



INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR SERIES I:  
**THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN  
PROBLEM IN THE CONTEXT OF  
INTERNATIONAL LAW AND POLITICS**

**INTERNATIONAL  
REPORT I**

**Editors**

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Istanbul Aydın University Publications

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**22.10.2020**

**PARTICIPANT LIST**

**Assoc. Prof. Mustafa AYDIN, President of İstanbul Aydın University  
(Opening Speech)**

Born in 1956, Mustafa Aydin completed his primary, middle and high school education in his birthplace, Trabzon. He continued his undergraduate in Cairo University and Ankara University Language and History-Geography Faculty. Later, he completed his master's and doctorate studies on linguistics. He started working in Turkish Armed Forces in 1975 and had various duties, both national and international until his retirement in 1995. Following his retirement, Assoc Prof. Aydin started working as an academic member of Istanbul University while also simultaneously establishing organizations with his investments in education sector under the roof of BIL Holding of which he still holds presidency.

He continues to provide education services through 150 schools, from kindergarten to high school, in around 40 BIL College campuses under the roof of BIL Educational Institutions he established in 1985. He laid the base of Istanbul Aydın University in 2003; Turkey's biggest foundation university with 16 faculties, 34 Research Centers, 40.000 students of which 5000 are international, 2 think-tanks, 2 UNESCO platforms and over 100 strong technological, information and laboratory infrastructures. Moreover, besides Cyprus Science University and International Aydın University in TRNC, he

established the IAU Incubation Centers in Silicon Valley, England, Baku, Tehran, Beijing, Chicago and San Francisco, respectively.

Assoc. Prof. Mustafa Aydin, who introduced the concept of ‘Education Diplomacy’ into higher education community, works continuously for worldwide recognition of Turkish Higher Education and he has been well recognized by his contributions on establishing ‘Study in Turkey’ in 2010 and great efforts to make Turkey the center of attraction for global international student mobility. He has also been the founder of the ‘Hybrid Higher Education Model’, combining vocational and research-based education, which was appraised and reported as a success model by the European Universities Association and global higher education community.

**Prof. Dr. Ragıp Kutay KARACA, Director of Institute of Graduate Studies, IAU (Moderator)**

Ragıp Kutay Karaca who graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1991, had worked at various units at Turkish Armed Forces. Karaca completed his second undergraduate study at the Department of Public Administration at Anadolu University in 2000; and his postgraduate study at the Department of Strategy Science, at Gebze Higher Institute of Technology in 2003. Karaca obtained his PhD degree at the Social Sciences Institute, Gazi University with the thesis titled “Republic of Turkey-People’s Republic of China Relations in Post-Cold War Period”. Karaca worked as a teaching assistant at the Institute for Strategic Research, at the National Defense University in 2010-2012; and received his associate professorship in the field of International Relations Political History in 2012. Karaca received his professorship in the field of Political History in 2018. Since 2018-2019 Academic Year, Karaca acts as a faculty member at the Department of International Relations and as the Director of Institute of Graduate Studies, İstanbul Aydın University.

Karaca has an extensive list of published national and international articles. Karaca is also the author of books titled “Dünyadaki Yeni Güç Çin Tek Kutuptan Çift Kutba”, “Güç Olma Stratejisi Çin Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Çin İlişkileri”; and the co-editor of books titled “Diplomasi Tarihi I”, “Diplomasi Tarihi II”, “Diplomatic History I”, “Diplomatic History II”, “SinoTurkey Relations Concept Policies and Prospects”, “New Concepts and New Conflicts in Global Security Issues”, and “Asya’da Güvenlik Sorunları ve Yansımaları”. Ragıp Kutay Karaca is a Member of the Middle East Institute Middle East-Asia Project Group and the Vice President of the Association for Research on Diplomacy.

**Cem Gürdeniz, Retired Rear Admiral, owner of the Blue Homeland doctrine (Speaker)**

Cem Gürdeniz was born in 1958. Gürdeniz, who was accepted to the Naval High School in 1972, graduated from the International Relations Department of the Naval Academy in 1979 and assumed the rank of Naval Lieutenant.

Cem Gürdeniz completed his postgraduate education in the field of "Manpower, Personnel and Training" at the USA Naval Postgraduate School between 1983-1985 and served in the Naval Forces Command until 1987. Gürdeniz, who completed his education at the Naval War College between 1987-1989, then became TCG Effort Operations Officer as a Naval Staff Captain. Gürdeniz served in various ranks of the Turkish Army between 1991 and 2011.

Admiral Cem Gürdeniz is also known for his Blue Homeland Doctrine, graduated from Naval Academy of International Relations as a lieutenant, later he continued his graduate education at Naval Post-Graduate School in USA and during this period he worked in Turkey’s US forces command, NATO’s

European SHAPE. Today he is one of the most known experts on Eastern Mediterranean issue.

**Prof. Dr. Hasan ÜNAL, Maltepe University Faculty Member (Speaker)**

Having graduated from Istanbul University, Department of History (1981), Prof. Dr. Hasan Ünal completed his doctorate at the University of Manchester, England (1986-1993). Upon his return to Turkey, Ünal started to work in the Department of International Relations at Ankara Bilkent University, where he worked until 2008, when he transferred to the Department of International Relations at Ankara Gazi University. Ünal, who worked at Gazi and then Atılım University for a total of ten years. Now, Professor Dr. Hasan Ünal is a faculty member at Maltepe University's Department of Political Science and International Relations, he works in the different fields of Turkish foreign policy, especially in Balkans, Greek-Turkish issues and the EU-Turkey relations. He has also organized many television programs, published articles and books.

**Prof. Dr. Mark MEIROWITZ, Faculty Member at State University of New York Meritame College and Lawyer (Speaker)**

Dr. Mark Meirowitz is a Professor of Humanities at SUNY Maritime College in New York. He is an expert in Turkish Foreign Policy and U.S.-Turkish relations. Dr. Meirowitz has lectured and written extensively on these subjects. He frequently appears in the U.S. and Turkish media to analyze these issues, as well as issues related to American Foreign Policy.

Dr. Meirowitz is writing a book on Turkish Foreign Policy for The Fort Schuyler Press. He has been a panelist and moderator at numerous academic conferences and panels, including the Turkey Focus Group of the National Defense University/Institute of National Security Studies, and at the annual

conferences of the Transatlantic Studies Association. He organized the international conference at SUNY Maritime College to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli/Canakkale Campaign. Previously, he completed the SUNY Levin Fellowship during which he taught English conversation to Turkish Faculty while in residence at Istanbul Technical University. Dr. Meirowltz teaches a wide variety of courses at SUNY Maritime College, including American Foreign Policy, American History and Constitutional Law. He is also a lawyer.

**Dr. George TZOGOPOULOS, Faculty Member at Center International de Formation Europeenne (Speaker)**

Dr George N. Tzogopoulos is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE) and Visiting Lecturer at the European Institute affiliated with it. He is also teaching International Relations and International Energy Relations at the Department of Law of the Democritus University of Thrace. George recently joined the Begin Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA) as a Research Associate and expert in media and politics as well as Chinese affairs. At BESA, he is, inter alia, organising its recently launched online debates on several international themes. He has been a Fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy since 2010 and is coordinating its Asian Studies Programme.

Dr Tzogopoulos is the author of two books: US Foreign Policy in the European Media: Framing the Rise and Fall of Neoconservatism (IB TAURIS) and The Greek Crisis in the Media: Stereotyping in the International Press (Ashgate), a regular columnist in Global Times, china.org.cn and the founder of chinaandgreece.com. For his work in Chinese affairs, he was awarded prizes by China Radio International in 2015 and 2016. In April 2016 he was selected by the Delegation of the European Union to China to take part in the first think China-EU think tank Dialogue organized in Beijing. In the summer of 2017, he

was a selected as ‘young leader’ by China’s Diplomatic Academy to attend its second workshop for European young leaders.

Dr Tzogopoulos has participated in several international research programmes. Since 2010 he is representing Greece in evaluations of European foreign policy conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR). His work has appeared in media such as Al Jazeera, ARD, CCTV, Deutsche Welle, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Jerusalem Post, Le Monde, Le Figaro and ZDF.





## METHODOLOGY

In this webinar event was aimed to evaluate the issue not only from a single perspective, but also from opposing perspectives and create a synthesis. For this reason, it was important to bring together participants from different countries and with different views. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, webinar event was held on the online platform and was open to the audience. A large number of listeners attended meeting and a few of the audience's questions were also answered.

Everything the participants said was transcribed to text without being changed or deleted. In addition, the maps and visuals used by the participants during the meeting were added to the text. Just to get closer to the text format, some filler words used by the speakers were not included. With this prepared report, it is aimed that this oral event will also be a source for written studies to be made on the subject in the future. The key messages given by the speakers during the meeting are also given in the executive summary section. Written and oral opinions and evaluations in this report are the personal evaluations of the presenters; it does not reflect the views of other speakers, institutions and editors.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The above-mentioned speakers attended the webinar event held on the zoom platform on 22.10.2020. The opening speech of the meeting was delivered by Assoc. Prof. Mustafa Aydin and the moderator of meeting was Prof. Dr. Ragıp Kutay Karaca. At the meeting, which lasted approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, the current developments and problems in the Eastern Mediterranean were evaluated by expert lawyers and political scientists.

