dhabi Meeting (February 27, 2019): Under UAE's auspices, this meeting emphasized the ongoing diplomacy aimed at breaking the deadlock despite the lack of definitive outcomes. The "National Security Council" concept reflected attempts to create a power-sharing framework. Yet, its lack of formal confirmation highlighted the fragility of agreements in Libyan politics.

Haftar's resistance during meetings highlighted the complexities of power-sharing in Libya, where military control influenced political power. His insistence on blocking elections and imposing conditions underscored strategic maneuvering in the ongoing conflict. Diplomatic efforts reflected a struggle to resolve the political crisis, with each agreement fostering hopes for stability. However, repeated failures revealed deep divisions and competing interests that necessitated national and international cooperation. This cycle of negotiations showcased the challenges of conflict resolution amid historical distrust and divergent regional ambitions. (Dalaa, 2020)

3.7 TFP: THE 2019 TRIPOLI WAR AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN TENSIONS

3.7.1 Libya's political landscape and Türkiye's strategic position

A notable absence of military escalation between the eastern and western regions marked the situation in Libya from 2016 to 2018. However, internal conflicts persisted within urban areas, particularly in Tripoli, where confrontations between various militias occurred frequently. Throughout this period, the geopolitical divide between eastern and western Libya remained largely intact, as the Government of National Accord (GNA) sought to expand its influence by forming alliances with armed militias in the west. Meanwhile, Haftar dedicated his efforts to strengthening his military capabilities in the east.

Despite numerous consultations and meetings to reconcile the disparate factions, these efforts largely failed to produce significant outcomes, allowing divisions to persist and dominate the political landscape. A pivotal moment was reached in April 2019 when Haftar declared his intention to launch a military offensive on Tripoli. This declaration did not merely signify an escalation of the internal conflict in Libya but also represented a critical turning point in Turkish-Libyan relations and a significant reconfiguration of the internal military dynamics and regional influence concerning the Libyan crisis.

In April 2019, General Khalifa Haftar launched a military campaign to seize Tripoli, claiming to eliminate a government reliant on militias. This prompted the Government of National Accord (GNA) to declare a state of alert, leading to an alliance among former adversaries united against Haftar. Meanwhile, the UN prepared a political forum in Ghadames to address Libya's instability. (Fathallah, 2019)

Haftar built his forces in central Libya and claimed control of the south, preparing to advance on the west. His offensive on the capital contradicted the support from his regional allies. Despite being the aggressor, Haftar's attack prompted a swift response from Western militias, leading to intense fighting in populated areas.

The mobilization united various groups against Haftar, with many fighters returning to battle out of concern for their vision of a civilian state established post-Qaddafi. This reflected a defense of political interests and fear of a new authoritarian regime threatening Libya's revolutionary legacy. (Trauthig, 2019)

In his examination of Khalifa Haftar's assault on the capital of Libya, Pack (2019) traces the roots of this military initiative back to the inception of Operation Dignity. Haftar articulated a distinct objective of capturing Tripoli, positing that no faction can credibly assert its identity as a "national army" without securing control over the capital. Through a carefully constructed narrative, Haftar and representatives from the Libyan National Army (LNA) framed their campaign as a "liberation" of the capital, positioning it against what they describe as terrorist and extortionist armed groups. This rhetoric functions as a justification for potential military engagements in urban areas.

The LNA's campaign in Tripoli began shortly before the scheduled dates for the UN-affiliated National Conference in Ghadames, initially set for April 14-16. This timing has led many analysts to interpret the LNA's mobilization and heightened military posturing as a strategic maneuver aimed at intimidating or coercing Western factions into negotiating favorable terms with the LNA, thereby consolidating its position ahead of the conference rather than indicating preparations for a comprehensive offensive.

Pack argues that Haftar's offensive catalyzed the formation of a loosely organized "Anti-LNA coalition" among various Western militias. However, the coalition's coherence and long-term viability remained precarious, making it susceptible to fragmentation or collapse in the face of internal and external pressures.

In response to the assault, the Government of National Accord (GNA) began to designate its forces as al-Jaysh al-Libi, or the "Libyan Army." It appointed a spokesperson for this newly established entity. Despite the lack of previous collaborative operations and limited time for enhanced coordination, these groups emerged with a shared recognition of the necessity for operational cohesion on the battlefield and a unified strategic response to counter Haftar's media narratives.

Notably, most militias retained their original identities despite the establishment of formal designations such as the "Tripoli Protection Force" (TPF), which was officially announced on December 18, 2018. This duality underscores the intricate dynamics of the conflict and highlights the challenges inherent in pursuing a unified military front in the face of fragmented allegiances. (Pack, The Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2019)

Haftar's decision to initiate the military offensive in early April could be attributed to factors that shaped his strategic calculus. His enhanced international visibility may have played a significant role, potentially augmenting his sense of legitimacy on the global stage. Additionally, it is plausible that he perceived an implicit endorsement from external supporters and benefactors, which could have further emboldened his actions. This interplay of domestic ambitions and international dynamics merits thorough examination within the region's broader context of geopolitical influences. (Malsin & Said, 2019)

After a lengthy six-month deadlock in Tripoli, Türkiye thoroughly evaluated the circumstances and intervened to counterbalance Haftar's military strength by signing security and maritime agreements. Starting in January 2020, Türkiye sent around 100 military advisors and 2,000 Syrian rebel fighters to Libya, along with air defense systems and advanced military equipment. This tactical intervention highlights Türkiye's aim to influence the course of the conflict and assist in regional stabilization through diplomatic initiatives. (International group crisis, 2020)

3.8 TÜRKIYE'S FOREIGN POLICY TRIPOLI WAR ENGAGEMENT

The Turkish Foreign Ministry's decision to enter into agreements with Libya can be understood through a multidimensional analysis of internal and external Turkish political factors. Satanakis and Süss (2021) analyze the Turkish Foreign Ministry's significant transformation in 2019, highlighting various factors and variables influencing its decision. Their examination reveals that geopolitical, economic, and strategic considerations motivated the Turkish Foreign Ministry's actions during this pivotal period.

Türkiye's foreign policy has transformed from the ideal of "zero problems with neighbors" to a more assertive and confrontational approach. The 2016 failed coup attempt primarily triggered this shift. Satanakis and Süss argue that this fueled distrust toward Western allies and prompted Türkiye to pursue a more independent stance. Türkiye perceives a decline in Western influence, especially following the U.S. withdrawal from multilateral commitments, empowering it to assert its interests regionally. Domestically, this assertiveness distracts from economic difficulties, including a struggling lira and decreased foreign investment.

Involvement in conflicts like those in Libya and the Eastern Mediterranean illustrates Türkiye's ambitions to secure energy resources and strengthen economic ties. Its increased military presence in these regions has strained relations with NATO allies and other powers, such as Russia. Türkiye's foreign policy evolution reflects its desire to be a dominant regional power while navigating a changing global landscape. Therefore, the formation of the new Turkish foreign ministry can be understood through various interconnected internal factors articulated by the authors. In this context, Türkiye's relationship with Libya emerges as a significant political opportunity, particularly in light of the presence of a strategic political ally, namely the Government of National Accord. This relationship underscores the complex dynamics that inform Türkiye's foreign policy decisions and its pursuit of regional influence. (Satanakis & Süss, 2021)

3.9 STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

After 2016, Türkiye's foreign policy under the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) witnessed significant changes, particularly in its relations with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This period is characterized by a shift towards strategic autonomy and increased use of military tools in foreign policy. (Altunişik & Martin, 2023)

Qaddoura (2021) argues that Türkiye's internal political evolution is pivotal to its transformation. This evolution has enhanced the military and foreign policy relationship, resulting in a more assertive diplomatic stance.

Such a shift appears to have alleviated the risks of future military coups by cultivating a supportive environment for the armed forces and promoting the development of indigenous technological capabilities. This strategic reorientation entails redefining the military's role to encompass new responsibilities, enhancing its contributions to economic growth, and reinforcing Türkiye's geopolitical interests. This multifaceted approach seeks to bolster national security and expand Türkiye's influence on various fronts. (Kaddoura, 2021)

Therefore, Turkish foreign policy has undergone a significant transformation since 2016, characterized by a shift towards a more autonomous decision-making framework. This transition reflects a departure from traditional Western alliances, emphasizing reliance on domestic capabilities. In addition, Türkiye's redefined military role not only aids national security but also facilitates economic growth and enhances its geopolitical influence. This multifaceted approach positions Türkiye as a key player in the evolving international landscape.

3.10 TÜRKIYE'S STRATEGIC INVOLVEMENT IN LIBYA BALANCING GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS AND REGIONAL ALLIANCES

The context of the Turkish military intervention in Libya came through the Tripoli-based government requiring additional support to counter the military offensive initiated by Khalifa Haftar. The potential collapse of Tripoli would have signified a pivotal victory for forces opposed to the February Revolution, ultimately disintegrating the unity government and its primary allies, notably Türkiye. Consequently, this situation catalyzed the Tripoli government to seek enhanced support. (Daily sabah, 2019)

Conversely, Türkiye's motivations have been multifaceted. Primarily, its objectives include defending Tripoli and safeguarding its interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly concerning energy security. At this juncture, the Tripoli government's and Türkiye's strategic interests appear to align. Nonetheless, a critical question persists: Does Türkiye possess a coherent long-term strategy regarding its involvement in Libya, or is its support for the government merely a temporary measure motivated by immediate geopolitical considerations?

In light of the developments in the Tripoli conflict and the advanced weapons support provided to the Libyan National Army (LNA) by its backers to seize the capital, reports have emerged regarding the presence of sophisticated weaponry supplied to General Khalifa Haftar. This situation emphasizes the intricate nature of external influences on the dynamics of the Libyan civil war, particularly illustrating the disparity in military capabilities between the opposing factions. (Lacher, 2019)

These developments in the conflict in Tripoli have marked a significant turning point in geopolitical dynamics. In response, The Turkish parliament ratified a motion approving a memorandum of understanding (MoU) and military cooperation with Libya following two separate agreements signed on November 27. One MoU focuses on military collaboration, while the other addresses maritime boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean, explicitly outlining Türkiye's rights in the area amid unilateral exploratory drilling by the Greek Cypriot administration.

It also asserts that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) has rights to resources in the contested region, with the maritime pact coming into effect on December 8. Regarding military cooperation, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan "indicated that Türkiye may consider deploying troops to Libya if requested by the UN-recognized government in Tripoli, “ reflecting the evolving geopolitical dynamics and Türkiye's regional strategic interests. (Atalay, 2019)

This aspect was particularly pertinent to exploring and exploiting oil and gas resources, effectively expanding Türkiye's and the partnering nation's territorial claims in this resource-rich region. This alignment reflects a strategic maneuver to enhance both nations' geopolitical and economic interests amidst a complex and evolving landscape.

According to Cagaptay and Fishmen (2019), Ankara's policy towards Libya is deeply influenced by its geopolitical isolation in the Eastern Mediterranean, worsened by the deterioration of relations with Israel in 2010 and significant miscalculations during the Arab Spring. Their analysis highlights how Erdoğan's support for Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood during 2011-2012 led to alienation from key Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, who favored a military regime after the Brotherhood's ousting.

Meanwhile, Qatar's alliance with Türkiye against the positions of Egypt, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia signifies the complex dynamics within the region.

By the time of Libya's civil war in 2014, Türkiye's previous regional partnerships had diminished, leading it to support the Tripoli-based "Dawn Coalition" against Khalifa Haftar's "Dignity Coalition." In response to the UAE and Egypt's backing of Haftar, Türkiye provided military assistance to the Government of National Accord (GNA). However, it did not match the extent of the support given to Haftar. (Gapaptay & Fishmen, 2019)

3.10.1 To what extent has Türkiye supported the GNA?

The examination of Türkiye's involvement in Libya illustrates a phased engagement strategy. Initially, Türkiye's actions signaled a shift in regional alliances in response to the changing geopolitical environment. During General Haftar's initial offensive against Tripoli, Türkiye abstained from immediate intervention, opting for a gradual escalation of support for the Government of National Accord. This progression highlights the intricate dynamics affecting Türkiye's foreign policy decisions within the Libyan context.

The geopolitical dynamics in Libya have been significantly influenced by covert support for Khalifa Haftar from France and Russia. This support prompted the Government of National Accord (GNA) to request military assistance from Türkiye. (Gomati, 2022)

Military advisors substantially influenced Türkiye's initial engagements in the conflict; however, the resolution to deploy ground forces was contingent upon ratifying previously established agreements within the Turkish parliament. Notwithstanding this procedural delay, General Khalifa Haftar escalated his military offensives, driven by apprehensions regarding potential shifts in favor of the Government of National Accord. (Canli, 2020)

Consequently, it posits that Türkiye's military engagement in Libya appears legitimized through two primary justifications. First, it is founded upon an agreement with a government recognized by the international community.

Second, it is notable that Türkiye delayed the deployment of military resources and personnel until the relevant agreements received approval from the Turkish parliament. Furthermore, the intervention was precipitated by a formal request from the Libyan government for prompt assistance, especially in light of the intensified military operations led by Khalifa Haftar and his allies against Tripoli. This situation underscores the complex interplay surrounding the legitimacy of regional military interventions.

The Turkish intervention, prompted by assaults from Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA), marked a shift in the Libyan government's strategy from defensive to offensive with the launch of Operation Peace Storm on March 25. This operation aimed to protect civilian lives. By April 13, the Libyan military had liberated approximately 3,000 square kilometers from Tripoli to the Tunisian border and significantly damaged Haftar's military assets, including aircraft and armored vehicles. Türkiye's involvement was pivotal in this transformation. (Zoubir, 2020)

Understanding the military defenses and technology utilized during the Battle of Tripoli is essential, as these elements significantly impacted the conflict's outcome in favor of the Government of National Accord (GNA). According to Pack and Pusztai (2020), Türkiye's advanced military capabilities were crucial to this success.