In the opening speech of the meeting, it was emphasized that the role of the academy in solving global and regional problems and that it was too late to discuss Turkey's maritime problems, especially the Eastern Mediterranean problem. In the meeting, the subject was discussed from two different perspectives. The first of these approaches was the "Blue Homeland" perspective. As a result of the evaluations made about the concept of "Blue Homeland" and the problems in the Eastern Mediterranean; Blue Homeland was defined as Turkey's declared and undeclared maritime jurisdiction. In addition, the Montreux Agreement was described as the guardian of stability in the region and focused on three main problems; Territorial waters expansion problem, demilitarized status, and the islands whose sovereignty not ceded to Greece. It was also mentioned that the Eastern Mediterranean problem is not only a political problem due to border security, but also an economic problem due to the size of the maritime trade in the region and the share of import-export.

However, it existed in a perspective that characterized the Blue Homeland approach as one-sided. From this point of view, Greece, believing that some of the islands were threatened by Turkey, took the disarmament of the islands as natural. This situation forms the basis of many problems such as the continental

shelf. For this reason, it was emphasized that dialogue channels should be established for the solution of the continental shelf problem.

In addition to the two opposing perspectives mentioned, views were also developed that allow a comprehensive assessment of the problem within the framework of politics and international law. The first of these was an opinion that evaluated the Eastern Mediterranean problem in the axis of the Cyprus issue. Some views were put forward regarding the Cyprus problem in the Eastern Mediterranean. According to this view, there was not a single instance in the world where a multinational society was split as a result of armed conflicts and subsequently both sides established their own rule. For this reason, it was not possible to implement such a model in Cyprus. At the same time, in an evaluation made on the axis of NATO, it was stated that the tensions to be experienced between Turkey and Greece would weaken the integrity and effectiveness of NATO.

Also, some evaluations were made in the context of international law. The evaluations showed that the arguments Turkey put forward in the Eastern Mediterranean were valid according to the rules of international law. Emphasizing that governments have very different responsibilities, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, a solution was pointed out through diplomacy. For these reasons, the necessity of diplomacy and peace-based solution was emphasized.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Mr. President and dear participants, welcome to our webinar titled as “The Eastern Mediterranean Problem in the Context of International Law and Politics” which is organized by Istanbul Aydin University Institute of Graduate Studies. We aim to have a scientific discussion on a current topic. I express my gratitude to the President and also the Rectorate of Istanbul Aydin University, who also made this opportunity for us. Without further-ado I would like to give the floor to our President for his opening remarks.

## OPENING SPEECH

**MUSTAFA AYDIN:** First of all, I would like to thank our professor and valuable academic Professor Kutay Karaca for organizing such a wonderful event tonight. Of course, nowadays both in national and international media, we see the Eastern Mediterranean problem, the North Africa and Caucasus problem and we are seeing all the debates going on in different channels. We see very well that along with the academicians debating in these TV programs you also see some politicians as well, but I've always believed in academy is the one who shines a light and leads the politicians same is true for the economists, for the businessman, for the producers, academicians are the ones who provide the light for them.

The way you look at this perspective I strongly believe that academicians are who is going to bring solutions to global problems and geographical problems. I am very sorry to see in some countries that this power of academicians as much as we should because science is founded on the peace, harmony and of course the political wealth of the world. It has to be objective and should not have any bias. When we look at from this side, these kinds of events are very important. I find this webinar very important, and I hope that the results of this webinar will bring another light to the problem.

Of course, today we are going to look at the Eastern Mediterranean problem in terms of international law and politics. As we see the famous Hayreddin Barbarossa says, the ones who dominates the seas will dominate the world and we are going to discuss furthermore what he meant by saying this. When we look back in the history, centuries ago, we see that whoever controls the seas dominates the world as well. Of course, our great leader Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk said in one of our statements that we must embrace the seas as one of the great national ideas of Turkey and we have to achieve it, and this shows how much importance the seas has for our nation.

Unfortunately, I am very sad to say that as a country we are a little late in discussing our country's maritime issues. On this I would like to thank our Admiral Mr. Cem Gürdeniz, his Blue Homeland doctrine dating 2006 was a true turning point for our country and since has been a very important topic ever since. Signing the memorandum of limitations of maritime jurisdictions with Libya in 2019 has been one of the most important turning points on this topic as well. The claims that Greece has Eastern Mediterranean have no meaning, neither in terms of UN and international law, nor in terms of reason and logic. Can you imagine an island that is so small but wants the four thousand times more of its measure in its maritime rights? There's also another reality we have to accept it's not always enough to be right in many platforms, you have to make this truth based on diplomacy.

Turkey is using this diplomacy ways as much as they can, and the Cyprus problem is another part of this whole situation. It's a land that is right in the middle of Mediterranean Sea. I am confident that the valuable speakers and academicians that discusses these issues today will bring a great solution suggestion to these problems that I just mentioned, bring new horizons, reveal the undiscovered points. Again, I extend my greatest regards to Professor Kutay Karaca first and all the other very valuable participants for being here today. I wish everyone a COVID-free, healthy and beautiful days ahead. Thank you for being here with us today.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Mr. President, thank you very much for your speech. I, again, also express my gratitude to you for making this opportunity for us. Now I would like to present our participants who honored us with their participation from abroad. Firstly, Professor Dr. Mark Meirowitz, he is a professor from State University of New York Maritime College, he is a well-known expert on US-Turkey relations and US foreign policy, he holds a PhD in Political Science and is also a lawyer and he has made comments to wide variety of topics in the US and Turkish media, for example, Turkish foreign policy, US-Turkey relations.

The other participant is from Greece, Dr. George Tzogopoulos, is an expert on media and international relations and China foreign policy, he is a director at EU-China programs at Center international de formation européenne and a lecturer at Europe Institute, he also gives lessons on international relations at Democritus University of Thrace's Law Faculty. He organizes online discussions on various international themes, he has books on areas such as US foreign policy and international relations.

I would also like to introduce Admiral Cem Gürdeniz and Professor Hasan Ünal from Turkey. Admiral Cem Gürdeniz is also known for his Blue Homeland Doctrine, graduated from Naval Academy of International Relations as a lieutenant, later he continued his graduate education at Naval Post-Graduate School in USA and during this period he worked in Turkey's US forces command, NATO's European SHAPE. Today he is one of the most known experts on Eastern Mediterranean issue.

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I want to begin with Mr. Cem Gürdeniz. We were probably working together in Turkish General Staff, since the Turkish General Staff you have always mentioned Blue Homeland. Could you explain what do you mean by Blue Homeland?

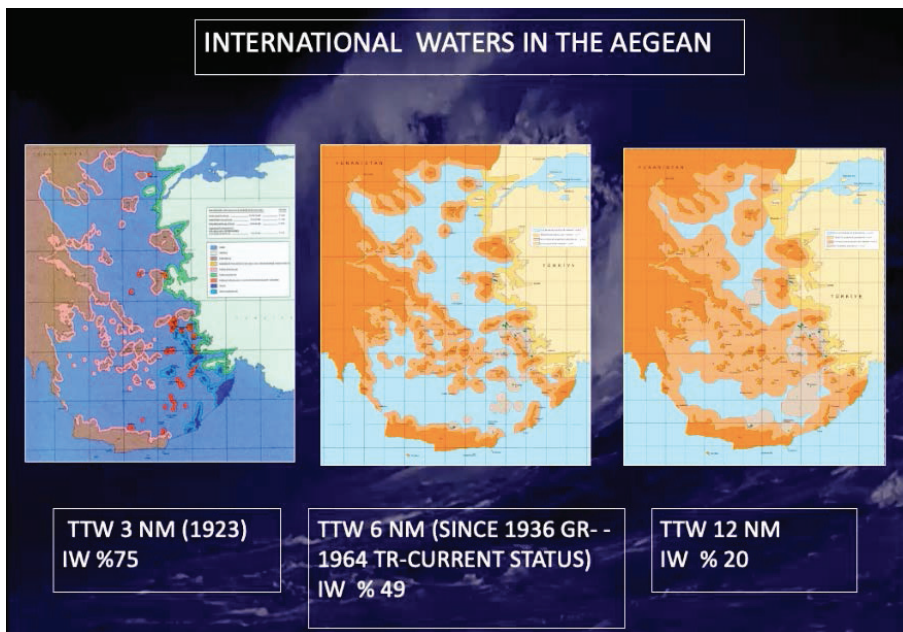
**CEM GÜRDENİZ:** If you don't mind, I have prepared a presentation and it's a PowerPoint presentation Turkish maritime policy. I want to start with presentation because I want all participants to at least have some background information on the intent that created Blue Homeland. First of all, we are a peninsular state with 81-83 million people have more than 4500 NM coastline which is declared, and undeclared areas are about 178.000 KM<sup>2</sup>. We are depending on the sea for foreign trade at least %89, and we handled 400 million tons of cargo. The oil and byproducts that has crossed Turkish straits in 2018 was more than 145 million tons, mostly belonging to Russian Federation. In the Black Sea, I would like to stress on what do we understand from the Blue Homeland.

Blue Homeland is the Turkey's declared and undeclared maritime jurisdiction area, when I first established this term, I have intended to attract the attention of people, what the Continental Shelf or EEZ. Therefore, I have intended to draw a picture, getting the attention of people as well as the government because in 2004 Turkey's maritime interests and rights were at the most risky position after the Greece declared something unilaterally. If we look at our maritime jurisdiction area, there is not a problem in the Black Sea. As you will see the Turkish continental shelf in the area is established in 1980 and the EEZ is established in 1986. The Montreux convention is the guardian of stability in the area, and we also established the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, Blackseafor, Black Sea Harmony and Black Sea Coastguard Forum. These are all the basic and very fundamental instruments to maintain peace and stability in the region.