1. Drones: Türkiye deployed uncrewed combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs), such as the Bayraktar TB2 and TAI Anka-S, for precision strikes and enhanced operational effectiveness through advanced communication systems.
2. Air Defense Systems: The integration of air defense measures, including HAWK XXI surface-to-air missiles and Korkut anti-aircraft guns, was essential in countering the Libyan National Army's (LNA) aerial dominance and ensuring the security of strategic locations.
3. Electronic Warfare: The KORAL Electronic Warfare System efficiently targeted LNA air defense radars, enabling greater operational freedom for Turkish and GNA forces.
4. Artillery: Utilizing advanced artillery, like the T-155 Fırtına and T-122 Sakarya, provided significant fire support and enhanced offensive capabilities against LNA positions.

5. Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR): Using ISR assets, including reconnaissance drones and signals intelligence, improved battlefield awareness and operations coordination.

6. Logistics and Strategic Planning: Turkish military planners effectively structured GNA operations into phases, ensuring timely supply and sustained momentum against the LNA.

Therefore, Türkiye's sophisticated military tools and strategies contributed to establishing air superiority and neutralizing LNA defenses, marking a significant advancement in modern asymmetric warfare. (Pack & Pusztai, 2020)

Moreover, Türkiye's use of drone technology in the Libyan conflict has enhanced its foreign policy through a strategy known as "Bayraktar Diplomacy," which emphasizes small military interventions that achieve political and military aims while minimizing financial and humanitarian costs. This modern approach to warfare has effectively shaped the geopolitical landscape, with the Bayraktar TB2 drone playing a crucial role in saving the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Libya, thus demonstrating the significant impact of this strategy on contemporary warfare and international relations. (Mitzer & Oliemens, 2021)



Figure 5 : Bayraktar (TB2 SIHA) Photo of one of the Turkish air weapons used to support the Government of National Accord/source Defenceturk.net

3.10.2 Role of regional actors and Türkiye's strategic position

The Turkish intervention in the Libyan conflict significantly supported the Government of National Accord (GNA), transforming Libya's political landscape and forming new alliances. General Haftar's camp viewed their loss as a tactical withdrawal rather than a defeat, highlighting the shifting power dynamics in the region. Expectations of capturing Tripoli with Turkish support were unmet, as Turkish backing strengthened the GNA's position and complicated international involvement in the conflict.

Türkiye's actions illustrate its influence on geopolitical relations, notably regarding Russia, the United Arab Emirates, and France, each of which had varying degrees of support for Haftar. Russia's involvement was primarily limited to finding a way in the Mediterranean for military bases as part of a broader strategy. At the same time, the UAE aimed to limit the rise of political Islam, and France engaged in economic interests such as gas contracts. These dynamics are closely tied to broader regional issues, particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) supports the eastern faction in Libya led by Khalifa Haftar as part of its strategy to counter political Islam, mainly influenced by Türkiye. The relationship between the UAE and Türkiye soured after the 2016 coup attempt in Türkiye, which Turkish sources have linked to the UAE. This tension is heightened by their competition for influence in Africa, where Türkiye's growing presence challenges the UAE's objectives, complicating regional power dynamics and impacting Libya. (Sheiko, 2018)

3.10.3 Russian and Turkish different roles in Libya

Russia's involvement in Libya was cautious and strategic, mirroring its approach in Syria. Initially, it established ties with General Haftar, providing him military support through the Wagner Group while maintaining connections with the Tripoli government to promote a ceasefire.

Moscow aligned with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, who viewed the Tripoli government as an Islamist remnant of the Arab Spring, and both alliances accused each other of violating arms embargoes. Unlike France, which faced deteriorating relations with Türkiye due to a naval incident, Russia managed its dialogue with Ankara while still backing the faction opposing Turkish influence in Libya, seeking to establish a stronger foothold in the Mediterranean. (Duclos, 2020)

Russia and Türkiye supported opposing factions in the Libyan civil war. Russia covertly backed Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) through the Wagner Group. At the same time, Türkiye openly supported the Government of National Accord (GNA) led by Fayeaz al-Sarraj with military advisors and drones. Türkiye's engagement was driven by geopolitical interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, supported by a maritime agreement with the GNA.

Meanwhile, Russia aimed to strengthen its influence in Libya. Despite both countries positioning themselves as mediators for peace, their effectiveness in resolving the conflict was limited compared to their roles in Syria. (Tekir, 2020)

France, on the other hand, has engaged in political tensions with Türkiye concerning the Libyan situation since the onset of the crisis in Libya. The French government has positioned itself in favor of General Khalifa Haftar, aligning this support with its broader strategic interests and ambitions, particularly in securing Libyan gas contracts. The French presidency has indicated that Haftar could be a stabilizing figure and a guarantor of French interests should he assume power. Additionally, this dynamic is intertwined with the complexities of the Eastern Mediterranean and the ongoing dispute with Türkiye over gas supplies to Europe, further highlighting the geopolitical stakes involved in Libya's political landscape (Ahmedzade, 2020)

3.11 POST-TRIPOLI WAR AND THE NEW POLITICAL REALITY

Despite the negotiations to establish a cease-fire between Libyan Prime Minister Fayez Sarraj and General Khalifa Haftar, which took place in Moscow and were facilitated by Türkiye and Russia, the prospective agreement was undermined when Haftar departed Moscow before signing the treaty.

This postponed hopes for a resolution until the upcoming Berlin Conference. Haftar's pattern of behavior, characterized by frequent violations of previously settled agreements, appears to be driven by his ambitions to consolidate singular control over Libya. (Aktaş, 2020)

Meanwhile, the forces of the Government of National Accord (GNA) have achieved significant territorial gains, effectively responding to the aggression of the Libyan National Army (LNA) from substantial areas. A pivotal development in this conflict was the capture of al Watiya Air Base, which had functioned as a critical defensive position for the LNA amid its protracted campaign to seize Tripoli. Additionally, GNA forces bolstered their strategic foothold around Tripoli by reclaiming control of Tripoli International Airport and the town of Tarhouna, which had previously served as a logistical support center for the LNA. These military successes have contributed to a shifting dynamic within the civil conflict. (Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2020)

The unexpected fall of the Al-Watiya base sent shockwaves through regional and international circles, marking a significant turning point in the battle for Tripoli. Some analysts are even speculating that the implications of this shift could see Turkish influence extend even further, raising eyebrows and stirring conversations about the region's future. The fall of Al-Watiya raises serious concerns as it paves the way for Türkiye to strengthen its grip over the crucial Libyan-Tunisian-Algerian border triangle. This strategically positioned base has the potential to oversee much of this vital region, altering the balance of power and influence in North Africa. (Guesmi, 2020)

Libya's internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA), under the leadership of Fayed al-Sarraj, has officially declared a nationwide ceasefire, directing its forces to halt all combat actions immediately. This declaration coincides with a similar appeal from Aguila Saleh, the speaker of the House of Representatives in Tobruk and an ally of Khalifa Haftar, who also urged for a cessation of hostilities and suggested that Sirte serve as the temporary base for a new Presidential Council. (France 24, 2020)

The United Nations Support Mission in Libya and various key countries have welcomed this joint appeal for a ceasefire, viewing it as a potential initial step toward a diplomatic solution in a divided nation struggling with significant conflict and foreign influence.

This situation raises important questions about the reasons for the simultaneous halt of military actions and the possibilities of launching a political dialogue in Libya. (European Commission, 2020)

Examining the military landscape in Libya reveals that the Government of National Accord (GNA) and its allied factions lack the military capacity to secure and extend control over Sirte and Jufra and push eastward to the oil crescent and the Egyptian border. This limitation was primarily due to the GNA's composition, which consists of remnants of the Libyan army and various armed brigades with diverse ideological and regional affiliations, creating an unstable and fragmented military structure.

The relationship between the GNA and these brigades is often fraught with tension, marked by fluctuating alliances and political disputes. Consequently, the GNA's primary objective appeared to be defending and preserving its current territories. Furthermore, Haftar's failed attempts to dominate Tripoli highlight the challenges faced by any faction in consolidating power in this complex political environment despite significant external support and resources. (Hussein, 2020)



FIGURE 6 AL-WATER: AIR BASE, WHICH REPRESENTED A STRATEGIC BASE THAT WAS TAKEN BY GNA, WHERE TÜRKIYE VIEWED IT AS AN IMPORTANT AREA OF MANEUVER /SOURCE THE LIBYA OBSERVER

Thus, the Turkish intervention created a new reality that ended with drawing a line known as the Sirte-Jufra line. In a TV statement, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi articulated Egypt's strategic interests concerning the Libyan conflict, explicitly referencing the significance of the Sirte-Jufra line. This delineation has emerged as a critical point of contention following the advances made by the Government of National Accord (GNA) forces.

President Sisi emphasized that any incursion beyond this line would directly threaten Egypt's national security interests and could potentially escalate into a military confrontation. This underscores the geopolitical dynamics in the region and highlights Egypt's asserted role in influencing the course of the conflict in Libya. (Al-Sisi, 2020)

The region stretching between Sirte and its pivotal airbase, Al-Qardabiya, and the strategically vital Al-Jufra airbase covers an impressive 300 km. This area is an essential boundary separating western and eastern Libya, acting as the western gateway to the oil crescent—home to the lion's share of the country's crude oil reserves and crucial export ports. This strip holds significant economic value, and the recently developed Al-Jufra

airbase enhances military logistical capabilities, positioning itself almost perfectly at the heart of Libyan geography. (Tastekin, 2020)

Strategic positioning, economic potential, and military readiness make the region a focal point of interest and critical importance in Libya's dynamics. (Al-Quraitili, 2020) Not to mention international movements to reach an agreement and new negotiations after Türkiye changed the equation in Libya, which was represented in the Berlin meetings, which will be covered in the next chapter.

Therefore, the general framework of the conflict can be understood in this way: all of these countries that took it upon themselves to support Haftar's project and bore the financial burden and technical and logistical support with equipment made Türkiye enter into a confrontational conflict that reached its peak in the Tripoli war and within the framework of the Turkish Foreign Ministry's transformations towards a more decisive and military policy towards the crisis in Libya.



FIGURE 7: MAP SHOWING THE LINE DRAWN FOR THE CEASEFIRE (SITE – JUFRA)
SOURCE AL ARABIYA ENGLISH

As already discussed, Türkiye did not enter the war except for a set of interests and strategies in several files. Supporting the Government of National Accord and militarily engaging in the crisis was a turning point for Turkish foreign policy. From this point, it achieved actual gains on the ground, achieving a political and military balance between the two camps and favoring the Government of National Accord.

On Al Jazeera Net (2020). Ismail Hakki, the former head of military intelligence in the Turkish General Staff, articulated "a strategic perspective on Türkiye's foreign relations within the context of the Libyan conflict. Hakki posited that a direct military confrontation between Türkiye, Egypt, Russia, or any other foreign entities in Libya is unlikely."

"He attributed this assessment to the robust American support for Türkiye in the region, which he argues is a deterrent against potential military engagements by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. Moreover, Hakki emphasized that the ongoing cooperation between Türkiye and Russia across various international issues further diminishes the likelihood of conflict between these nations in the Libyan theater." (Al Jazeera Net, 2020)

3.12 TÜRKIYE'S MARITIME AGREEMENT WITH LIBYA: IMPORTANCE OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The Eastern Mediterranean is geopolitically significant due to its substantial oil and natural gas reserves, particularly following recent gas discoveries that have catalyzed increased geoeconomic activity, especially in gas exports to Europe. Geoeconomics, which merges economic policies with geopolitical objectives, is crucial in these dynamics. Historical and contemporary conflicts over resources underscore the competitive nature of geoeconomics, often resulting in geopolitical disputes. The interconnection between geopolitical and geoeconomic factors highlights the continued prominence of states as primary actors in this arena. (Sarkhanov & Sadri, 2022)

Accordingly, Turkish foreign policy transformation has become inevitable due to adopting policies such as the Blue Homeland doctrine, one of Türkiye's foundational national pillars and a key component of its strategy.

The policy of strategic autonomy significantly shapes Turkish foreign policy, reflecting the nation's intent to assert its independent stance in the international arena. Within the framework of this policy, Türkiye employs a "leash-slipping" strategy, which facilitates the expansion of its geopolitical autonomy. This approach enables Türkiye to navigate complex global dynamics while seeking to enhance its sovereignty and influence on the international stage. (Aslan, 2024)

Türkiye's approach to autonomy has led to a significant transformation in its policy, which is closely tied to various geopolitical factors and energy security. For instance, when examining Türkiye's strategy for sourcing energy, it becomes clear that the nation has tailored its foreign policy to align with these evolving circumstances. One of the principal reasons and drivers of Türkiye's transition to new policy frameworks is the scarcity of energy resources. This issue not only constitutes a significant obstacle but also catalyzes these transitional processes. Türkiye faces significant energy dependence challenges, worsened over the past twenty years, with consumption expected to rise until at least 2035.

The country relies heavily on imports and lacks sufficient proven natural resources, creating economic and security risks. To address this, Turkish authorities are diversifying the energy mix through investments in domestic generation, such as natural gas exploration in the Black Sea and new nuclear and coal-fired power plants. Additionally, this strategy has led to collaborations with Western energy consumers and key suppliers, including Russia and neighboring countries, to secure reliable and affordable energy supplies. (Siccardi, 2024) Therefore, Türkiye's energy relations with Libya are part of its broader strategy to secure diverse energy sources and enhance its geopolitical influence.

3.13 THE "BLUE HOMELAND" DOCTRINE

The "Blue Homeland" doctrine, established by the Turkish Naval Establishment, particularly by Admiral Cem Gürdeniz in 2006, is a strategic framework designed to protect Türkiye's maritime rights. It emphasizes Türkiye's claim to its exclusive economic zone in the Mediterranean and advocates for military oversight in the Mediterranean, Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and former Ottoman regions.

This doctrine is a military strategy to assert Türkiye's national interests by establishing military facilities and strategically deploying forces, thereby increasing its global influence. (Fayed, 2024)

The Blue Homeland doctrine affects regional maritime dynamics by asserting Türkiye's sovereignty over extensive seas rich in oil and gas, increasing tensions with Greece and the Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus over maritime boundaries and exclusive economic zones (EEZs). Türkiye has taken steps to reinforce its claims through naval operations, agreements with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and Libya, and hydrocarbon exploration licenses. These efforts aim to secure energy resources and safe maritime routes in the Eastern Mediterranean, a vital area for global energy trade. They highlight the region's strategic importance and the need for cooperation among neighboring countries. (Ceyhun, 2023)

The diversification of energy sources is crucial for the Turkish economy, driven by changing geopolitical dynamics and concerns over energy security in the Eastern Mediterranean. This necessity has prompted a reevaluating of Türkiye's diplomatic strategies, moving away from the "zero-problem" foreign policy due to its limitations amid rising conflicts. Consequently, Türkiye now faces a sense of regional and international isolation, highlighting the need to identify strategic allies.

The maritime agreement between Türkiye and Libya, as a result, served as a pivotal element in Türkiye's foreign policy, particularly in terms of national security and the affirmation of sovereign rights. This agreement is of paramount importance to Türkiye's strategic interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, as it not only fortifies its relationship with Tripoli but also enhances its diplomatic leverage in the region. Furthermore, the agreement empowers Libya by granting it increased agency within a complex geopolitical landscape.

Overall, the maritime agreement not only advances Türkiye's national interests but also supports Libya's sovereignty, reflecting a recalibrated approach to Türkiye's foreign policy in response to contemporary geopolitical challenges.

Cihat Yaycı (2023) ” I just drew the map showing the Libya Agreement line to go step by step, but on the next map, I marked it as 189,000 km². This number emerges when the opposite shore with Israel, the opposite with Lebanon, and the opposite with Syria is included. My previous map, I used it until the Libya Agreement. After the deal, I brought up the next one. This is how the Blue Homeland is formed” (Turkish asian center for srategic studies, 2023)

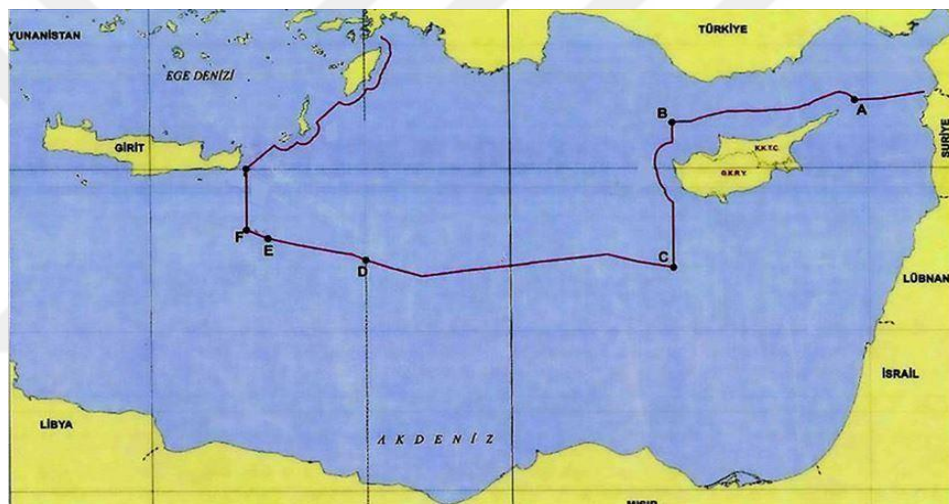


FIGURE 8 : THE MAP DELINEATES TÜRKİYE'S MARITIME FRONTIERS IN E.MED
/SOURCE ANADOLU AGENCY

Therefore, Türkiye's pursuit of agreements with Libya can be viewed as a pragmatic maneuver to align mutual interests despite considerable criticism and pushback from regional and international actors. This strategic pivot underscores the complexities of modern diplomacy, where geopolitical realities often compel states to forge partnerships that may initially attract skepticism or dissent. Consequently, the following points can be argued to delineate the factors influencing the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to adopt a hard power approach, characterized by an increased military presence and engagement beyond conventional norms.

1. Turkish Isolation: Türkiye's increasing international isolation necessitated a reevaluation of its foreign policy strategies, prompting the country to seek alliances that could enhance its geopolitical standing.
2. The Eastern Mediterranean's geopolitical significance, especially regarding energy resources, has been crucial in shaping Türkiye's foreign policy, which is driven by its strategic interests in energy security.
3. Post-Arab Spring, the formation of regional alliances significantly influenced Türkiye's foreign policy, especially in the Libyan context, as these alliances were based on shared interests and mutual benefits.
4. Impact of the 2016 Coup: The failed coup attempt in Türkiye in 2016 catalyzed a significant shift in the Turkish Foreign Ministry's policy framework. This period marked a transformation from a 'zero-problems' approach to a more assertive foreign policy characterized by military force and hard power.

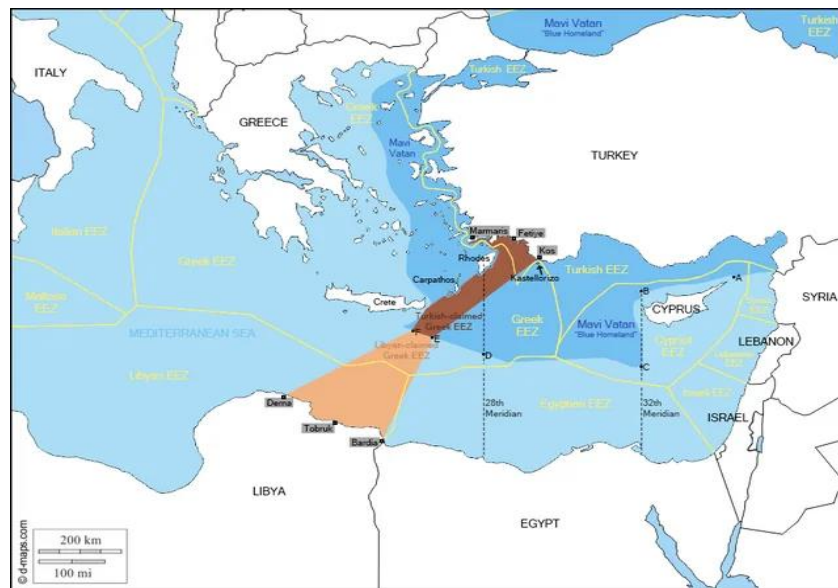


Figure 9 : Türkiye-libya agreement on maritime boundaries, türkiye's blue homeland (mavi vatan), and the eez boundaries in east mediterranean

5. Energy Resource Strategy: The pursuit of energy sources was intrinsically linked to Türkiye's domestic economic considerations. This strategic imperative drove Türkiye's involvement in various regional conflicts, including its assertive stance in Libya.

These variables illustrated how Türkiye's foreign policy gradually transformed, particularly following the Arab Spring. Initially marked by alliances with political Islam parties, Türkiye's foreign policy adapted to changing regional dynamics. A detailed examination of these factors provided a comprehensive understanding of Türkiye's strategic orientation towards Libya and elucidated the complex interplay of regional variables and their influences on bilateral relations.

3.13.1 International and Regional Reactions on Türkiye-Libya Agreements

The signing of the memorandum has sparked mixed reactions in Libya, primarily reflecting the divide between supporters of Khalifa Haftar and those backing the GNA. Ahmad Al Mismari, spokesperson for Haftar's forces, rejected the agreement with Türkiye, warning of potential military action to protect Libyan sovereignty. Eastern Tobruk parliament members echoed this sentiment, calling for the revocation of international recognition of Sarraj's government. In contrast, the GNA's Presidential Council approved the memorandum and emphasized that it does not compromise Libya's sovereignty or violate international law (Studies, 2020)

Egypt called the deal "illegal," questioning its legitimacy under international law, while Greece deemed it geographically untenable, overlooking the strategic position of Crete. These tensions arise amidst Türkiye's exploration activities in the eastern Mediterranean near Cyprus. In response, the European Union has signaled a readiness to impose sanctions on Türkiye, indicating broader geopolitical implications in the region. (Butler & Gumrukcu, 2019)

The situation intensified steadily, with tensions mounting and conflicts escalating, until it culminated in a pivotal moment at the United Nations. Here, the international community engaged in a fervent debate about the legal ramifications of the actions. As representatives from various nations deliberated the implications of the agreement, examining its legality intricately.

In a letter to the UN Security Council, Egypt formally objected to the Turkish-Libyan agreement on maritime border demarcation and security collaboration. The letter, sent to the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council President, deemed the memoranda signed between the Government of National Accord and Türkiye as invalid and requested their exclusion from UN records. Egypt contended that these agreements violate the political accord established in Skhirat in 2015, as well as contravene Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 1970 (2011), by potentially facilitating the transfer of arms to Libyan militias.

In response to unilateral actions in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Turkish envoy to Libya, Emrullah Isler, emphasized that Türkiye had warned relevant nations about such measures. He asserted that Türkiye's two agreements with Libya align with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, international law, and the rulings of the International Court of Justice, considering the configuration of coastlines. Furthermore, he noted that Türkiye has communicated the details of these agreements to the United Nations. (Aljazeera.net, 2019)

Certain scholars have advanced their analysis by critiquing the Turkish intervention in the Libyan crisis. They argue that this involvement raises complex geopolitical questions and reflects deeper regional dynamics, warranting a thorough examination of its implications for Libya and broader international relations.

The complexities of Türkiye's involvement in North Africa, particularly in Libya, are framed by an expansionist agenda that resonates with the ideological principles of neo-Ottomanism. This perception raises significant questions about the clarity and coherence of Türkiye's foreign policy strategy, especially as implemented by the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Critics argue that Türkiye's intervention in Libya constitutes an infringement on the sovereignty of a fragile nation, capitalizing on the prevailing instability to advance its interests.

As some argue, Türkiye aims to expand its influence in the Maghreb region and support the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Libya, which aligns with its broader strategy of reviving Ottoman-era influence. Türkiye's foreign policy in Libya was driven by its desire to expand influence in the Maghreb, secure oil and gas resources, and support Islamist movements like the Muslim Brotherhood.

Its military intervention aided the Government of National Accord (GNA) against General Khalifa Haftar, shifting the power balance and raising concerns about escalating conflict and terrorism. Türkiye aimed to strengthen its regional power and energy security amid complex geopolitical dynamics. (Algarni, 2021)

The Libyan newspaper Al-Wasat “ says that with the signing of the two memoranda of understanding, the Libyan crisis has "entered a new chapter of crisis through regional and international interference on the line of tension escalating due to the war in the capital, Tripoli."

It adds "The dust of reactions to the maritime agreement had hardly settled when Turkish President Recep Erdogan poured oil on the fire by announcing his country's readiness to send soldiers to Libya if the Government of National Accord requested it, which exacerbated the situation again so that tension prevailed in the position of all parties." (BBC news, 2019)

Libya's retired army chief of staff, Yussef al-Mangoush, “emphasized the importance of Turkish-Libyan cooperation in building a modern military infrastructure, citing Türkiye's historic military support, including its role in establishing the Libyan Air Force in 1963. The maritime agreement between the two nations faces criticism from Greece, Israel, and Greek Cyprus for undermining Greece's territorial claims. Al-Mangoush highlighted Türkiye's increased support for Libya's Government of National Unity, strengthening its position against adversaries.

He noted that Türkiye is committed to protecting its investments and assisting Libya, influencing both regional dynamics and Libya's political landscape".(Yussef al-Mangoush personal interview, December 7, 2024).

Cihat Yaycı (2022). "Libya, Our Neighbor at Sea" articulates a strategic perspective on Türkiye's bilateral agreement with Libya, positing that such an initiative is fundamentally aimed at counteracting the geopolitical ambitions of Greece, Cyprus, and Egypt concerning the shared resources of the Eastern Mediterranean. Yaycı emphasizes the importance of expediting the ratification of this agreement to disrupt the existing plans orchestrated by Greece and Greek Cyprus that seek to delineate control over the Mediterranean's wealth.

Yaycı: "Our agreement with Libya will spoil the scenario set by Greece and Greek Cyprus to share the Eastern Mediterranean region." This assertion highlights the intersection of national interests and regional dynamics in the context of Mediterranean geopolitics. (Yaycı, 2022)

After all The bilateral relations between Türkiye and Libya have been significantly shaped by a series of maritime, security, and military agreements, enabling both nations to pursue mutual interests despite facing various regional and international challenges. Notably, Türkiye's intervention in Libya played a crucial role in preserving the political and military equilibrium, effectively averting the collapse of Tripoli. Furthermore, Türkiye's adaptive foreign policy strategies have facilitated its maneuverability within the complex geopolitical landscape of the eastern Mediterranean. This interplay underscores the intricate dynamics at work in the region.

The period following 2021 can be characterized as a significant transformation phase at multiple levels, particularly in Libyan-Turkish relations and the subsequent developments therein. This transformation is evidenced by the achievements realized by both parties, notably within the context of the Government of National Accord, which had successfully maintained its legitimacy throughout this period.