I can say that we are safe and sound in the Black Sea, no problem, then we came to the Aegean Sea in which major maritime issues are on the table such as

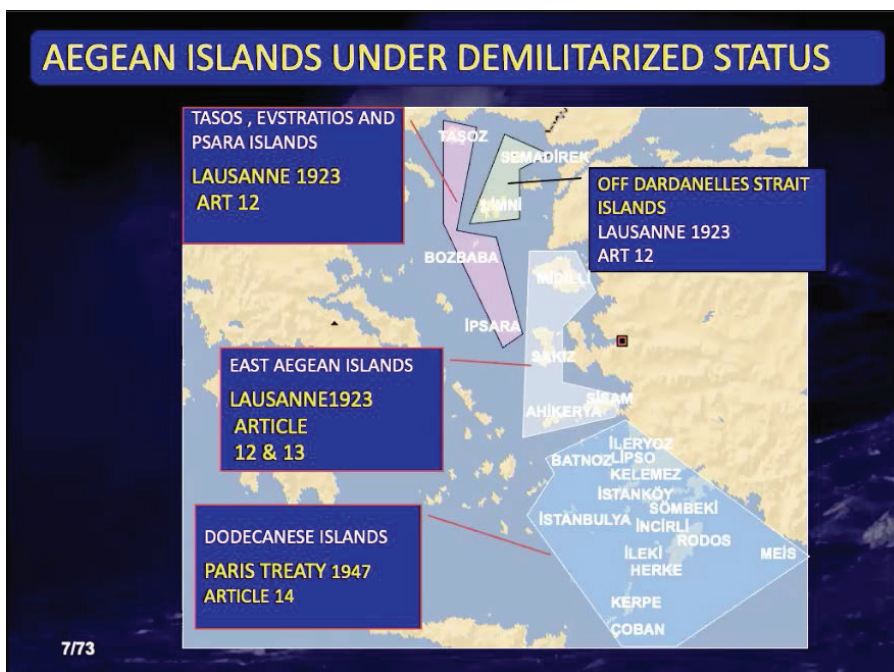


continental shelf, territorial waters, militarized islands, islands whose sovereignty not ceded to Greece through treaties. As we can see from the maps, Greek claim is that they gave all maritime rights to the islands and Turkish claim is more moderate offering to share the high seas, almost the 49% of the Aegean Sea is now high seas, but it's a difficult question.



Since 1976 November, issues in the Aegean is frozen, nobody can make a seismic or drilling activities in the international waters or high seas. Therefore, we can say that the continental shelf issue in the Aegean Sea is frozen but don't forget that in the 1997 we came to the position to almost armed conflict but its prevented. Territorial waters expansion problem is the major problem as you will see from these three slides, the first is left, its 1923 Lausanne that gives you the 75% of the Aegean Sea's high seas, its wonderful. I wish we could go back to the past but it's difficult. The one on the middle is dating 1936 as well as its status, its reciprocal confirmation that gives almost 49% of the high seas, and that gives a free passage to Turkish ships from the southeast axis.

Lastly, the one on the right, that is 12 NM extension and when we come across this, we can see that we are landlocked. We cannot go beyond this central part of the Aegean Sea. Therefore, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1995, Turkish parliament gave the full authority to Turkish government in order to prevent if the Greek government extends to this 12 NM, and most of the Turkish press commented on this issue. This is not a direct declaration from the government side, it's a interpretation.



The other issue is the demilitarized status, there are four different groups of islands, off Dardanelles Strait islands which is stated in Lausanne, article 12 in 1923, there is Tasos, Evstratios and Psara Islands which is stated in Lausanne article 12, and East Aegean Island Lausanne article 12 and 13, Dodecanese Islands which is stated in Paris Treaty article 14 in 1947. This status is totally distorted right now within the unilateral relation of Greece and Turkey, heavily armed islands, airfields and naval bases, and many high-level armed groups.



The other issue in the region is the islands whose sovereignty not ceded to Greece through treaties, there are total of 152 islands, islets and rocks which are occupied now. This is a gray zone issue, even the Prime Minister Smith once recognized the issue in his memoir, he mentioned this as gray zones. It's not white or black, it's in the middle for Turkey, it belongs to Turkey it's inherited from the Ottoman time. Greece consider that these are the outside trading articles but it's not, let's say legally binding right now. It's the major issue without, solving this issue it's very difficult to solve the other regional problems that are already mentioned.




Let's come to our point today, and one of the smallest of the blue planet with only 1.7 share from the oceans, and if you are talking about the Eastern Mediterranean, it's 0.8% share of total oceans. It's very small. To the contrary, 30% of the world shipping crosses this area, 20% percent of seaborne oil ships crosses this sea, and the most importantly the is 60-65% of the Russian imports and exports are crossing and including three million barrels of oil from Turkish straits and Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean, and 8% of the Turkish trade I will say.



**TURKISH MARITIME GEOPOLITICS IN THE MED**

**THREE DIMENSIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS:**

- Greek /EU Challenges over Turkish maritime jurisdiction area**
- The potentiality of a so-called independent Kurdistan with free access to the Mediterranean sea.**
- The future of TRNC with geopolitical implications for Turkey: Guarantees Agreements**

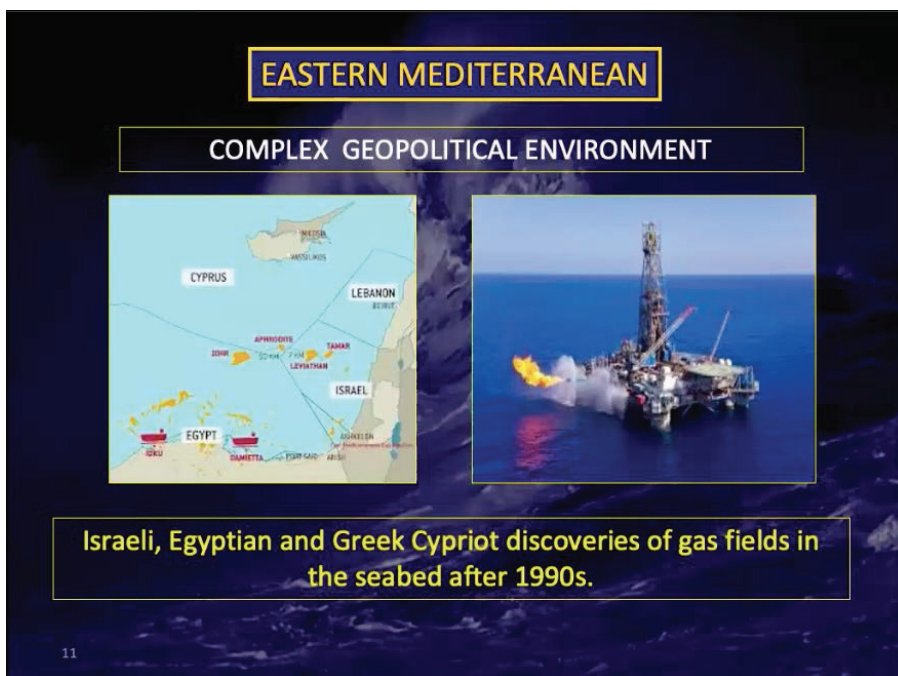


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Turkish maritime geopolitics in the Mediterranean Sea has three-dimensional security concerns, before I mention that, I will first stress that what are the Turkish maritime geopolitics three centers of gravity. First is the Turkish strait, second is Cyprus island, and the third is the Blue Homeland. So, from these geopolitical centers of gravity, I'm coming to Eastern Mediterranean which also has three very important security dimensions. First, again, Blue Homeland, this is the Sevilla map which demands Turkey to give up almost 150.000 square kilometers of Turkey's deserved rights in the Mediterranean continental shelf which is of course unthinkable, unacceptable and illogical because of Castellorizo or Meis expanded share of Cyprus island and also the expanded share of the Crete roads, according to the Turkish MFA, even this island doesn't create a continental shelf because Aegean Sea is not archipelagic sea for Greece.

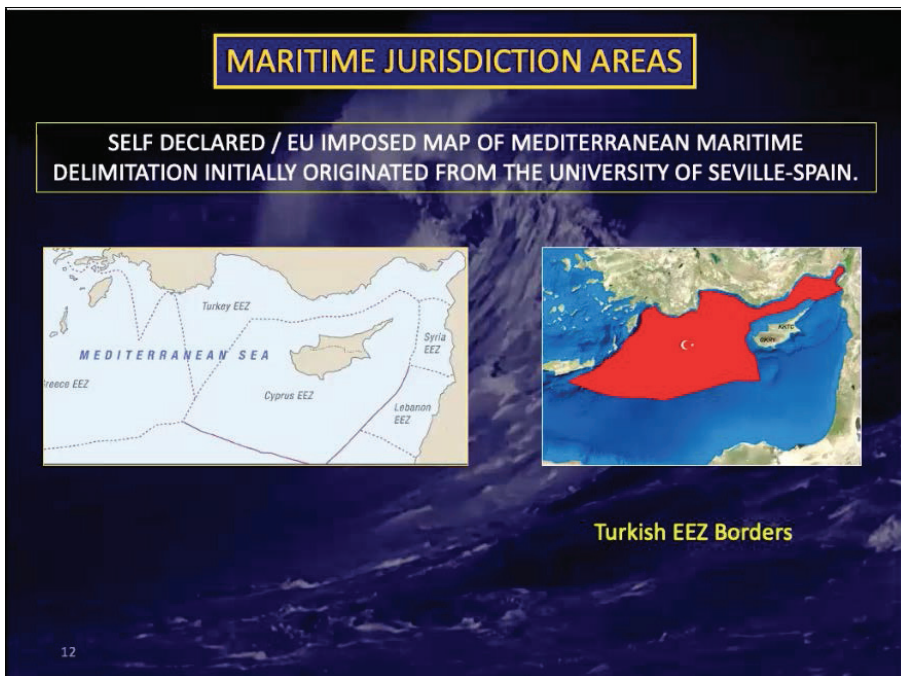
Other issue of course, independent puppet Kurdistan with the deep seaport in the Mediterranean Sea is a major security concern for Turkey, and the third one of

course the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Turkish military existence down there and to give up from this existence, it's a major geopolitical blow of the Turkish 21st century geopolitics. Therefore, there are three very serious centers of gravity for Eastern Mediterranean for Turkey, and a very complex geopolitical environment because apart from the geopolitical concerns, the discovery of the gas deposits and oil deposits in the area is also affecting the current situation.