3.14 TÜRKIYE AND THE BALANCE OF POWER IN LIBYA

Following a meeting in Istanbul, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin issued a joint statement advocating a ceasefire in Libya. They emphasized the importance of Libya's sovereignty and territorial integrity and supported the Berlin Conference's potential for significant outcomes. The statement criticized military resolutions for exacerbating divisions among Libyans and called for adherence to the 2015 Skhirat political agreement and UN Security Council Resolution 2259. The leaders highlighted that a sustainable ceasefire is crucial for restoring normalcy in Tripoli and other impacted areas. (Anadolu Agency, 2020)

The call for a ceasefire in Libya revealed the military limitations of both the GNA led by Fayez al-Sarraj and the Tobruk House of Representatives backed by Khalifa Haftar. This acknowledgment suggested that neither side could achieve a decisive victory, creating space for political dialogue. By recognizing their constraints, they could focus on a ceasefire, essential for addressing immediate humanitarian needs and fostering a lasting political solution.

Ultimately, this ceasefire initiative served as a crucial step toward rebuilding trust and laying the foundation for a comprehensive political solution in Libya, as long as both parties remained committed to a collaborative approach.

The Balance of Power theory posits that national security is enhanced when military capabilities are distributed so that no one nation is strong enough to dominate all others (Schweller, 2016), can be effectively applied to understand Türkiye's actions during the 2019 War of Tripoli.

In the conflict, Türkiye aimed to reinforce its position in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa, balancing against the influence of rival powers, particularly France, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, who supported the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by Khalifa Haftar. Therefore Türkiye's involvement can be seen as a strategic move to restore regional equilibrium.

By providing military support to the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli through arms, drones, and military advisors, Türkiye sought to counter the military advances of Haftar's forces. This intervention was not merely about territory but about projecting power and establishing Türkiye as a key player in determining Libya's political fate.

Türkiye leveraged its military capabilities to shift the balance of power in favor of the LNA, enhancing its regional influence and protecting its interests. Through the use of drones and strategic tactics, Türkiye gained a significant advantage, causing major losses for Haftar's forces and marking a turning point in the conflict. This involvement reflects Türkiye's strategy of forming alliances and utilizing multi-level diplomacy, in line with the Balance of Power theory.

The first Berlin Conference aimed to foster dialogue and emphasized the need for a political resolution and ceasefire stabilization in Libya. While these goals supported Türkiye's interests in legitimizing the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli, the conference ultimately sought to reassert European oversight of the conflict and curb Russian and Turkish influence, notably by limiting Turkish troop deployments. The urgency for the conference arose from previous European hesitance. (Hosbas, 2020)

CHAPTER IV

4 TFP REGIONAL NORMALIZATION POST-TRIPOLI WAR

INTRODUCTION

The recent evolution of Türkiye's foreign policy in the context of the Libyan conflict, particularly following the Tripoli war (2021-2023), signifies a notable realignment in its diplomatic posture. This shift is fundamentally underscored by Türkiye's establishment of a strategic alliance with the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli and its efforts to safeguard national interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. This transformation within the Turkish Foreign Ministry can be effectively analyzed through a theoretical framework elucidating the motivations driving Türkiye's diplomatic recalibrations, particularly regarding its adversarial relationships with key regional actors.

This chapter investigates the factors that prompted Türkiye to normalize relations with various states that have traditionally opposed its geopolitical interests, specifically in the Libyan context. The analysis highlights the indispensable role of the Turkish Foreign Ministry in facilitating a unified governmental structure in Libya and addressing the complexities introduced by various international and regional stakeholders. Additionally, the chapter seeks to illuminate the multidimensional challenges and obstacles that hinder the progression of Libyan-Turkish relations, particularly within the realms of security and economic collaboration.

Specific attention would be given to Turkish forces' presence in Libya, including the negotiations and discourse on mercenaries, which are crucial in the current geopolitical context. Later, economic cooperation in post-conflict reconstruction, particularly in the oil and gas sectors and other fields, would be explored.

4.1 TÜRKIYE'S FOREIGN POLICY SHIFT POST-TRIPOLI WAR (2021-2023)

4.1.1 Normalization and Alliances (2021-2023)

In 2021, Türkiye shifted its foreign policy towards the Middle East and North Africa, seeking to normalize relations with previously adversarial countries. According to a study analysis by Çevik (2024), This change was driven by domestic political needs ahead of the 2023 elections and regional changes, including a US retreat from the area and a greater focus on diplomacy from the Biden administration. Key countries involved included the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, which opposed Türkiye's interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and other regional files. However, evolving circumstances prompted Türkiye to adapt its approach to new developments. These initiatives should not be viewed as a cohesive package; specific motivations drive each reconciliation effort, and each faces unique challenges, resulting in varied outcomes.

To strengthen ties, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Türkiye resumed their relations with Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed's visit to Türkiye in November 2021, culminating in a \$10 billion UAE investment fund for Türkiye. This effort continued in February 2022, when President Erdoğan visited the UAE and signed thirteen defense, trade, and technology agreements. Similarly, Türkiye aimed to improve relations with Saudi Arabia through high-level visits between Crown Prince Salman and President Erdoğan, lifting a Saudi embargo on Turkish imports, and a significant \$5 billion deposit in Türkiye's Central Bank. (Çevik, 2024)

Türkiye has been slower in normalizing relations with Egypt but is actively limiting Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood broadcasts while aligning interests in Libya. In mid-2020, Türkiye sought to improve these relations, motivated by shared interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and Libya.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry acknowledged that the Turkish-Libyan maritime agreement, which Egypt initially opposed, could ultimately benefit Cairo, putting pressure on President Sisi to accept it for potential maritime concessions.

Meanwhile, setbacks in Libya and disputes with Ethiopia over the Nile heightened Egypt's concerns about its regional influence, prompting Türkiye to take a more diplomatic approach. As the May 2023 elections approached, addressing these foreign policy issues became crucial for the Turkish government in tackling domestic political challenges. (Bakir, 2023)

Therefore, as Türkiye's foreign policy evolved, it became clear that it was improbable that it would return to previous approaches like soft power or the "zero problems" strategy. These earlier policies faced significant challenges, particularly with Türkiye's ambitions in Libya. In pursuing its strategic goals, decision-makers had to pivot towards a more assertive stance, utilizing hard military power to balance regional dynamics effectively. This decisive shift helped Türkiye secure its interests in Libya and positively impacted relations between the two nations.

As a result, Türkiye gained a stronger foothold to navigate the complexities of the Eastern Mediterranean, enhancing its strategy for energy security. Türkiye's newfound military effectiveness has become a key asset in asserting its presence and influence in this turbulent geopolitical landscape.

Like other regional powers, Türkiye adjusted its foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa to respond to changing regional dynamics and domestic needs. These pragmatic adaptations aimed to navigate a complex geopolitical landscape rather than signify complete policy transformations. Türkiye and other regional states must adopt win-win frameworks and build cooperative relationships for true peace and stability. While these efforts may not drastically change existing policies, they are steps toward fostering stability and confidence in the region. (Altunışık, 2021)

The question that can be asked is how Türkiye's foreign policy can be defined after 2020 within a regional and international framework and at the level of relations with Libya. What power does Türkiye exercise?

Joseph Nye's definition of power and its types "differentiates between **hard power** as economic or military capabilities and the **soft power** that comes, for example, from cultural dimensions or the values that Define the identity and practices of the State to include the Diplomatic capacity to influence other states bilaterally or multilaterally in international organizational context others prefer not to distinct in this fashion but rather to view power as integral Concepts that states apply in different ways in pursuit of their goals or objectives in international relations to Nye what he calls **smart power** is an integral of blend of hard and soft power assets use effectively to advance the state's purpose." (Paul R. Viotti & Mark V. Kauppi, 2012)

Türkiye's new policy after 2021 may be closer to this definition, as the Turkish Foreign Minister's statements clarified. Mevlut Cavusoglu, During a keynote address at the TRT World Forum (2021) called Power and Paradox: Understanding Grand Strategy in the 21st Century, said that "Ankara applies smart power within its grand strategy by combining elements of both soft and hard power. That is why we define our foreign policy as enterprising, as well because we believe that a proactive foreign policy, not a reactive one, is required to respond to challenges. From Somalia to Afghanistan, we are part of the solution," he added. Türkiye only uses hard power when other options have been exhausted and only to initiate dialogue and diplomacy. "This is what we do to resolve frozen conflicts, de-escalate tensions, and protect our national interests. Our presence in Syria and Libya led to stability, prevented irregular migration and terrorism, and paved the way for diplomacy." (Cakmak, 2021)

Therefore, "smart power" encompasses a strategic approach that effectively integrates hard and soft power to exercise influence within a regional context. This framework emphasizes the importance of utilizing a combination of coercive measures and diplomatic engagement to achieve foreign policy objectives and enhance geopolitical stability.

However, in the context of Libya, it is essential to consider the presence of various influential nations that hold substantial stakes in the region and their interactions with Türkiye. The normalization of relations among these countries has notably impacted the Libyan landscape, especially in light of the multifaceted nature of the Libyan crisis, characterized by the involvement of diverse local and international actors.

As a result, Türkiye continued its active involvement and extended its military deployment in Libya in 2021 and 2022, justifying its presence as necessary for protecting regional security and stability. This involvement is also linked to Türkiye's broader objectives in the eastern Mediterranean, including issues related to Cyprus, energy resources, and maritime borders.

4.2 LIBYA'S POLITICAL SCENE: A RETURN TO NEGOTIATIONS (2021)

The challenges presented by Khalifa Haftar's military campaign to assert control over Libya have highlighted a significant reality within the Libyan political landscape: the complexities associated with achieving a military resolution. This situation has prompted international and regional actors to reassess their strategies and engagement in Libya. The failure of Haftar's efforts to consolidate power underlines the inherent difficulties of imposing a military solution in a context characterized by deep-seated political divisions and competing interests. (Alhar, 2022)

As a result, a renewed negotiation marathon has become necessary, overseen by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. Inspired by previous efforts, it focuses on three main tracks: security, political, and economic. Dialogues have taken place in Bouznika, Morocco; Geneva, Switzerland; and Cairo, Egypt. Stephanie Williams, acting head of the mission, has been pivotal in launching this process and advancing all dialogue tracks. (Sanusi Al-Basikri , personal interview 17 Desember 2024)

In February 2021, the United Nations facilitated the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF), establishing a three-member Presidency Council and appointing Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dabeiba. This marked Libya's first unified government since August 2014, aimed at governing until elections scheduled for December 24, 2021, despite lacking a legal framework. The Government of National Unity (GNU)T, formed amidst entrenched political divisions and armed groups, received unexpected support from external powers like Russia, Türkiye, and the UAE, highlighting complex international interests. Türkiye played a key role in supporting the GNU, helping to end the war in Tripoli, and continues to act as a security guarantor for the government, indicating a willingness to withdraw its Syrian mercenaries if Haftar's forces do the same (Lacher, 2021)

4.2.1 The new roadmap in Libya and Türkiye's position

The Geneva Dialogues and the subsequent Berlin 2 conference marked significant milestones in establishing a sustainable ceasefire and achieving political stability in Libya. A notable development that emerged from these discussions was the consensus to conduct general elections, thereby positioning the electoral process as a central mechanism for revitalizing the political landscape in Libya. This shift towards elections served as a crucial benchmark for assessing the legitimacy and performance of the new government and evaluating the roles of sovereign institutions.

From an economic perspective, the United Nations strategic plan had pivoted towards the unification of monetary institutions, addressing the pressing challenges associated with the Libyan dinar crisis while also aiming to mitigate the broader economic and financial turmoil plaguing the country.

Regarding security, the focus had been on implementing measures to solidify the ceasefire, a process initially catalyzed by diplomatic interventions from Russia and Türkiye. This trajectory was further endorsed in the inaugural Berlin meeting. (OCHA, 2021). Following a series of deliberations, the 5+5 Joint Military Commission

subsequently announced the establishment of a comprehensive security agreement in October 2020.

This agreement encompassed protocols to reinforce the ceasefire, facilitate the withdrawal of foreign combatants, and promote the unification of military institutions within Libya. (Topçu, 2023)

4.2.2 Challenges facing the new government and the Turkish position on them

Despite garnering international and regional support and parliamentary legitimacy, the newly established government encountered significant challenges that impeded its ability to fulfill its mandated responsibilities. One critical obstacle was that it was not embedded within the agreement that facilitated the government's inception to the constitutional declaration.

Furthermore, the governance structure presented issues; the selection of ministers was primarily influenced by tribal affiliations rather than being the prerogative of the Prime Minister, leading to the appointment of individuals who may not possess the requisite qualifications or political acumen. Additionally, the cabinet composition included several ministries deemed unnecessary, further complicating governance.

Compounding these challenges was the pervasive influence of security entities, alongside persistent corruption and social fragmentation issues, collectively undermining the government's efficacy. In addition, it re-challenges international interventions.

4.3 THE DILEMMA OF MERCENARIES AND FOREIGN FORCES

During a joint press conference with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Libyan Foreign Minister Najla Al-Mangoush expressed a stance at odds with the Prime Minister's position regarding the Turkish military presence in Libya. She advocated for the withdrawal of Turkish forces as part of a broader call for the exit of all foreign troops.

This situation highlights the contradictions within the Libyan government and the complexities surrounding foreign military interventions. In response, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu emphasized the importance of maintaining Libya's territorial integrity and highlighted Türkiye's legitimate military presence. His Libyan counterpart, Najla Mangoush, expressed optimism regarding increased Turkish cooperation to address foreign military presence in Libya. Cavusoglu clarified the distinction between Türkiye's authorized military engagement and the activities of mercenary militias, reaffirming commitment to agreements established during the strategic cooperation meeting in Ankara on April 12, which are crucial for guiding Türkiye's involvement in Libya. (Aljazeera net, 2021)

Basikri (2023) explained that AL-Mangoush's tone regarding the Turkish military presence underwent a significant shift following discussions with various Libyan political factions that convened with the minister. These parties elucidated the potential risks of withdrawing Turkish forces or canceling the existing military security agreement. Additionally, it is essential to consider that Haftar continues to pose a threat, with the possibility of reinitiating the offensive actions that undertook in April 2019

The competition among regional and international actors in Libya persists, notably due to Türkiye's significant involvement. Kenan Yilmaz, the Director of the External Security Department in the Turkish General Intelligence Service, appointed as the ambassador to Libya in April 2021, underscores this engagement. Conversely, Türkiye's presence presents a formidable challenge to Egypt, the UAE, France, and the broader interests of the United States.

Notably, the muted response to Turkish policies in Libya can be attributed to the concurrent presence of Russian forces; however, should these forces be expelled, it is anticipated that this would result in heightened pressure on Ankara.(Sanusi Al-Basikri , personal interview 17 Desember 2024)

4.4 CHALLENGES UNDERMINED LIBYA'S 2021 ELECTIONS

Despite the concerted efforts to facilitate elections in December 2021, which had been assigned to the Government of National Unity according to the Geneva Dialogue, several significant challenges emerged that hindered the electoral process. The legal complexities surrounding the elections compounded these previously discussed obstacles. Consequently, all parties involved were unable to proceed with the electoral process.

The underlying reasons for this failure Cherif (2021) argues that the absence of consensus on electoral regulations and unclear oversight mechanisms stalled progress within Libya's electoral bodies, preventing the establishment of a final list of eligible candidates. Since the resumption of political dialogue in November 2020, Libyan stakeholders have faced challenges in establishing a unified constitutional and legal framework ahead of the general elections scheduled for December 24, 2021, raising concerns about the elections' ability to restore political legitimacy and stability.

Cherif also noted that the lack of a widely accepted constitution and clear regulatory guidelines threatened the integrity of the electoral process, jeopardizing their legitimacy and complicating efforts toward a democratic resolution amidst intense political rivalries.

As a result, Aguila Saleh, the speaker of the House of Representatives, enacted a new electoral law on September 10, 2021, which resembled the 2012 law and did not incorporate lessons from previous conflicts. Despite being endorsed by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMILP) the legislation failed to address the unresolved draft constitution and other existing issues.

The Tripoli government's irresponsible financial practices and internal strife further undermined UNSMIL's subsequent efforts in spring 2022 to draft legal frameworks to resolve electoral deficiencies. (Cherif,2021)

4.5 POLITICAL TENSIONS IN LIBYA: TÜRKIYE'S RESPONSE

The House of Representatives retracted its confidence in Abdul Hamid Dbeibah's government. It instituted a new roadmap to facilitate the electoral process and reach a consensus on amendments to the draft constitution. To advance this objective, two teams were established, comprising representatives from the State Council in Tripoli and the House of Representatives, to negotiate the constitutional declaration collaboratively.

On February 10, the House voted on proposed amendments and concurrently appointed Fathi Bashagha as the new Prime Minister. This development signified a pivotal shift in the political landscape, reflecting efforts to stabilize governance and establish a framework for future elections.

In May 2022, violence significantly increased, particularly in the political power struggle between rival factions. Armed confrontations escalated between militias aligning with the respective leaders, Fathi Bashagha and Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, as both sides sought to assert dominance in the conflict for control over the state. This escalation underscores the complexities of Libya's political landscape and the challenges of achieving stability amid competing interests.

Türkiye's attempt to navigate a suitable path moving forward is also influenced by changing dynamics within Libya's political leadership. The situation involving Fathi Bashagha, who served as interior minister in the former Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA) before aligning with the opposing Tobruk-based government in eastern Libya, and previously a spokesperson for the Misrata Military Council, Bashagha was recognized for his strong connections to the Muslim Brotherhood and Türkiye.

While serving as the GNA's interior minister, some considered him to wield more influence than Prime Minister Fayed al-Sarraj. With support from Türkiye, Bashagha played a pivotal role in defending Tripoli from General Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army 2019 and vowed to control the armed militias that dominated Tripoli.

However, he unexpectedly reached an agreement with General Haftar and the House of Representatives Aguila Saleh, leading to his selection by the HoR in February 2022 to establish an interim government, claiming that Dbeibah's Tripoli-based government's term had ended on December 24, 2021, the date when national elections were meant to be conducted under a United Nations peace initiative but never took place. Bashagha's complex and winding career straddling both sides of Libya's existing divide highlights Türkiye's difficulties in determining the most effective approach to foreign policy. (Gurbuz, 2023)

4.6 TÜRKIYE TO EAST WORDS

Türkiye has sought to strengthen ties with the Tobruk-based administration, mainly due to Bashagha's influence in eastern Libya. The Turkish ambassador to Tripoli visited Benghazi with business representatives to discuss resuming halted construction projects, reopening the Turkish consulate, and reinstating Turkish Airlines flights. (Daily sabah, 2022)

Kenan Yilmaz's landmark visit to the Qubba region to meet Aguila Saleh, the Speaker of the Libyan House of Representatives, marked a significant shift in Türkiye's foreign policy, moving towards a more inclusive engagement with both eastern and western Libyan factions. (Alharathy, 2022)

During his visit, Yilmaz discussed recent political developments and explored ways to strengthen bilateral relations, with plans to reopen Türkiye's consulate in Benghazi and resume Turkish Airlines flights. This engagement comes amid ongoing political fragmentation in Libya, prompting Türkiye to adopt a more proactive diplomatic stance.

The Turkish Foreign Minister emphasized Türkiye's historical ties to eastern Libya and the importance of cooperation. Analysts suggest this outreach aims to build relationships with influential eastern factions, contrasting Türkiye's previous focus on Western alliances. Therefore, Türkiye's efforts may reshape relationships within Libya and enhance its regional influence during the political transition (Awda, 2022)

In August 2022, Erdoğan met with Saleh, affirming Türkiye's intention to engage with the Tobruk government while treating all Libyan regions equally. In an interview with the Turkish newspaper Yeni Şafak, "Saleh said that they need Ankara's support to preserve Libya's territorial integrity, adding that he conveyed to Erdogan, during their meeting, a prominent picture of the Libyan scene. He assured the Turkish president that preserving Libya's unity and territorial integrity is the most important thing and that the Turkish president promised to make all necessary efforts for the stability and prosperity of Libya (Ahmed,2022)

4.6.1 The Derna disaster and Ankara's political opportunity

On the night of September 10, 2023, catastrophic flooding and the subsequent collapse of two dams resulted in significant devastation in Derna, eastern Libya. In response to this humanitarian crisis, Türkiye demonstrated rapid engagement by deploying two warships, which transported 360 personnel.

This group included members from the state disaster-management agency AFAD and the Search and Rescue Association (AKUT) and personnel from the Ministry of Health, Coast Guard, and Fire Department. Additionally, Türkiye provided 122 vehicles, including ambulances and rescue intervention vehicles, established three field hospitals, and provided food, shelter, and medical supplies. (Fidan, 2023)

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made a public commitment to facilitating Libya's rapid recovery, intending to "ensure Libya's wounds are healed as soon as possible." This intervention was notably marked by the visit of Ambassador Kenan Yilmaz to Derna alongside Osama Hammad, the head of the government appointed by the House of Representatives in eastern Libya. Hammad recognized the efforts of the Turkish rescue teams, reflecting a significant diplomatic outreach. (Wannes, 2023)

This recent engagement contrasts sharply with Türkiye's military involvement in the conflict over the past three and a half years, particularly its support for Western Libyan forces, which played a crucial role in repelling an offensive by Khalifa Haftar's eastern forces against Tripoli. During that period, the strategic deployment of Turkish Bayraktar drones dealt significant blows to Haftar's military ambitions, yet his forces continued to dominate the eastern regions, including Derna.

To understand this notable shift in Türkiye's approach, it is essential to analyze it within the framework of the country's long-term strategic objectives in Libya. Primarily, Türkiye aims to preserve its influence in North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, where it competes with regional rivals, particularly Greece, for access to oil and gas resources. Additionally, Türkiye seeks to enhance its economic engagements with Libya, aspiring to increase exports and facilitate more significant investment, particularly in the energy and construction sectors. This dual objective underscores the complexity of Türkiye's foreign policy strategy in the region, highlighting its humanitarian commitment and geopolitical ambitions. (Musa, 2023)



Figure 10 : Türkiye's team begins tasks to coordinate search rescue operations in libya's flood-ravaged derna (photo by türkiye's disaster and emergency / anadolu agency via afp)

4.7 LIBYA-TÜRKIYE: ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS

Libya and Türkiye's economic relations and bilateral cooperation have significantly fluctuated from 2011 to 2023, influenced by various political and security considerations. An analysis of this period reveals that both countries have confronted numerous challenges, both domestically and in their bilateral relations. Notably, the overarching challenge has been the stability of each state, which has directly impacted their economic interactions.

From an economic perspective, the narrative of Libya-Türkiye relations post-2011 starkly contrasts with the preceding period. Before 2011, particularly from 2002 to 2011, Turkish foreign policy was characterized mainly by a government prioritizing economic partnerships and zero problems with various countries, including Libya, under the Gaddafi regime. During this era, nations entered into numerous agreements on construction and reconstruction projects within Libya, alongside Turkish investments in Libya's energy sector.

4.7.1 Türkiye's role in libya's construction sector

Öztaş and Polats Libya ranked second in signing contracts with Turkish construction companies with \$26.427 billion and 19 percent among other countries in 2011. However, The onset of the Arab Spring was a pivotal moment that disrupted the bilateral relations between Libya and Türkiye. Türkiye's opposition to the fall of the Gaddafi regime created a rift in relations that significantly impacted economic cooperation.

The 2011 uprising against the Gaddafi regime in Libya severely disrupted construction projects by Turkish companies, causing significant damage due to military raids and civil unrest. In response, the Turkish Trade Ministry held a "Libya Assessment Meeting" with officials and representatives from over 200 Turkish companies involved in approximately \$15.3 billion worth of projects across the country.

At this meeting, then-Minister of Trade Zafer Caglayan noted that 28 Turkish firms were working on 31 projects valued at \$3 billion in Tobruk, Benghazi, and Derna. that 14 of the 24 construction sites in key cities like Tripoli and Benghazi sustained severe damage from raids and arson by various factions. Muzaffer Aksoy, chairman of the Türkiye-Libya Business Council, highlighted that many projects were near completion when conflict erupted, forcing companies to leave without payment and abandoning equipment worth around \$500 million, including a \$200 million university site by Mesa Construction Ltd.

Additionally, 2011 marked Türkiye's largest evacuation operation, with about 25,000 Turkish workers and engineers evacuated by the end of February as violence escalated, exemplifying the challenges faced by foreign businesses in conflict zones and the implications for international economic engagement in unstable regions

The most important of these companies, according to the Öztaş and Polats, are:

- Arsenal Construction Company Limited
- MRA Construction Company Limited
- Aska Construction Company Limited
- NA Construction Company Limited
- Çukurova Construction Company Limited
- Özaltın
- Enka Üstay Construction Company Limited
- Mas Construction Company Limited
- System Construction Company Limited
- Mesa Construction Company Limited
- STEFAN
- MNG Construction Company Limited
- Tekfen

Following the regime's fall in Libya from 2012 to 2014, there has been a notable revival in trade exchanges. Türkiye's exports to Libya include clothing, furniture, food, auto parts, construction supplies, etc. However, construction projects and investments by Turkish companies in Libya have continued to be suspended due to prevailing security concerns. Despite these challenges, efforts have been made to advocate for the resumption of these critical projects. This situation underscores the complex interplay between economic initiatives and the broader security landscape in Libya, highlighting the need for strategic approaches to facilitate investment and development in the region.(Öztaş & Ferhat, 2019)

4.7.2 Trade and Investment

Before 2011, trade relations between Türkiye and Libya were robust and characterized by significant investments across various sectors. However, the civil war severely disrupted these relations, leading to a decline in bilateral trade. The prevailing instability has created significant barriers for Turkish enterprises seeking to operate within Libya's borders. The period from 2014 to 2019 marked a new decline in economic relations.

However, 2019 was a turning point in relations between the two countries at all levels, especially regarding the agreements between the two countries. Despite the fragility of the security situation, economic relations witnessed a return again in 2020-2023 post-political settlements in Libya, during which Türkiye's involvement became increasingly active and influential (Saber Al-Shaikhi personal interview 29. May 2024)

Türkiye has set an ambitious goal to significantly enhance its exports to Libya, aiming to reach \$10 billion, a marked increase from approximately \$1.49 billion in 2018. This objective reflects Türkiye's strategic intent to capture a larger share of the Libyan market and foster economic ties between the two nations. Additionally, Libya serves as a crucial entry point for Turkish enterprises, facilitating access to broader North African markets such as Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and the Central African Republic. (Yüksel, 2021)

In statements to Anadolu Agency ,Murtaza Qarnfil, the Chairman of the Turkish-Libyan Business Council at the Foreign Economic Relations Board, underscored the progress achieved in various sectors, notably economic, commercial, political, and military domains. He attributes this advancement to the MoU, which he believes serves the interests of both countries and their populations.

The statement emphasized that the agreement holds substantial significance concerning national security, economic collaboration, and other pertinent areas of mutual interest. Highlighting Libya's strategic importance, Qarnfil" identified it as the primary foreign market for Turkish contractors, reflecting its critical role in Türkiye's economic landscape. He pointed out Libya's geographical proximity, only three days away by sea, as a vital

factor in enhancing trade relations, further augmented by Libya's potential as a gateway to markets across the African continent". (Durdak, 2021)

According to Alsanusi, Altıntaş, and Alnour (2022), Türkiye is recognized as the second-largest exporter to Libya, following China. The trade balance between these two nations is influenced by several factors, notably the real exchange rate, oil prices, and economic policy uncertainty, significantly shaped by Libya's oil revenues. A strong correlation exists between Turkish exports to Libya and the fluctuations in these revenues; specifically, when Libya's oil revenues are robust, Turkish exports tend to increase, while a decline in these revenues corresponds with a reduction in exports. This relationship indicates a strong cointegration between the trade balance and oil revenues.