My concern is not directly linked to the energy related geopolitics, my concern directly related to the geopolitics of Mediterranean and for Turkey because in the 20-30 years' time, we might not be talking about the oil, we will be talking about the green energy, and therefore this is transitionally, but geopolitics is stationary, geopolitics doesn't change but the energy can be changed in early 1900s nobody knew about the gas, and people have just now started to talk about the oil. I think we are we are transiting to another phase of the world history and therefore I

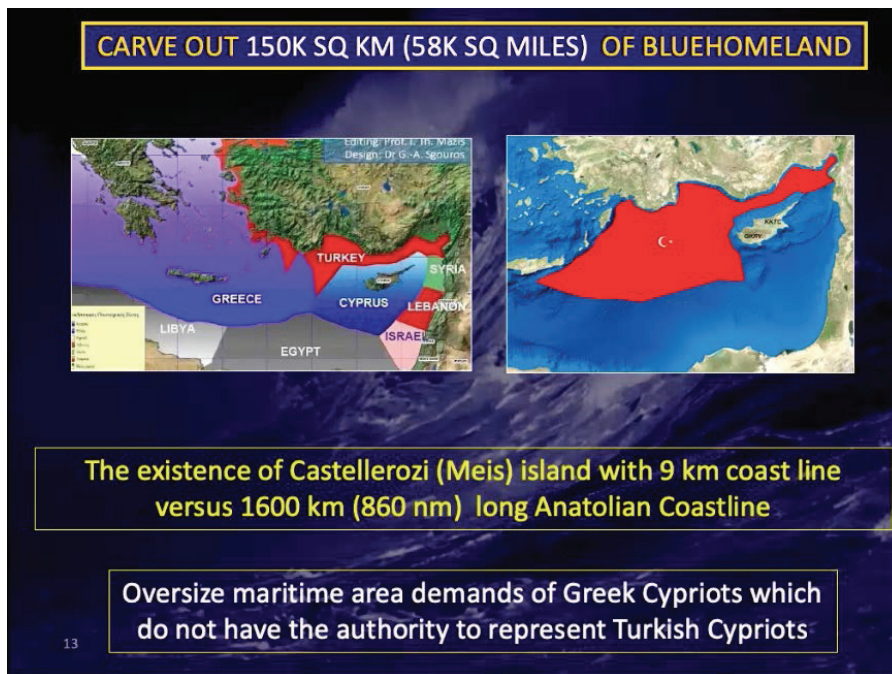
would say the energy, yes at the time being it's visible, it's important but we should focus more than energy in the Eastern Mediterranean.



Mediterranean jurisdictions, the map on right is very outdated I am sorry for the right-hand side, normally it should cross the 26 longitudes, that was the early version of the Turkish cartographers, but it's changed but the left-hand side is the Seville map, it's the current one. The US Embassy, a couple weeks ago, denounced this map and said that this is not relevant, and we don't recognize it, even the European Commission declared that it's irrelevant but on the other hand if you go to the European Union websites, it is still on everywhere. If you go to the actual physical documents, it's on there. If you go to the in scientific documents in the academy, it's everywhere.

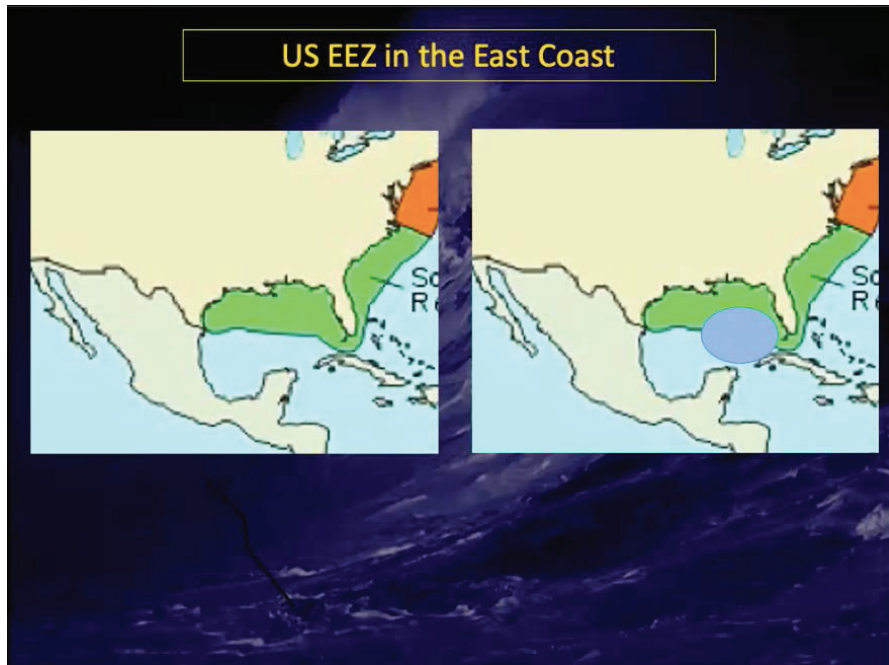
Therefore, I will not consider this map as relevant, it's irrelevant and even today in the south of Castellorizo the Greek navies are very heavily active, because

they consider this area as their continental shelf. It's according to the international law according to a very logic, it's impossible for Castellorizo to have it nine kilometers periphery versus seventeen hundred kilometers of Anatolian coastline they have in that share.



It's very difficult to imagine and therefore as you will see from the left-hand side map Turkey is being forced is being strangled to the Anatolian peninsula as if it's being excluding from the high seas, excluding from the reach to the ocean, excluding from the Mediterranean geopolitics, Mediterranean civilization, and the high politics. Therefore, it is impossible from political perspective to accept that. Again, forget the oil and gas deposits, and you cannot force a nation, representing not only the Turkey in here but representing the whole Turkish world in the western Asia, extending from Asia to the Europe within this geography, cutting all the edges from the sea with this map, it is unimaginable. I have to say that all right.





I gave this example when I was briefing in the Press Club, that is the similarity between Cuba and the Castellorizo, it's the same situation, right hand side, if they adopt the Castellorizo approach of Greece, this is the idea.



I said that the EU continues to promote this illegal boundary since 2000, and as you will see in 2007 as Greek Cypriots announced their license zones in the you know 1-4-5-6-7, they are infringing with Turkey, and whenever Turkey interferes with their warships against those vessels operating in seismic drilling, then Turkey becomes the barbarian country, Turkey invades, irredentists, neo-ottomanist. Turkey just defends its homeland, that's it and Cyprus issue already transcended to different dimension, and I think in the future without TRNC involvement, there is no solution for the perpetual stability in the area regarding maritime jurisdiction area solutions.



Therefore, we will say this Cyprus issue right now transformed itself related with the civic energy issues, and the formation of anti-Turkish coalitions in the area is right now reached to a level I would say not risky but threatening Turkey. Therefore, Turkish public opinion is openly defending the idea this is the this is the second Sevres Treaty imposed on Turkey. The first one carving out the motherland, and second one carving out the blue homeland which under these conditions, G20 member Turkey with 83 million people and the defense industry is a very good level and increasing; it's not impossible Turkey to swept out of this map.



This map was issued in 2014 by the Kurdish Regional Government's side as you will see, their aim to reach a deep-sea water in the Mediterranean Sea. If they reach it, forget the blue homeland, therefore, for Turkish maritime geopolitics this is unacceptable.

We are in a peculiar state and I think these political realities are right now appearing in the horizon the world order is changing, especially we have seen after the COVID-19, and especially we have seen after the management of the George Floyd uprisings in the United States and it's not so let's say easy for Washington consensus to maintain forever. Therefore, things are changing, and the Turkish geopolitics are also changed and Turkey on the other end is becoming a maritime population. Turkey is becoming a maritime state. Maritimization process is on right now, and therefore good and mutually respectful relations with

our neighbors, aiming maybe peaceful co-existence as well as fair share of maritime domain.

We are not against the fair share of maritime domain but the if you consider the civil map, it's not a fair share let me say. So, this concludes my presentation. I would like to state one more thing that the issues are becoming very complex because Eastern Mediterranean basin is also involved in three, very important global geopolitical issues. First the geopolitics of rimland, this is so important for the new world order is coming here. Rimland is so important for US, everybody knows that, and therefore geopolitics of rimland very important for us considering now the higher militarization of the Alexandropoulos and Souda Bay the other stuff this is related definitely not with the Greek-Turkish issues but we all understand that this is related with the rimland geopolitics.