Furthermore, the scholars noted that the trade balance displays an asymmetric response to fluctuations in the real exchange rate: negative variations exert a more pronounced and lasting impact than positive changes. Additionally, shocks in oil prices generally enhance the trade balance, while economic policy uncertainty has detrimental effects. In times of elevated Libyan oil revenues, the trade balance typically shows improvement, facilitating increased Turkish exports to Libya.

From 2011 to 2023, it is imperative to consider significant external influences, such as the civil war in Libya and the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic between 2019 and 2020, which have directly affected trade relations and other bilateral sectors. The research underscores the complexity of trade relations and economic cooperation between Libya and Türkiye, revealing a multifaceted landscape shaped by several interrelated dynamics.(Alsanusi et al. 2022). This leads the research to explore the role of the energy sector and cooperation in petroleum relations!

4.7.3 Energy sector

The pivotal moment in Libyan-Turkish relations was signing a maritime agreement in November 2019, which sought to redefine territorial waters in the Mediterranean and grant Türkiye rights to explore hydrocarbon resources in the region.

In 2020, During a joint press conference held in Tripoli, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu announced an agreement with his Libyan counterpart, Najla Mangoush, regarding a memorandum of understanding focused on oil and gas exploration within Libyan territorial waters and on Libyan land. This memorandum facilitates collaborative efforts between Turkish and Libyan companies in resource exploration. (Al-monitor, 2022)

Türkiye and Libya focus on cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector, particularly in exploration and drilling. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu "stated that the agreement aims to promote mutual benefit between Turkish and Libyan businesses on land and at sea." Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah "highlighted that oil exploration will align with Türkiye's previously established maritime agreement, showcasing a joint effort in hydrocarbon exploration." (Offshore, 2022). Türkiye is set to begin seismic survey operations in the Libyan economic zone, supported by its previous discoveries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, along with an intense energy fleet of drilling vessels and seismic research ships. These developments reinforce the ongoing partnership in the energy sector between the two countries.

However, a Libyan court has boldly suspended the energy exploration agreement ratified by the Tripoli government in collaboration with Türkiye. This judicial ruling has stirred the waters, inciting an intense backlash from other Mediterranean nations and deepening Libya's already turbulent political landscape. (Reuters, 2022)

On the other hand, in his statements to Sabah TV Economist Prof. Dr. Ahmet Sedat Aybar (2020) articulated the significance of Türkiye's initiation of oil exploration activities in Libya, emphasizing its potential to deepen economic relations between the two nations.

Aybar highlighted Libya's considerable oil and natural gas reserves, asserting that these resources could bolster Türkiye's strategic position amid the ongoing energy conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean. Aybar remarked, "The oil exploration endeavors in Libya are poised to satisfy a substantial portion of Türkiye's oil requirements." The commencement of Türkiye's oil operations in Libya has garnered substantial attention, particularly about Türkiye's fuel needs.

Before the unrest, Libya produced approximately 1.6 million barrels per day of high-quality oil, of which 80 percent was exported to European markets. This made Libya a pivotal oil producer in North Africa, contributing to 3 percent of global oil production and housing the largest oil reserves on the African continent. Currently, Libya extracts merely four-thousandths of its reserves annually, a situation exacerbated by conflicts that have led to a decline in hydrocarbon production and exports. Furthermore, the downturn in global oil prices, influenced by diminished demand during the COVID-19 pandemic, has adversely affected Libya's oil revenues, which account for 69 percent of its total revenue.

With an investment exceeding 180 million dollars in Libya, the Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) has been involved in oil exploration activities since the early 2000s; after discovering oil reserves in the desert, TPAO suspended its operations in 2014 before it could commence production. The corporation plans to develop collaborative energy projects in the region known as the Oil Crescent, encompassing areas such as Sirte and Murzuk and aims to operationalize these initiatives. Establishing new oil and gas processing facilities would generate substantial employment opportunities in Libya and Türkiye. (Sabah TV, 2020)

4.7.4 Financial support

As for the financial level and cooperation between Türkiye and Libya, in 2020, Libya's Central Bank made a notable deposit of \$8 billion into the Central Bank of Türkiye, interest-free for four years. This financial maneuver was intended to help stabilize the Turkish lira and strengthen the economic ties between the two nations. Nevertheless, Libya's conflict and political instability have complicated the maintenance of consistent financial support and investment initiatives. (Hernandez, 2020)

Regarding technological, agricultural, and industrial cooperation, a recent meeting in Tripoli, chaired by Boujnah of the Southern Development Authority, focused on enhancing collaboration between Libyan and Turkish companies to develop southern Libya, particularly in energy, agriculture, and industry.

The Deputy Prime Minister's media office stated that the meeting aimed at exchanging technical expertise between Turkish investment firms and the Southern Development Authority to boost regional development. Discussions also highlighted the importance of training professionals, emphasizing skill development and cooperation. Boujnah reinforced the historical ties between Libya and Türkiye and committed to strengthening their economic and commercial relations. (Abdullah, 2023) This is in addition to the cultural exchange in developing education and scientific research, the health sector, and agreements to build hospitals in Libya. As a result, it could be said that the political turmoil resulting from civil strife and fragmentation within Libya has significantly hindered prospects for economic cooperation.

Additionally, regional tensions stemming from the maritime agreement and Türkiye's military involvement have strained relations with other geopolitical actors, complicating economic interactions. Security concerns persist, as ongoing violence poses challenges for Turkish businesses attempting to operate safely in Libya. Despite these myriad challenges, Türkiye and Libya continue to endeavor to strengthen their economic ties, maintaining a particular emphasis on energy cooperation and reconstruction efforts.

Türkiye's endeavors in Libya also reflect its aspirations to expand its influence within North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. Concurrently, Türkiye has engaged in diplomatic efforts to facilitate a political resolution to the conflict, support the UN-led peace process, and advocate for Libya's unity and territorial integrity. A combination of military, economic, and diplomatic efforts has informed Türkiye's strategy towards Libya, all aimed at securing its interests while expanding its regional influence.

This complex interplay of factors underscores the challenges and opportunities inherent in Libyan-Turkish relations. To comprehensively understand the dynamics of Libya-Türkiye relations, it was essential to examine the various agreements, contracts, and Türkiye's strategic demands in Libya and Libya's aspirations for cooperation with Türkiye across diverse sectors, including construction, energy, and security. This analysis reflects the complexities of international relations in the region and underscores the importance of economic diplomacy in navigating challenges and fostering mutual interests.

CONCLUSION AND RESULTS

The findings of this study reveal that the evolution of Turkish foreign policy, particularly after the rise of the Justice and Development Party in 2002, has significantly influenced Türkiye's relations with Libya. The initial transformation was deeply rooted in the party's ideology, emphasizing an eastward orientation and strategic depth, particularly with Libya, given their historical ties. Despite engaging with a dictatorial regime in Libya, Türkiye successfully established economic channels based on mutual interests, driven by concerns over its strategic aims in North Africa and existing contracts with the Gaddafi regime.

The onset of the Arab Spring marked a new phase in Türkiye's approach towards Libya, characterized by a desire to capitalize on revolutionary movements to foster economic interests and promote democratic governance. However, Türkiye's support for particular political factions, often aligned with its ideology but lacking popular backing and political experience, led to unforeseen challenges. This approach hindered Türkiye's credibility and incited the discontent of various regional and international stakeholders, resulting in heightened competition over influence in Libya.

The study underscores that Türkiye's foreign policy towards Libya has been shaped by a complex interplay of ideological aspirations, strategic interests, and the contextual realities of the Libyan political landscape, illustrating the multifaceted dimensions of international relations in this region, the multifaceted motives underlying Türkiye's foreign policy in Libya, revealing a complex interplay of political, economic, and military-security considerations that shape Türkiye's strategic interests in the region.

In this research, we meticulously examined the complexities of Turkish foreign policy, using Libya as a pivotal case study. Our method involved a detailed division of historical periods, allowing us to analyze the sources and developments that have influenced this dynamic relationship over time.

By scrutinizing the statements and actions of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, the research traced a comprehensive narrative highlighting how various geopolitical factors have shaped Türkiye's engagement with Libya.

Therefore, it was discovered that Türkiye's involvement in Libya is not merely a contemporary affair but is deeply rooted in historical, political, and economic contexts. Türkiye's shifting allegiances, the impact of regional conflicts, and its strategic motivations all played vital roles in the evolution of this relationship.

Through this analysis, we concluded that Türkiye's foreign policy towards Libya is characterized by a multifaceted approach, balancing national interests with regional stability. This research not only sheds light on the specifics of Türkiye's actions but also provides a broader understanding of the implications these developments hold for the future of both countries in the international arena. Therefore, Türkiye's foreign policy drivers and motivations in Libya can be summarized in the following points.

1. Political Motivations Libya has emerged as a crucial component of Türkiye's strategic perception, providing Türkiye with its first significant foothold in the southern Mediterranean. By establishing a maritime area exceeding 1,770 square kilometers, Türkiye aims to enhance its geographic presence, extending its influence from North Africa to the Aegean Sea. This strategic positioning solidifies Türkiye's role in the Mediterranean and acts as a countermeasure to attempts by regional players to marginalize its interests.

2. Economic Considerations: Türkiye's engagement in Libya is driven by the latter's substantial oil and gas reserves, estimated at 48 billion barrels of oil and 1.5 trillion cubic meters of gas. These resources allow Türkiye to reduce its reliance on energy supplies from Russia and Iran while positioning itself as a key player in supplying energy to the European Union. The maritime agreement signed with Libya is a strategic move to involve Türkiye in the Eastern Mediterranean energy dynamics, asserting its influence in the face of exclusionary practices by other regional stakeholders.

3. Military-Security Aspects: Türkiye perceives its military presence in Libya as vital for ensuring its role in future security arrangements. This involvement is part of a broader strategy to enhance its position amid regional power dynamics. It underscores Türkiye's aspiration to be a significant factor in military and security matters within Libya.

4. Geostrategic Calculations: The findings indicate that Türkiye's actions in Libya are deeply intertwined with its regional ambitions. The strategic calculations aim to rebalance power dynamics in favor of Türkiye, thereby redefining its influence in the Eastern Mediterranean and asserting its sovereign rights. This move aligns with Türkiye's broader goal of cultivating a robust foreign policy that elevates its status as an aspiring regional power.

5. Shifts in Foreign Policy: In light of recurring tensions with traditional allies, Türkiye has sought to develop a more independent foreign policy emphasizing openness to new alliances. Türkiye aims to consolidate its influence and navigate the shifting geopolitical landscape by diversifying its partnerships, particularly with regional powers in North Africa.

Türkiye's engagement in Libya reflects strategic ambitions that encompass political, economic, and military dimensions. It challenges existing power structures while pursuing a more assertive role in regional affairs.

Two salient points underscore the complex and evolving dynamics of Turkish-Libyan relations. Firstly, Türkiye's role as a key player in the region is pivotal in engaging with various parties involved in the myriad conflicts that characterize the landscape. This strategic involvement is not merely opportunistic but deeply entrenched within a clearly defined framework that Türkiye has developed specifically for its interactions with Libya.

Upon careful examination, it becomes evident that Türkiye possesses a deliberate and coherent strategy regarding its approach to Libya, which is crucial in navigating the broader regional conflicts. In this volatile environment, Turkish-Libyan relations cannot be viewed in isolation; they are influenced by many interlinked factors that inform and shape the policies of both nations.

The thesis hypothesis posits that Turkish foreign policy operates as an independent variable while surrounding geopolitical events are contingent and dependent on this policy framework. It This relationship suggests that Türkiye's engagement with Libya transcends mere diplomacy; it is rooted in a profound and multifaceted partnership that extends across various sectors, including economic, military, and political arenas. It becomes clear that it is accurate enough to say the hypothesis is optimistic regarding the Libya-Türkiye relationship being based on cooperation and bilateral relations.

When analyzing the Eastern Mediterranean issue, it becomes clear that Türkiye is staunchly defending its rights, which aligns with a broader strategic agenda. Libya is a crucial ally in this context, as both parties find their interests interconnected and mutually beneficial. This alliance reinforces Türkiye's position and enhances its capacity to project influence within the Eastern Mediterranean.

The analysis directly correlates Türkiye's relationship with Libya and its maneuverability within the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond. As Türkiye strengthens its ties with Libya, it gains greater leverage to navigate other regional complexities, reflecting the interconnected nature of these relationships in pursuit of shared goals and interests. Ultimately, this intricate web of diplomacy underscores the significance of Türkiye's strategic choices in solidifying its role as a dominant force in the region.

In the author's view, Türkiye has embarked on an exciting journey to strengthen its ties with Eastern regions, which has garnered positive attention. This shift signals a keen awareness of the geographical and strategic importance of the East for Türkiye, where economic opportunities and strategic interests converge. Striking a careful political balance in relations with all parties involved is essential to ensuring success.

Regarding a shift in foreign policy approach, Türkiye's previously established goal of maintaining "zero problems" with neighboring countries has shifted in response to regional developments. This change has prompted a reevaluation of Türkiye's external relations, particularly with Libya.

Türkiye has consistently prioritized engaging with internationally recognized Libyan governments. Its adoption of Tripoli as a reference point for cooperation underscores this commitment to legitimacy. The analysis indicates that Libyan-Turkish relations are fundamentally rooted in economic interests and bilateral cooperation. Despite the ongoing political instability within Libya, regional developments have fortified these ties.