The second issue is the geopolitics of Israeli security, this is so important as well. We all know that the Israel is creating a let's say security buffer zones, and therefore the creation of free Kurdistan with the puppet Kurdistan with the deep seaport as well as the Israeli involvement in Cyprus directly related with the Israeli security geopolitics. The last one the energy of politics we all know that the everybody would like to see in the western camp, the Russian monopoly to be cut off from their gas resources to the Europe, and therefore the Atlantic block sees the Mediterranean is the second or third alternative to the Russian monopoly. We have to be taking care of all these three geopolitical points as well. I'm stopping here and thank you very much for listening to me. Thank you Kutay.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** I would like to thank Mr. Gürdeniz, this was a wonderful presentation from the Turkish side. I am the moderator so I am the boss of this webinar, therefore, I want to give the floor to George, after Cem Gürdeniz. Maybe you can also explain the claims in your perspective. The Sevilla map, we don't know if it's comply with the international law, we as Turkey do not accept it. The second Sevres means it's very important for Turkey, maybe

you can also answer about, and the sixth coalition to Turkey it is a different claim. I hope to listen Greece approach side from George

**GEORGE TZAGOPOULOS:** Thank you, professor. I would like to start by thanking you for the invitation, and also praising the work of your university. I think it has an international reputation, and international students and this is very important that you contribute to this discussion, and you have invited me to hear the Greek position which are very much appreciated. I think that it is very important for a fair and sincere dialogue even if we do not agree, as it is the case right now because the Admiral offered the Turkish position, which of course is not accepted by Greece as Greece only acknowledges one difference to be settled between the two countries and this is that of the continental shelf. So, Greece believes that there is no issue about any demilitarization of the islands as Greece believes it is threatened by Turkey, and therefore there is no question from a Greek perspective to discuss this issue, including the issue of sovereignty of some islets as Greece relies on terms of the Lausanne Treaty as well as the Treaty of the Dodecanese which is each completely different from the position of Turkey.

From a Greek perspective what is very important and it's here also where I disagree with the Admiral is that the Admiral said that Turkey is forced outside from maritime settlements in the Eastern Mediterranean, I don't think this is the case if you read the recent interviews of Greek prime minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, he said that let's discuss with Turkey about the continental shelf, let's sit on the same table and find a solution. I believe that we all agree that this issue needs to be settled peacefully, everyone agrees, and the current situation is very boring it's very worrying for Turkey, it's very worrying for Greece, it's very worrying for NATO. How can we talk about stability and integrity now NATO south and front, when we are talking about these tensions?

Another thing which I don't understand very well from the position of Turkey is why the Turkish vessel returned for research in the Eastern Mediterranean in a period during which the two sides were making attempts to restart the exploratory talks. So, while we all support dialogue now it seems to me that we are leasing a deadlock again, and this is what makes me very worried about the future. I'm not sure how this dialogue about the continental shelf will restart, and public opinion in both countries they do want a peaceful solution to all these. Of course, I know that the two sides do not agree on how to negotiate about the continental shelf but it's important to start the dialogue, if there is no dialogue then there is a risk for a military accident, and this military accident will be dangerous for everyone. This is the main message that Greece is sending, and I strongly believe that this is the only way forward in order for the problem to be solved peacefully.

If I may and once again, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to offer the Greek position on this debate, the Greek position also about Castellorizo is completely different. Greece is prepared to start negotiations but at the same time Greece relies on international law and Greece has signed the UN convention for the law of the seas while Turkey hasn't signed it. This is a basic point that needs also to be remembered when we are talking about international law, of course I know that Turkey understands international law in a different way from Greece but it's also important to mention that Greece has been a signatory of this important convention.

Regarding Castellorizo so the Greek approach is that the island is not only and should not only be considered as a tiny island as the admiral described before but as an island which is part of a chain of islands, the Dodecanese. If we measure for example the distance between Castellorizo and Rhodes, it is smaller than the distance between other islands in Greece like for example Lesbos and Samos, or Syros, the capital of the Cyclades and Naxos. Greece has more than six thousand islands so these islands from a Greek perspective they should have an effect to a continental shelf, of course, Greece will start negotiations with Turkey about this.



Greece accepts that a peaceful solution on the basis of dialogue needs to be found. So, this is more or less the Greek position and to sum up once again I wouldn't necessarily agree with the Admiral in considering all the initiatives in the Eastern Mediterranean asserted by Turkey.

We are talking about a cooperation of several countries for example this led to the creation of the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum which recently became a regional organization where Israel, Greece, Cyprus, Jordan, the Palestinian authority and Italy do participate. We need to explore up to what extent Turkey's participation in northeast can be accepted but all this needs to be based on some guidelines, and to sum up and give the opportunity to other colleagues to offer their views, once again I send this message of peace and of the importance and the significance on solving the continental issue via dialogue. This is a key point right now and I don't believe that we should be optimistic that this dialogue will start soon if the current situation in the Eastern Mediterranean continues.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** George, thank you very. At the end of the webinar Cem Gürdeniz might say something about your speech. Now I want to give the floor to Professor Hasan Ünal. Maybe you can also give some answers to George, because Cem Gürdeniz already gave us the Turkish approach and George gives us the Greece perspectives. So maybe you can also discuss or compare each approach.

**HASAN ÜNAL:** How much time I have?

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** It is up to you, Professor. However, 10 or 15 minutes is okay.

**HASAN ÜNAL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for inviting me to the webinar too. I have got a few points to make, not necessarily to answer either George Tzogopoulos or to follow up on Admiral Gürdeniz's points. Perhaps in



some form to answer what Mr. Tzogopoulos said, and sometimes to add to what Admiral said.

First of all, let me start with this now we see an Eastern Mediterranean crisis, if you like, we keep seeing tensions and we keep seeing saber rattling as I normally call it. Most of the time between Turkey on the one hand and Greek Cyprus administration or between Turkey and Greece now in normal circumstances if there had been no Greco-Turkish dispute over the Aegean Sea, and if there had been no Cyprus question there would have been no Eastern Mediterranean crisis to speak of today. Basically, what we are witnessing is that the Cyprus problem which has been which is remaining unresolved is now spreading itself to a large part of the Eastern Mediterranean, and it is affecting in many ways any resolution, any agreement that the Eastern Mediterranean states could actually arrive at in terms of the exclusive economic zone or the continental shelf, in other words, their maritime jurisdictions.

Again, very much along similar lines as for instance the Black Sea reverence states have concluded. Now the problem basically here we need to look at closely is the Cyprus question and Aegean dispute. How could we resolve the Cyprus question or can we ever resolve the Cyprus question in the foreseeable future? This is the problem we need to concentrate on, from an academic point of view, from an expert point of view it's easy to resolve it. It is a post-colonial conflict, so the former colonial administration basically pulls out and leaves behind two peoples none of which wants the administration of the other over itself, and it leads to a dispute and then the neighboring states are drawn, in naturally, because they see the island within their area of orbit. Plus, the peoples living on boats on either side of the island or in mixed communities before the divide was established, and basically a look to these states Turkey and Greece for advice and support.

We come to 1974 as a result of long years of clashes and disputing now well federation could have been a remedy, as it was proposed at the time, federation was always proposed as some sort of a remedy to basically cure all the ills of this sort in the 1960s 70s and 80s. However, it didn't work out in the Cold War where the Cold War strategic thinking prevailed the two sides, basically Turkey and Greece and their respected communities on the island, took into account all these Cold War strategic considerations and negotiated every single detail, basically all the nitty gritty details. Nothing was arrived at; no solution was found to the conflict.

Then the Cold War came to an end, and in the single polar world, the two communities and their respected motherlands, again, continued with well in in good faith basically most of the time to find a resolution to the conflict. They could not. There was one catalyst in the single polar world which was sort of brought about by some clever Greeks and some clever diplomats and others that was the framework that is the European Union. Basically you resolve the dispute in Cyprus in the form of a federation within the membership within the European Union membership, it didn't work out again, and since then since the last ? plan basically which was rejected by the Greek side was the latest casualty. Then the list of the casualty had certain edition with a new packages of talks about this and that until 2017, which is when again the two leaders of the two communities on the island found no solution to the dispute in Switzerland in Crans-Montana. What do we do with this? How do we bring them together to create a unified Cyprus state?

I would like to, simply say, is it possible, is there one single example in the world by which a multinational society, or one form or the other basically gets divided as a result of armed clashes and then establish each side their own administration on a piece of land, and then you bring them together as if nothing happened. This didn't work out in Yugoslavia, didn't work out anywhere else, and now the world federation has lost much of its spell. It used to be quite a magical term in the

1960s 70s everyone would simply say, well yeah if you have more than one nation disputing with each other than the obvious answer to the ill to the problem is there is some sort of a federation. Now, over the last few decades we've seen federations crumble across Europe both in the socialist federation's um like former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union, and also if they had let Spain crumble, it could have crumbled in the last years and no one can guarantee that Spain is going to remain as it is in the years ahead again. The British situation is going to be very interesting in British English term to say interesting in the years ahead, how it's going to basically play out for instance with Scotland getting out of the United Kingdom one way or the other if that happens as a result of some sort of Brexit dispute.

Again, the dispute between the two sides in Belgium perpetuates, and we can say that again federation is not a solution in Cyprus, federation is not a solution in Cyprus because in addition to what I've said, one would also add the two sides in Cyprus seem to mistrust each other. So, an agreement on the basis of power sharing, an agreement on the basis of political and sovereign equality, and agreement on the basis of personality and by communality seems to have come to a dead end and the situation now in Northern Cyprus as I go there every two weeks to teach in one of the universities, and I've been dealing with these issues to concrete this dispute and whatever you over the last 25 years or so. Basically, I see from the driver who picks me up from the airport to the little shopkeeper and then the pharmacist or the restaurant owner or the or the waitress and the waitresses in the restaurants I go to, basically people are fed up seeing their leadership negotiating a federation of some sort.