This approach is not just about Türkiye but also about fostering Libya's internal unity, a crucial factor in realizing Türkiye's broader national strategy while aiding in Libya's stabilization. Libya's pressing needs—ranging from reconstruction efforts to energy projects and joint defense initiatives—highlight the indispensable role of Türkiye's involvement. Türkiye's support is not just welcomed; it is vital for Libya's recovery and development.

However, establishing political consensus in Libya is imperative for this relationship to flourish. The research suggests that Türkiye is well-positioned to be a key player in facilitating political solutions that foster consensus within the complex Libyan political landscape.

As we observe the evolving context of Turkish-Libyan relations, it becomes clear that we are witnessing a dynamic interplay of economic cooperation, political legitimacy, and the critical need for political consensus. This triad is essential for both nations' stability and paves the way for mutual development. It is an intriguing chapter in international relations that promises to shape the future of both Türkiye and Libya.

References

- Abdullah, W. (2023, May 9). *The Libyan government hopes to achieve "fruitful cooperation" with Turkish companies*. Retrieved from Libya observer: <https://libyaobserver.ly/news/libya-hopes-achieve-fruitful-cooperation-turkish-companies>
- Ahram*. (May 20, 2014). Retrieved from I want to cleanse Libya of Muslim Brotherhood: Haftar: <https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/101760.aspx>
- Aktaş, I. (2020, June 13). *The current balance of power in Libya*. Retrieved from Daily Sabah: <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/current-balance-of-power-in-libya>
- Al Jazeera Net*. (July 16, 2020). Retrieved from Who bombed Al-Watiya base in Libya? Unique sources speak to Al Jazeera Net: <https://bit.ly/42pzozb>.
- Al-Abouz, A. (2013). *Libya was the most prosperous economy during the Arab Spring*. Cairo: Anadolu.
- Alhar, A. (2022). the reality of Libyan political sense: path and policies. *International Relations Journal*, 10–11.
- Alharathy, S. (February 1, 2022). *Turkish Ambassador: My visit to Benghazi came at the invitation of its steering council*. Retrieved from Libya Observer: <https://libyaobserver.ly/news/turkish-ambassador-my-visit-benghazi-came-invitation-its-steering-council>
- Aljazeera*. (2011, October 31). Retrieved from NATO officially ends Libya mission: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2011/10/31/nato-officially-ends-libya-mission>
- Aljazeera news*. (2011, September 16). Retrieved from Türkiye PM hails 'sacrifice' of Libyan people: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2011/9/16/Türkiye-pm-hails-sacrifice-of-libyan-people>.
- Aljazeraa.net*. (February 18, 2014). Retrieved from Libyan militias tell parliament to quit: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2014/2/18/libyan-militias-tell-parliament-to-quit>
- Aljazeera.net*. (December 18, 2019). Retrieved from Egypt objects internationally to the Turkish-Libyan agreement, and Ankara's ambassador responds: <https://www.aljazeera.net/politics/2019/12/18>
- Al-monitor*. (October 3, 2022). Retrieved from Türkiye and Libya sign maritime hydrocarbons deal: <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/10/Türkiye-and-libya-sign-maritime-hydrocarbons-deal>

- Al-Quraitili, I. (2020, August 4). *Sirte-Jufra Line in Libya: Battle or War?* Retrieved from Al Jazeera Center for Studies: <https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/article/4756>
- Altunışık, M. B. (2021, April 27). *The new wave of normalization in Türkiye's Middle East foreign policy.* Retrieved from the Middle East Institute: <https://www.mei.edu/publications/new-wave-normalization-Türkiyes-middle-east-foreign-policy>
- Altunışık, M. B., & Martin, G. L. (2023). Türkiye, the Middle East, and North Africa under the AKP: A Three Level Analysis of Foreign Policy Change. *Uluslararası İlişkiler(International Relations)*, 20(78), 80-82.
- Altunışık, M. B., & Martin, L. G. (2023). Türkiye, the Middle East, and North Africa under the AKP. *International Relations*, 20(78), 79-96. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27248345>
- Anadolu Agency.* (2012, 10 17). Retrieved from Mahmoud Jibril: Türkiye has presented a distinguished economic model:<https://bit.ly/3PIFzXR>
- Anadolu Agency.* (January 8, 2020). Retrieved from Türkiye, Russia call for Libya ceasefire to start Sunday night: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/energy/international-relations/Türkiye-russia-call-for-ceasefire-in-libya-joint-statement/28022>
- Anjum, H. (2022, December). *SECOND LIBYAN CIVIL WAR (2014-2020): CAUSES AND IMPACTS.* Retrieved from research gate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/366445100_SECOND_LIBYAN_CIVIL_WAR_2014-2020_CAUSES_AND_IMPACTS
- Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.* (June 9, 2020). Retrieved from Türkiye's Growing Role in Libya: Motives, Background, and Responses: <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/Türkiyes-growing-role-in-libya-motives-background-and-responses/>
- Aslan, A. (2024). Strategic autonomy in Turkish foreign policy: Defense or offense? *Comparative Strategy*, 749–751.
- Atalay, A. (2019, Desember 22). *Turkish parliament ratifies motion on Türkiye-Libya deal.* Retrieved from Anadolu agency: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/Türkiye/turkish-parliament-ratifies-motion-on-Türkiye-libya-deal/1680334>
- Aydin, A. (2013). the perception of the change of axis in Turkish foreign policy in terms of a liberal perspective between 2002-2010. *Süleyman Demirel University Institute of Socia*, 244.
- Aydın, S. D. (2014, july 24). *The Seesaw Friendship Between Türkiye's AKP and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.* Retrieved from Carnegie endowment for international peace:

<https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2014/07/the-seesaw-friendship-between-Türkiyes-akp-and-egypts-muslim-brotherhood?lang=en>

Bakir, A. (2023, April 12). *Egypt-Türkiye normalization: Ankara's perspective*. Retrieved from Atlantic Council:
<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/egypt-Türkiye-normalization-ankaras-perspective/>

Barkey, H. J. (2012). The Evolution of Turkish Foreign. *Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation*, 5–6.

Basikri, S. (2023). *Eleven years since the February 17 Revolution*. Al Jazeera Center for Studies.

BBC news. (December 16, 2019). Retrieved from The military agreement between Türkiye and Libya is described in Arab newspapers as "pouring oil on the fire":
<https://www.bbc.com/arabic/inthepress-50808249>

Bekaroglu, E. A. (2015). Justice and Development Party and Muslim Brotherhood in the "Arab Spring": A Failed Post-Islamist Interaction to Transform the Middle East. *DergiPark*, 13-14.

Britannica. (2011). *Libya Revolt of 2011*. Retrieved from Britannica:
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Libya-Revolt-of-2011>

Britannica. (May 21, 2024). *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved from Britannica:
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/foreign-policy>

Burweila, A. (2019). TÜRKIYE'S SUPPORT TO LIBYA'S OUTLAW MILITIAS AND THE THREAT TO EUROPE'S SOUTHERN FLANK. *Research Institute for European and American Studies*, December.

Cakmak, B. N. (2021, Ocuber 19). *From Somalia to Afghanistan, Türkiye is part of the solution*. Retrieved from Anadolu Agency:
<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/Türkiye/from-somalia-to-afghanistan-Türkiye-is-part-of-solution/2396678>

Calabrò, A. (2017, November 1). Islamist Views on Foreign Policy: Examples of Turkish Pan-Islamism in the Writings of Sezai Karakoç and Necmettin Erbakan. *Insight Türkiye*, 175-178. Retrieved from Islamist Views on Foreign Policy: Examples of Turkish Pan-Islamism in the Writings of Sezai Karakoç and Necmettin Erbakan: <https://www.insightTürkiye.com/articles/islamist-views-on-foreign-policy-examples-of-turkish-pan-islamism-in-the-writings-of-sezai-karakoc-and-necmettin-erbakan>

Canli, E. (2020, November 28). *Milestone memorandums with Türkiye change Libya's fate*. Retrieved from Anadolu Agency:

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/milestone-memorandums-with-Türkiye-change-libyas-fate/2058139>

Çevik, S. (2024). Türkiye's Reconciliation Efforts in the Middle East. *German Institute for International and Security Affairs*.

ICRC. (April 3, 2011). Retrieved from Türkiye evacuates and treats wounded people in Libya: 2011:<https://bit.ly/3PIIWOi>

Ceyhun, G. Ç. (2023). Maritime Dynamics and Energy Security in the Eastern Mediterranean: Analyzing the Blue Homeland Doctrine. *Journal of Corporate Governance, Insurance, and Risk Management*, 160-165.

Charbonneau, L., & Haddadin, H. (2009, September 23). *Gaddafi blasts big powers in first U.N. speech*. Retrieved from Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/gaddafi-blasts-big-powers-in-first-un-speech-idUSTRE58M5DW/>

Cousins, M. (2012). *Libya and Türkiye in military deal*. Tripoli: libyaherald.

Daily sabah. (2011, september 16). Retrieved from Erdoğan to visit Libya as Sirte battle rages: <https://www.dailysabah.com/Türkiye/2011/09/16/erdogan-to-visit-libya-as-sirte-battle-rages>

Daily sabah. (December 26, 2019). Retrieved from Libya makes a formal request for Turkish military support: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2019/12/26/libya-makes-formal-request-for-turkish-military-support>

Daily sabah. (January 11, 2022). Retrieved from Libya's deputy PM invites Türkiye's envoy to visit east: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/libyas-deputy-pm-invites-Türkiyes-envoy-to-visit-east>

Dalaa, M. (2020, June 13). *9 peace initiatives rebuffed by Libya's Haftar: Timeline*. Retrieved from Anadolu Agency: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/9-peace-initiatives-rebuffed-by-libyas-haftar-timeline/1875548>

Davutoğlu, A. (2008). Türkiye's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007. *Insight Türkiye*, 10(1), 79.

Donaghy, R. (February 13, 2015). *Libya's parliament rejects the court ruling, and calls for international action have grown*. Retrieved from Middle East Eye: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/libya-parliament-rejects-court-ruling-calls-grow-international-action>

Duclos, M. (June 30, 2020). *The Libyan Crisis: a Russia-Türkiye-France Triangle*. Retrieved from Institut Montaigne: <https://www.institutmontaigne.org/en/expressions/libyan-crisis-russia-Türkiye-france-triangle>

- Dünya Gazetesi*. (February 20, 2013). Retrieved from Zeidan: Libyan people owe to Türkiye: <https://www.dunya.com/gundem/zeidan-libyan-people-owe-to-Türkiye-haberi-201822>
- Dünya, G. (2009, November 26). *Erdogan concludes Libya's visit with a host of agreements*. Retrieved from <https://www.dunya.com/gundem/sinav-takvimi-degisebilir-haberi-97835>
- Durdak, A. (2021, November 26). *The maritime deal increased Türkiye-Libya's bilateral trade by 43%*. Retrieved from Anadolu Agency: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/economy/maritime-deal-raised-Türkiye-libya-bilateral-trade-by-43-/2431470>
- El-Kikhia, M. O. (2013). *Libya: The Seeding of a New Democracy*. Retrieved from European Institute for the Mediterranean: <https://www.iemed.org/publication/libya-the-seeding-of-a-new-democracy/>
- European Commission*. (October 25, 2020). Retrieved from Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the announcement of a Ceasefire Agreement in Libya: https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/declaration-high-representative-behalf-eu-announcement-ceasefire-agreement-libya-2020-10-25_en
- Fathallah, M. (2019, April 12). *Haftar's war on Tripoli. This is how the scene has developed since the February Revolution*. Retrieved from Aljazeera.net: <https://bit.ly/40JTqDe>
- Fayed, A. (August 7, 2024). *Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies*. Retrieved from Will the Blue Homeland Doctrine Rekindle Tensions in Türkiye?: <https://acpss.ahram.org.eg/News/21241.aspx>.
- Fidan, H. (2023, September 21). *Türkiye spares no effort to help flood-affected Libyans abdin need of medical care*. Retrieved from Anadolu Agency: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkiye/turkiye-spares-no-effort-to-help-flood-affected-libyans-in-need-of-medical-care/2997999>
- France 24*. (August 21, 2020). Retrieved from Libya's warring rivals announce ceasefire: <https://www.france24.com/en/20200821-libya-s-un-backed-government-announces-immediate-ceasefire>
- France-Presse, A. (May 31, 2011). *Libyan rebels rename themselves the National Liberation Army*. Retrieved from Inquirer.net: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/10807/libyan-rebels-rename-themselves-national-liberation-army>
- Fund, I. m. (January 30, 2012). *International monetary fund*. Retrieved from Libya- Concluding Statement of the 2012 Staff Visit: <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/52/mcs012612>

- Gaddafi Hosts Erdogan in His Tent.* (November 24, 2009). Retrieved from haber 3:
<https://www.haber3.com/foto-galeri/haber/kaddafi-erdogani-cadirinda-agirladi-galeri-4541506?page=3>
- Gagaptay, S., & Sievers, M. (March 8, 2015). *Türkiye and Egypt's Great Game in the Middle East.* Retrieved from The Washington Institute for Near East Policy:
<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/Türkiye-and-egypts-great-game-middle-east>
- Gapaptay, S., & Fishmen, B. (2019, Desember 19). *Türkiye Pivots to Tripoli: Implications for Libya's Civil War and U.S. Policy.* Retrieved from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy:
<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/Türkiye-pivots-tripoli-implications-libyas-civil-war-and-us-policy>
- Gomati, A. E. (2022, March 17). *How Türkiye Transforms Libya.* Retrieved from Bertelsmann Transformation Index: <https://blog.bti-project.org/2022/03/17/how-Türkiye-transforms-libya/>
- Guardian, T. (n.d.). *Muammar Gaddafi condemns Tunisia uprising.* Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/16/muammar-gaddafi-condemns-tunisia-uprising>
- Guesmi, J. (2020, May 19). *The arab weekly.* Retrieved from The fall of al-Watiya base Ushers an era of permanent Turkish presence in western Libya:
<https://the arabweekly.com/fall-al-watiya-base-ushers-era-permanent-turkish-presence-western-libya>
- Harding, L., & Julian Borger. (August 23, 2011). *Libya: Gaddafi's citadel falls, but his fate remains unknown.* Retrieved from the Guardian:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/aug/23/libya-gaddafi-compound-rebel-fighters>
- Hernandez, H. (2020, July 1). *Atalayar magazine.* Retrieved from Libyan Central Bank deposits "billions" of dollars in Türkiye:
<https://www.atalayar.com/en/articulo/politics/libyan-central-bank-deposits-billions-dollars-Türkiye/20200701105722146426.html#:~:text=During%20the%20meeting%2C%20as%20reported,to%20have%20reached%20%248%20billion>
- Hosbas, A. (January 23, 2020). *Did the Berlin Conference on Libya reassure or concern Türkiye?* Retrieved from Middle East Monitor:
<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200123-did-the-berlin-conference-on-libya-reassure-or-concern-Türkiye/>