Now it seems as if it has come to some sort of a dead end, we need to and particularly the Greek side of Cyprus and Greek mainland need to basically take this situation into account in the way that why is it anathema to Greek Cypriots as well as Greek mainlanders to have a two-state solution to the Cyprus problem why is it an anathema so. The other thing is, the world is no longer a single polar

world and in a multipolar world as we have now moved into a country like Turkey with 83 million and medium sized power is going to have a lot of influence and project influence, and project power here, and there and the country like Turkey cannot be basically kicked around one way or the other, or a country like Turkey um cannot be kept waiting for decades and decades about say either exclusive economy zone agreement or some other agreements relating to that. What I'm saying here the first question, we need to address is this why it is anathema I remember a booklet written by some very wise Greek former ambassadors and wise men that came out I think in 1995 when Greece was embroiled in this Macedonia dispute, and Greece basically messed up its foreign relations with all its neighbors turning against Greece.

The way we have been messing up with our neighbors these days, and those wise men basically proposed a new policy for Greece they said leave this Macedonia argument be assigned, it cannot go on like this and they also said if we go on like this and then make a lot of fuss about Macedonia, then we won't be able to basically convince our western partners about how we are right and Turkey is in the wrong in the Turco-Greek dispute because we keep turning everybody against us. However, one point they made was important that they said well why do we keep opposing a two-state solution in Cyprus because the current situation in Cyprus is on the basis of a ceasefire, and something basically comes up it turns into some sort of clashes either in the Aegean or in Cyprus or somewhere else and the whole thing basically can get thrown into such a conflict again.

Something we would like to avoid at any rate and that is understandable from the Greeks point of view and basically, they said if we have a two-state in Cyprus that would consolidate the borders okay and that would basically determine the borders whose border is this who's bordered there. Now the problem at the time, in a few years later Turkey began to pursue a European Union-oriented policy and then came in a European Union model solution to the Cyprus problem. Someone basically Mr. Clerides in particular brought out of his hat a new

proposal, and said you know why we don't resolve the Cyprus problem through the membership of the whole island to the European Union. It could have been done I always remained at the cautious end of the argument at the time with regard to the Turkey's admission to the European Union as I wrote a piece for the Financial Times in 2004 which came out on the 17th of December, the title was 'Turkey would be better off outside the European Union' so many of my predictions the article came out. What I'm saying is, now we have a Turkey with no European Union perspectives even we have a Turkey with European Union membership perspectives, this sort of concessions Turkey would be expected to make both in the Aegean and in Cyprus would have been quite not difficult perhaps, but certainly not easy.

Would have required a lot of convincing, a lot of give and take and a lot of good intention here and there but with that perspective, basically, thrown out of the window and the European union membership, being no longer a catalyst, what do we do now with the tricogenic dispute both in Cyprus and the Aegean. I can also talk about the nitty-gritty details of the Aegean dispute but just to say basically I agree with our colleague Tzogopoulos.

What it is the whole thing needs to be eyeing down through negotiations, but the negotiating point is important. If a Greek side says well I can only negotiate with you, as they did negotiate over the years during the European Union prospective years of Turkey if you like, because there were a number of exploratory talks but those talks basically explored nothing. Just explored that they were not negotiating at all basically there has to be a negotiated solution to both. Do I see, I ask the question to myself first and to the members of the panel, do I see any prospect for that? Very dim and my hunch tells me that both sides are going to take unilateral actions that will complicate the matters both in the Eastern Mediterranean with regard to Cyprus, and also in the Aegean, I'm afraid. So, I'm not terribly hopeful of the situation but I am a terrible optimist, so something

might come up, some sort of miracle which will then help find a negotiated settlement on the basis of the thought I have sort of outlined. Thank you.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Thank you, Professor Hasan Ünal. So, Cyprus is in the middle of the issue of course. You can never separate the East Mediterranean issue from the Cyprus issue. It is very well, thank you very much for your remarks. Mark is very worried about his speech, at the beginning he said that he does not want to be the first one to give a speech-

**MARK MEIROWITZ:** My answer to you is the Chinese proverb be careful what you wish for. I wanted to say my profound thanks to you, Professor Dr. Karaca for your graciousness.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Mark sorry to interrupt but I have to let our attendees know that at the end of your speech they can send their questions through chat. Thank you.

**MARK MEIROWITZ:** Thank you. Let me repeat my profound thanks to Professor Dr. Karaca, of course to, the Sayın President Professor Dr. Aydın for his excellent comments which I think gave a good capstone to what we're talking about, and I want to thank my colleagues, and I want to thank Admiral Gürdeniz whom I have a connection at State University of New York Maritime College and to Admiral Sağdıç and we hope to continue our maritime collaboration. Also to mention George who is a colleague who I've worked with and I've enjoyed my work. I've not met professor Ünal before but it's a pleasure to meet you. I would say that there's so much that we talked about, I also like to talk a little about the US perspective on this but first of all about Cyprus, I know a lot about Turkish Cyprus, I've been to Turkey Cyprus. With the recent election and I'm surprised nobody mentioned the election of Ersin Tatar beating Mustafa Akıncı, to my mind the as the bleak prediction that you may Professor Ünal is even

bleaker, although from the Turkish perspective this was what Turkish leadership wanted.

I think it's problematic, but you know endemic to this problem is the way in which Greece and the Greek Cypriots have negotiated with Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots on Cyprus which doesn't lead us much optimism to how Greece will deal or Greece Cypriots will deal with the Eastern Mediterranean. I mean an example of that is the fact that you know I think as I understand it Turkey and Greece were going to sit down to negotiate this issue, and then Greece proclaimed its limitation zone with Egypt which caught everybody off guard, and this kind of thing has been going on for years between the Greeks and Turks, the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. I want to say a point about Cyprus because you Professor Ünal, you really sensitize that point, how is it in the modern world that the world can boycott Turkish Cyprus?

I think this is the most unfair thing I have seen. Boycotts are not appropriate in the modern world, that's number one. There's a lot of unfairnesses here about that. That boycott has to be lifted and there has to be a negotiation, I'm very familiar with for negotiators and I've talked to them I understand what's going on here because what has gone on is stonewalling over the time from Greek Cyprus and Greece. These are facts. We could work this out very easily. Now other point unfairness in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Turkey is on one side and as the admiral said they're the ones blamed for everything, and on the other side is a lineup of states, Greece, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, etc. So, the idea is that one group can go ahead and issue licenses and do explorations and Turkey can't do that. About the law of the sea, and it's kind of have a flashback because my dissertation for my PhD was on the law of the sea, and I can tell you that even if Greece signed the law of the sea treaty Turkey didn't but reservations the US never signed the law, never ratified the treaty, but the United States follows the treaty.

So, this is a mess, there is no solution on the law of the seaside, and as far as Cyprus is concerned the problem, I see with Cyprus is a very specific problem it's sort of the problem about you know parents and children. These children, the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots are sitting there, and the Turkey and Greece are out there and they're the ones the parents. The parents should get out of the way and let the people on the island work it out but they won't do that, and I'm very concerned the people in Cyprus as you've alluded to Professor Ünal, do we want to have peace?

They're fed up exactly, but the big powers are not allowing them to do with the so-called guarantors, I do want to talk about the US perspective on this because this is one that should not be forgotten. Number one very important point we're facing an election coming up shortly, Americans have no interest in this issue. The interest level in this issue is minus a thousand, zero. Nobody talks about this in America, nobody's interested in America, as far and you know always on the Turkish reader ask me about what Americans think about Turkey. Look, let me be candid. They're not thinking about Turkey. The only time they think about Turkey, I have to be candid I'm American, I want to fulfill all of the stereotypes of an American. Americans do not think about Turkey, right now there's COVID, there's a pandemic, and what are people thinking about jobs, the economy, COVID, the economy, COVID, and the election.

We have an election in this country that is one of the most impossibly, I mean today for example, the judiciary committee voted on Amy Coney Barrett and no democrats showed up and then they stood outside, and protesters were screaming America is in a roller coaster. I don't know if they have roller coasters in Turkey, I think you do but I'm not sure but amusement parks- it's like so ridiculous what is going on here. Americans are distracted by President Trump and Biden, and all the things that are going on here in COVID, and nobody is paying attention, which is a problem because there's distraction from the leadership in normal times if we'll ever hopefully inshallah go back to normal times, in normal times



we would be you know dealing with a what George correctly talked about. I mean that there's a situation going on in this area that is very worrisome between Greece and Turkey number one. Number two, you have to remember history, you can't forget history, you're doomed to repeat it, I'm paraphrasing. Remember that in the 1970s, when the Cyprus issue developed as a big issue, the United States boycotted Turkey, a major power, and as a result of that there were bad relations for many years. My worry about all this and I would like to comment if I may a little bit on the blue homeland idea, because to me that is by the way, Admiral Gürdeniz as I thank you for your encyclopedic summary of these issues, it was very informative, I learned a great deal but the one thing that I worry about is the idea of overreach. America has suffered from overreach, Turkey can suffer also from overreach, and I'm worried about it because if you look right now, Turkey is in a fraught situation Cyprus, Eastern Mediterranean, Libya, Azerbaijan, Syria...

The question is can Turkey project its power and influence in this way without risking its security and stability. That concerns me from the American point of view, because from the American point of view, I really believe strongly in a great and strong and powerful US-Turkish alliance, and relationship that is fundamental that we have to keep our eye on that, and we have to make sure that these proceeds. Now as I said we're in a distracting situation, of course, a lot depends on who is the winner in the election whether or not you have Biden or Trump. That is very significant I would also say although it's quite tangential is that the UAE deal with Bahrain etc. with Israel is also fraught for Turkey because Turkey finds itself on the other side of that and Trump supports the deal.

Again, this we you know the geopolitical situation as Admiral Gürdeniz said is primary to understand that. To this law of the sea issue because that is what we're talking about, I really found interesting Admiral Gürdeniz is his comments about the archipelagic sea and you know what I thought and also George's points about the many islands, this reminds me of China's position in the permanent court of

arbitration in the South China Sea. China took this and China militarized islands like Greece, right, and claims that they have an archipelagic sea and as a result they have this extensive what EEZ, exclusive economic zone.

These ideas of China have been debunked by the permanent court of arbitration, and most recently by Secretary Pompeo, the claims of China on the law of the sea these ideas about the islands have no foundation in the law of the sea. Therefore, this idea that Greece can militarize islands and create lines where they have an island which is two kilometers which you mentioned Castellorizo, two kilometers from Turkey can project out this gigantic economic zone is an idea that has no foundation in the law of the sea. About the law of the sea and I just want to say this the law of the sea is very complicated, now if you look at the maps and Admiral Gürdeniz is an expert, a naval expert and naval maritime expert, and I don't profess to know the depth of his knowledge but if you look at all the lines if I were a diplomat I'm looking at that I'd say -oh -oh what do I do here everybody's got lines right, Libya and Turkey have an MOU, Greece and Egypt have an MOU, There are all these licenses, all these things.

This has to be taken apart but not on the point of view to me I mean I agree with this in terms of international law, because international law is unclear you know you spoke Admiral Gürdeniz is about mare liberum and of course mare clausum, and you know the basic American policy, to look at American foreign policy is freedom of the sea, open seas. But also respect for sovereign rights of sovereign nations, that goes hand in hand. How is it that Turkey's claims which are perfectly valid in my humble opinion, I'm not an expert like the admiral but seems to be very valid, those claims are not taken seriously while the other parties on the other side can create forums and give licenses and do contracts and do whatever they want. I think there's a question of fairness here the problem that we have right now is that we're in a very fraught international situation with the COVID, internationally spiking up, leadership cannot focus on these issues.

That's why I agree with the idea that diplomacy is the very best solution that we should undertake. This is my last point, that Admiral Gürdeniz was pointing out- I think was very important oil-gas, green energy, keep your eye on that one because the world is changing. Reading a statistic that China has more than 50 percent of the solar panels in the world, and they control I think the lithium and the cobalt which is used for these alternative energy sources. We have to be very careful about this because, as the admiral said, the world is changing so that the parties in the region I think should sit back understand that, take stock of it and sit down and work out a solution but I do agree Cyprus is in essence really the root problem here, and needs to be solved. It seems insolvable but you could solve it but the first thing we need to do is eliminate the boycott, there are people living there that are entrepreneurs and students and wonderful people, and they get a boycott, and honestly, it's absolutely untenable in the modern world today. That's all I have to say right now and thank you very much for the privilege of participating in this very distinguished forum. Thank you very much.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARA:** Mark thank you very much for your speech. I also want to ask a question to George because Mark said that the similarities of the South China Sea issue and also Greece claims. What do you say George?

**GEORGE TZOGOPOULOS:** I very much respect the work of Mark, but I don't agree with this. That's why I thank you very much for offering me the opportunity to respond, and I believe that what Istanbul Aydin University is doing right now is a model of how dialogue can be played out because you give the opportunity to meet a responder this is very important. That's why I appreciate it very much.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** George we are not bureaucrats or from the government side or soldiers now. Yes, I am a retired colonel, Cem Gürdeniz is a retired admiral but here is academic platform. We are very happy together with you, don't worry about that.

**GEORGE TZOGOPOULOS:** Thank you very much. The Greek approach is completely different, the Greek approach is that some of the islands are militarized because Greece perceives a threat from the side of Turkey, and in so doing it claims article 51 of the UN chart so it's a completely different situation and that is what Greece is not discussing at all. It will not be part of the agenda from a Greek point of view in that regard. Once again I should say that sometimes it seems to me that that kind of dialogue only leads to the conclusion that we agree that we disagree. Always my second thought is what we can do in order for a solution to be reached about the for the future. This is what makes me very worried and for the time being I should say that we can't even be optimistic about starting a dialogue on the continental shelf. Right now, there is a serious risk for a military accident, and this is what needs to be addressed first. Then we will see how we can address the continental shelf issue, let's preserve peace it is a very important good for both Greek and Turkish citizens right now, this is at stake and this is what I want to say at first then we will see about the continental shelf.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** We have some questions coming in the chat. In the meantime, anyone who want to comment?

**CEM GÜRDENİZ:** This is not the problem the solve all the issue because it is a never-ending process. We understand that but I fully agree with you that we have to talk, we have to construct the dialogue platforms and I am sure that the two nations, two sides are wise enough sober enough not to engage in combat activities. We have to do everything to avert, to divert any conflict in the future, utilizing armed power so I'm optimistic about that the two sides will continue to maintain peaceful conditions because they're civilized enough mature enough wise enough not to wait for against each other. You can be so sure that the Turks will never pull the trigger as the first using the firepower and therefore I'm sure that the Greece should do the same. I'm optimistic to maintain the peaceful status quo.

Mr. Meiorowitz explained very well that the United States, Israel and Turkey is not part of the UNCLOS but as a customary law they are fully adopting it, why we were against the UNCLOS because of the article 3 of the extension of territory waters, and Turkey became the persistent objector from the beginning, and I would like to show that map again if you don't mind to give an example. In this one for instance the continental shelf map was drawn before the UNCLOS, this is not related with the current blue homeland map, this was drawn in 1975. What I'm trying to say Greece should understand the Turkish mindset, I already understood your mindset, I've been in your country many times, beautiful country, and I have been in contact with admirals and such when I was an active duty. You have to change your mindset why in Kathimerini newspaper in 2019, I think it was March or April, right after the blue homeland exercise, there was an article I never forget.

In the article the order I don't remember the author or their name, but I saved it somewhere, they said, in the Lausanne we pull back from the Asia minor. We signed the Lausanne treaty, with the Lausanne treaty we gave up he says we gave up Ionia or western Anatolia, we gave up. In return Turks gave us the Egypt Sea, this is his interpretation can you imagine and they right now Turks wants the Aegean back. This is the ordinary Greek's mindset, they consider Thalassa the sea belongs to Greeks and they consider as a sacrosanct but let me jump to the 1930 and 1955 period. 25 years of period starting with Atatürk and Venizelos' friendship. How come they achieved such a strong friendship, right after the big pitch battle of Dumlupınar in 1922. Turkish government sent the big flotilla of Turkish fleet in Piraeus 1936 November I am talking about, 13 years after or 14 years after the pitch battle, and this friendship continued until 1955 and during civil war during the German invasion, Turks opened the doors, opened their hearts and minds to the Greek people.

We sent full of ships to help these stricken children under famine, under hunger, and we provided safe refuge most of the Jews fleeing from Greece to Turkey,

and we have we have provided safe refuge to many people escaping from German invasion or Italian invasion at the beginning. What I'm trying to say that how they establish these bonds we can do that again but the problem is to change the mindset. You have to understand Turkey is as a maritime state as Greeks and we are becoming a maritime nation and we are becoming a maritime state you hate to understand it and you cannot consider that the you know of this agency to the left-hand side, the belongs totally to Greece and Mr. Mark Meirowitz, he mentioned about the South China Sea issue, and our pelagic state issue but the United States should be careful about dealing with Turkish-Greek relations too look at Senator Menendez, Senator Rubio.

They're provocation the issue, I remember a couple of weeks ago Senator Menendez or Senator Rubio once he said the Aegean is Greek. How come a US senator can say such a thing that the Aegean is Greek. Disregarding the 49 percent of the overall Aegean Sea is high seas and he in one word he strikes out the legal lights of the extension of Anatolian peninsula into the ISIS and he says the agent is Greek okay. Therefore, first you have to understand our geopolitical needs, we are talking about the growing population. When the Lausanne deal was signed the Turkish population was about less than 10 million but right now, we are 83 million.

Even during the 1975-76 continental shelf crises Turkey's population was around 30 million, and Turkish imports exports was about 2 billion, right now it's 400 billion. Turkish defense industry was null and look at 1974 Cyprus intervention, was before that 1964, Turkey attempted to such a thing and President Johnson sent a letter if you go there, we cannot provide security against the Russian aggression against Turkey. Turkey returned why because there was no defense industry national defense industry. Turkey was not independent those days and therefore they had to wait 10 years in 1974, in order to create an amphibious force and to see the conditions and who changed the status quo in the Cyprus island, who first attacked Turks, Sampson coup attempt, integration plans who

did this first. Then Turks decided to intervene in the island in 1964, they even didn't have amphibious forces, they did not said anything about intervention to Cyprus island.

In 1950 Turkish Foreign Ministry said that Turkey has no Cyprus problem at all. Can you imagine but who started that and therefore we have to understand the history well and if you look at the history who do you think that they killed each other most in the world I think Germans and French killed each other the most with three different wars. The battle of Marne, there are many battles in the first world war. In a day thousands of people killed each other but if you look at Turkish-Greek history we don't have such as bloody hands as the Europeans killed each other, if you look at again the same issue with the Turkish-Russian relations, it is exactly the same. I am asking this question if French and Germans achieved, such a concrete, such a strong basis today starting right after 1940s or 45, why Turks and Greeks cannot reach such a strong basis to establish good relations in the future?