Hüseyin Bağcı & Serdar Erduramaz. (September 4, 2017). LIBYA AND TÜRKİYE'S EXPANSION POLICY IN AFRICA. 8, 39. Gazi Antep, Ankara, Türkiye: JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations,

Hussein, A. Q. (September 6, 2020). *Ceasefire Declaration in Libya: Motives and Implications*. Retrieved from Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies: <https://www.dohainstitute.org/ar/PoliticalStudies/Pages/Ceasefire-Declaration-in-Libya-Motivations-and-Significance.aspx>

Haesebrouck, T., & Joly, J. (2022). Foreign Policy Change: From Policy Adjustments to Fundamental Reorientations. *Sage*. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1478929920918783>

Idriss, M. A. (2020, August 8). *Türkiye-Africa partnership: A development-oriented approach*. Retrieved from Anadolu Agency: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/analysis-Türkiye-africa-partnership-a-development-oriented-approach/1696640>

Inaç, h., & Hadji, a. (2022). Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East During the Rule of the Justice and Development Party: Interaction of Interests and Future Challenges. *Uluslararası Yönetim Akademisi Dergisi*, 312-314.

International group crisis. (May 20, 2020). Retrieved from Interpreting Haftar's Gambit in Libya: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/libya/interpreting-haftars-gambit-libya>

Joffé & Paoletti. (2011). THE FOREIGN POLICY PROCESS IN LIBYA. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 2–4.

Kaarbo, J., Lantis, J. S., & Beasley, R. K. (2013). *The Analysis of Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective* (2nd ed.). Washington DC: Sage journal.

Kaddoura, I. (2021, November). *Türkiye: Ambitious Strategy and Constrained Policy: A Geopolitical Approach*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiDAIsx0AGM&t=18s>

Kardas, S. (March 4, 2011). *Türkiye Diverges From Western Position On Libya*. Retrieved from the Jamestown Foundation Global Research and Analysis: <https://jamestown.org/program/Türkiye-diverges-from-western-position-on-libya/>

Kaya, A. (2020). *How Türkiye built ties with the African continent over 23 years*. Retrieved from TRT world: <https://www.trtworld.com/opinion/how-Türkiye-built-ties-with-the-african-continent-over-23-years-44625>

- Kiprof, J. (2019, November 11). *What are the primary natural resources In Libya?* Retrieved from World Atlas: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-are-the-major-natural-resources-of-libya.html>
- Kiraz, B. Ö. (2023). Multidirectionality(ies) in the Turkish Foreign Policy: Compensatory, Complementary and Reactive. *JOURNAL OF BALKAN AND NEAR EASTERN STUDIES*, 25(3), 566–567.
- Kirişçi, K. (2013, August 15). *The Rise and Fall of Türkiye as a Model for the Arab World*. Retrieved from Brookings: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-rise-and-fall-of-Türkiye-as-a-model-for-the-arab-world/>
- Kirişçi, K. (2016, November 29). *The End of the Cold War and Changes in Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour*. Retrieved from Foreign Policy Institute: <https://foreignpolicy.org.tr/the-end-of-the-cold-war-and-changes-in-turkish-foreign-policy-behaviour-kemal-kirischi/>
- Krikish, N. (2016, September 6). *Islamic Movements in Libya after the Arab Revolutions: Transformations and the Future*. Retrieved from Al Jazeera Center for Studies: <https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/reports/2016/09/160906083705908.html#a10>
- Lacher, W. (2015). Supporting stabilization in Libya: the challenges of finalizing the State's and implementing the Skhirat agreement. *Deutsches Institut für Internationale Politik und Sicherheit*, 1-5.
- Lacher, W. (2019). How the 2019 Civil War is Transforming Libya's Military Landscape. *Small arms survey*, 14–15.
- Lacher, W. (2020). A Most Irregular Army. *RESEARCH DIVISION MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA*, 13–15.
- Magazin, M. (October 14, 1997). *Libya and Türkiye agreed to boost trade during the Erbakan visit*. Retrieved from <http://archives.mees.com/issues/827/articles/31742>
- Málnássy, A. (2022). Türkiye's Military Role in Libya and Its Wider Strategic Environment (interest) in the Eastern Mediterranean Basin. *Journal of Central and Eastern Europe African studies*, 107.
- Malsin, J., & Said, S. (2019). *Saudi Arabia Promised Support to Libyan Warlord in Push to Seize Tripoli*. Dubai: The Wall Street Journal.
- Memmott, M. (February 22, 2011). *Gadhafi Blames 'Rats' And Foreign 'Agents'; Says He Will Be A 'Martyr'*. Retrieved from NPR news: <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2011/02/22/133960871/gadhafi-blames-rats-and-foreign-agents-says-he-will-be-a-martyr>

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs.* (September 2, 2011). Retrieved from Political relations between Türkiye and Libya: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-libya-siyasi-iliskileri.ar.mfa>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs.* (September 2, 2011). Retrieved from Political relations between Türkiye and Libya: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-libya-siyasi-iliskileri.ar.mfa>
- Mitchell, E. (1982). Islam in Colonel Qaddafi's Thought. *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 38(7/8), 319–326. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40395634>
- Mitzer, S., & Oliemens, J. (February 12, 2021). *Al-Watiya - From A Libyan Super Base To Turkish Air Base*. Retrieved from Oryxspioenkop: <https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2020/09/al-watiya-airbase-capture.html>
- Musa, A. B. (2023, October 5). *Türkiye Leverages Derna Relief to Reconcile with Eastern Libya*. Retrieved from Middle East Council: https://mecouncil.org/blog_posts/turkiye-leverages-derna-relief-to-reconcile-with-eastern-libya/
- Nkala, O. (2013, December 11). *Africans leading defense news portal*. Retrieved from 220 Libyan soldiers start military training in Türkiye: <https://www.defenceweb.co.za/security/national-security/220-libyan-soldiers-start-military-training-in-Türkiye/>
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization.* (March 22, 2011). Retrieved from NATO and Libya February - October: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_71652.htm
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization.* (October 21, 2024). Retrieved from NATO and Libya (February - October 2011): https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_71652.htm
- OCHA.* (June 23, 2021). Retrieved from The Second Berlin Conference on Libya: <https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/second-berlin-conference-libya-conference-conclusions-23-june-2021>
- Offshore.* (October 10, 2022). Retrieved from Libya PM defends deal signed with Türkiye over oil and gas exploration: <https://www.offshore-mag.com/regional-reports/north-sea-europe/article/14284056/libya-pm-defends-deal-signed-with-Türkiye-over-oil-and-gas-exploration>
- Oğuzlu, H. T. (2020). Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing World Order. *All Azimuth*, 127-128.
- Öniş, Z. (1995). Türkiye in the Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity. *the middle east journal*, 49(1), 49-57.
- Öniş, Z. (2012). Türkiye and the Arab Spring: Between Ethics and Self-Interest. *Insight Türkiye*, 52.

- Örmeci, O. (2011). Ismail Cem's Foreign Policy (1997-2002). *Journal of Social Sciences*, 224.
- Pack, J. (May 17, 2019). *The Italian Institute for International Political Studies*. Retrieved from Kingdom of Militias: Libya's Second War of Post-Qadhafi Succession: <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/kingdom-militias-libyas-second-war-post-qadhafi-succession-23121>.
- Pack, J., & Pusztai, W. (2020). Turning The Tide: How Türkiye Won The War For Tripoli. *Middle East Institute*, 6-8.
- Paul R. Viotti & Mark V. Kauppi. (2012). *international relations theory*. United states: Pearson.
- Randall, E. (2015). Development and Democratization in Libya. *Middle East Journal*, 200.
- Reuters. (November 13, 2018). *Reuters*. Retrieved from Türkiye withdraws from Libya summit in Italy: vice president: <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/Türkiye-withdraws-from-libya-summit-in-italy-vice-president-idUSKCN1NI1JH/>
- Reuters*. (January 10, 2022). Retrieved from Libyan court suspends energy deal with Türkiye: <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/libyan-court-suspends-energy-deal-with-Türkiye-2023-01-10/>
- RFI. (July 4, 2011). *Radio France Internationale*. Retrieved from Türkiye recognizes Libya's rebel council: <https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20110704-Türkiye-reconnis-libyas-rebel-council>
- Sabah TV*. (2020, Janury 11). Retrieved from Türkiye'nin Libya'daki petrol hamlesi büyük yankı uyandırdı! Türkiye'nin yakıt ihtiyacını karşılar: <https://www.sabah.com.tr/ekonomi/2020/06/11/turkiyenin-libyadaki-petrol-hamlesi-buyuk-yanki-uyandirdi-turkiyenin-yakit-ihtiyacini-karsilar>
- Sakr, T. (2019, Sebtember 27). *Egypt scolds Türkiye's Erdogan over sponsoring terrorism in the region*. Retrieved from Daily news: <https://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2019/09/26/egypt-scolds-Türkiyes-erdogan-over-sponsoring-terrorism-in-the-region/>
- Salem, P., & Kadlec, A. (2012). Libya's troubled. *Carnegie Middle East Center*, 7.
- Salyk-Virk, M. (2020). *Airstrikes, Proxy Warfare, and Civilian Casualties in Libya*. New America (2020).
- Sarkhanov, T., & Sadri, S. (2022). Geopolitics and Geoeconomics of the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Conflict: Analysis of Türkiye's Policy. *Geopolitics Quarterly*, 18, 97–98.

- Sawani, Y. M. (2020). Gaddafi's Legacy, Institutional Development, and National Reconciliation in Libya. *Center for Arab Unity Studies*, 46-47.
- Schweller, R. L. (2016, may 9). *The Balance of Power in World Politics*. Retrieved from Ohio State University:
<https://oxfordre.com/politics/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-119>
- Sofuoglu, M. (n.d.). *How Arabs perceive Türkiye's foreign policy in the Middle East*. Retrieved from TRT World: <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/how-arabs-perceive-türkiye-s-foreign-policy-in-the-middle-east-40415>
- Sheiko, Y. (February 16, 2018). *The United Arab Emirates: Türkiye's New Rival*. Retrieved from Washington Institute for Near East:
<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/united-arab-emirates-türkiyes-new-rival>
- Shupak, G. (September 26, 2023). *responsible statecraft*. Retrieved from Media completely ignores NATO war role in Libya chaos:
<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/libya-floods-nato/>
- Studies, A. C. (January 2, 2020). *Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies*. Retrieved from The Libya-Türkiye Memorandum of Understanding: Local and Regional Repercussions: <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-libya-türkiye-memorandum-of-understanding-local-and-regional-repercussions/>
- Tastekin, F. (January 21, 2020). *Why is Sirte everyone's 'red line' in Libya?* Retrieved from Libya Tribune: <https://en.minbarlibya.org/2020/06/21/why-is-sirte-everyones-red-line-in-libya/>
- Tekir, G. (2020). Russian-Turkish Involvement in the Civil War in Libya. *Turkish Journal of Russian Studies*, 207–209.
- Tierney, D. (April 15, 2016). *The Legacy of Obama's 'Worst Mistake*. Retrieved from The Atlantic:
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/04/obamas-worst-mistake-libya/478461/>
- Trauthig, I. K. (2019, April 15). *Haftar's Calculus for Libya: What Happened, and What is Next*. Retrieved from The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation: <https://icsr.info/2019/04/15/haftars-calculus-for-libya-what-happened-and-what-is-next/>
- Trend news agency*. (November 25, 2009). Retrieved from PM, Erdogan invited Gaddafi to pay a visit to Türkiye: <https://en.trend.az/world/arab/1587524.html>

- Turkish Asian center for strategic Studies*. (May 15, 2023). Retrieved from Türkiye is a Country of Two Peninsulas:
https://tasam.org/en/Icerik/72328/turkiye_is_a_country_of_two_peninsulas
- Wannes, M. (2023, September 22). *Turkish ambassador visits Libya's flood-ravaged Derna city*. Retrieved from Anadolu Agency: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkish-ambassador-visits-libyas-flood-ravaged-derna-city/2998410>
- Wehrey, F. (February 17, 2016). *Why Libya's Transition to Democracy Failed*. Retrieved from Washington Post:
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/02/17/why-libyas-transition-failed/>
- Yackley, A. J. (2011). *Türkiye opposes any NATO operation in Libya*. Istanbul: Reuters.
- Yüksel, E. (2021). Türkiye's interventions in its near abroad: The case of Libya. *Netherland Institute for International Relations*, 8.
- Zadar. (21.200, ol yukyu). *sfaevfavervev*. Retrieved from fvwwwervfvevwe.
- Zoubir, Y. H. (2020). The Protracted Civil War in Libya: The Role of Outside Powers. *Insight Türkiye, Vol. 22*, 15.