We have to think cold bloody, we have to think of course our geopolitical needs but we should be very careful to not fall into the traps again for the great powers' game, you have to think independently. Therefore, I think it's the best thing is before the exploratory talks start again, we have to understand each other's needs and your political needs and we don't have to make provocations. For instance you talk about the Oruç Reis' actions in recent weeks, in this case I'm asking your president's action when Turkey decided to withdraw or retrace, after the seismic research and the right after they finished the job your president went to Castellorizo, that was an open provocation for Turkey.

**GEORGE TZOGOPOULOS:** I don't think it is a provocation to visit the Greek territory. Why is it a provocation? It's part of the Greek territory.



**CEM GÜRDENİZ:** Okay, of course, this is your territory. No one questions it, I have nothing to do with it but the problem was the timing because we are talking about the large areas Castellorizo demanded as a share 40.000 square kilometers. This is the thorn in the Eastern Mediterranean, this is the center of gravity this is the heart of the major conflict in the area and after Oruç Reis withdraws, your president goes to Castellorizo, the timing was not good that that's what I want to say okay.

**GEORGE TZOGOPOULOS:** He even sent a message of peace; this is the most important thing. Greek president visited part of the Greek territory.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Maybe I will give the floor to George first, then Mark because Mr. Cem Gürdeniz has discussed on US aspects, and I asked these aspects to Mark. So, George, a question from one of our attendees, Mehmet Ferhat Çolpan asked that Greece is confident that European Union and the US will be backing their position upon the issue even if international law states the opposite. What if a European Union and US quit backing up Greece? Would there be a chance for a partnership probably this partnership between Turkey and Greece on oil and gas deals even if other disputes would be left frozen?

**GEORGE TZOGOPOULOS:** Yes, this is this is a good question. I think that Greece and the US right now are experiencing a period of excellent cooperation which goes into defense sector as well. I have come across all the announcements and statements from the Department of State which calls for the two sides to arrange the continental shelf issue via dialogue, and in many cases the United States criticizes what it perceives as provocation of the site of Turkey regarding the action of the Oruç Reis ship. I think there's always a possibility for cooperation, we have a very good US Ambassador in Greece who recently talked about and reconfirmed the Greek position that the islands should have a right to continental itself, that's why I'm telling you that it seems to me that, we agree that we disagree because the Greek side, the Greek position is completely

different from the Turkish one, and this is what is very important to be stressed. now a final remark on the role of the European Union because we heard a lot about the Cyprus question before I think that we should give diplomacy a chance as far as Europe's role in the world is concerned.

Mark mentioned before and he was right that the united states is not very much interested in becoming involved in the Eastern Mediterranean and that kind of problems but I see that the European Union in the last months it has shown an interest of playing a role, and in the recent EU Council there was an important statement issued which mentioned that EU-Turkey relations can be part of a wide debate from the moment that Greece, Turkey and Cyprus start to solve their differences on maritime zones via dialogue.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** We really know all these statements here but the question is that what if European Union and US quit backing up Greece?

**MARK MEIROWITZ:** Can I talk on the EU in the US for a moment, George if you don't mind. First of all I just looked on the web Joe Biden, and you have to keep your eye on the target here, there's an election, Joe Biden issued a manifesto to the Greek community which quote opposes the Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus calling on the Trump administration to press Turkey to refrain from further provocations. I mean you have to keep your eye on the target here what we're talking about. First of all the EU and Europe, I'm sorry I'm an American, excuse me, irrelevant. I'm being too strong, maybe you won't feel happy about what I'm saying but number one the EU is not an honest broker in the issue of Turkey and Turkish Cyprus clearly.

Look at this, think about it this way, the admiral just told us about the growth of Turkey from a smaller nation to a huge nation it's been applying to the EU for a hundred thousand years, it can't get in but the Republic of Cyprus got into the EU. Does that tell you something about the proportionality of the EU and how

its fairness operates? I said before it's about fairness. So they're not fair okay now NATO, I have to say in terms of the Secretary General of NATO has been sort of Jens Stoltenberg kind of a diplomat, and he's been pretty, from the Turkish point of view, but he realizes he's got two NATO powers here that don't get along, but about the United States. The US is not one monolith, it's not one party, it's the ambassador said something fine, the state department said something fine, there are different branches here, and the comment was made before about the admiral by the comments by Menendez and Rubio now when I heard that I got very concerned because it's bipartisan and we've seen this.

Can you imagine that the United States congress passed resolutions to sanction Turkey and Armenia resolution on October 29th on republic day of Turkey. Would the United States make a resolution of the congress against France on Bastille Day, would they do that? No. Would they ever do this on the Queen's birthday to say something about England? No but about Turkey the congress decided we're going to do a zinger against Turkey and the concern is the bipartisanship. Here is my point, there's going to be a very different trajectory if Biden is elected or if Trump is elected. Turks are not happy with Trump's actions on f-35 but he stopped the sanctions, he sort of tempered the issues with the United States senate, he brought the senators in to meet with President Erdoğan, he did a couple of things albeit not perfect and there's a bigger discussion about that but at the end of the day, it's a question. Is Trump's second administration or is it Biden's administration, as you can see.

What's really happening here and you have to go back in history to understand US policy towards Greece this is not the forum to do that, but look at the boycott look at the Johnson letter which the admiral spoke about, I mean it's inconceivable that the United States would tilt so strongly in the direction of Greece and boycott Turkey unless there was a lot of pressure to bear. What's really happening is it's our internal where America is a free country we have constituent interests, we have lobbies and also the corporations don't ever forget

the importance of Noble Energy which I think was acquired, Chevron and Noble all these companies feel they have a profit possibility in the Eastern Mediterranean and so they are pressuring also, and they're very important corporate influence in this country is very strong. You've got a lot of trajectories but at this present time what we have to hope for is calm stability, and waiting to see who comes into office, I hate to think of the world as America-centric.

You'll forgive me for thinking that as an American but I have to say and Turkey relationship with the United States is fundamental, a good relation is fundamental, and that's why I hope when you're not, when we get our new administration in and hopefully we get past the pandemic, we can strengthen the relation with the United States which is not very good right now. Hopefully diminish the influence of Russia on the Turkish-Russian relationship and strengthen the relationship with the US and hopefully there would be a way to work out a lot of these issues on a diplomatic fashion, but I think it's going to be hard to do with the EU, forget it. Europe is already completely you know on one side of this against Turkey, clearly their statements and NATO maybe is a good forum and America could be involved Britain isn't having- Britain's a guarantor and it is it is suffering under COVID so right now let's hope that as you say calm diplomacy and see the world trajectory goes in terms of COVID and the American elections and I'm hoping for peace too, George.

Believe me that's my greatest hope in the world is that there should be peace. I read the letter of Venizelos about Atatürk nominating editor for the Nobel Prize, I tell you go on the internet and read this letter. This is the most beautiful letter you can see from a leader in Greece writing about Atatürk after everything that went on between Greece and Turkey, it's just hopeful for the future, I agree with that point that hope for the future. We're all they're all neighbors, you guys are neighbors, get together, but I think on Cyprus, I think the key this first step is you know end that boycott. Let those people breathe free and try to fix Cyprus at the same time anyway, that's my American idea.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** I have two questions for you Professor Hasan Ünal. What are the functions that the Turkish Republic North Cyprus can undertake in solving the problems of the region? The second one do you foresee the possibility of military conflict between the Turkey and Greece? If yes, what will be the position of NATO in such prospect?

**HASAN ÜNAL:** Well, it's a very tricky question but the answer might well be quite easy and short in the sense that if Turkey and Greece go to war but basically NATO can do almost nothing. Except you know they would call for ceasefires here and there, try to bring to two sides to the negotiating table one way or the other but the NATO basically has managed to ensure that there has been no Turco-Greek war. You know since the admission of the two countries to the alliance in 1952 except the Cyprus or intervention by Turkey but then it took place basically in quite different and sweet generous circumstances. Let me make few points now, one is about the map which Greece drew in 1975, now the date is important because the map basically came about with flesh and bones because the Greeks had entertained the map over a decade or so, but then it took final shape in 1975 a year after the Turkish intervention in Cyprus.

What I would like to basically emphasize here is the potential of the Cyprus question to destroy or anytime disrupt good Turco-Greek relations, don't forget, for instance I think one of the panelists and Professor Mark Meirowitz referred to the Atatürk-Venizelos friendship beginning from late 1925, and then admiral also alluded to that citing several instances by which Turkey and Greece basically cooperated until well into mid 1950s and one thing that hasn't been mentioned in that Turco-Greek friendship is that when Greece came under Nazi and fascist occupation during the course of the Second World War, Turkey basically continued to recognize the Greek government in exile, and that government in exile kept its embassy in Ankara and Turkey did negotiate with that embassy several things. As if the country hadn't come under occupation at all, let alone

mentioned, Turkish basically help to the Greek people, war stricken, famine stricken and under terrible circumstance, destitute circumstances, and all that.

There's one other perhaps point to add to that, during the course of the Greek Civil War which broke out in 1946 and went on until 1949 Turkey basically supported the Greek government quite firmly, because the two countries were perceiving threat from the Soviet Union, but I would like to make is the point that all this basically was blown up by the Cyprus question. Never underestimate the potential destructivity of the Cyprus question to the Turco-Greek relations, for instance, when you study the Turco-Greek relations from late 1920s right into the middle of the 1950s then you get amazed, and basically not understand how the Cyprus problem could actually blow up the whole friendship and alliance basically. Alliance that is under NATO from 1952 almost, now again with this point in mind I'd like to emphasize how the current Eastern Mediterranean crisis came up with the Greek Cypriot administration basically taking advantage of Turkey's inclination towards the European Union and also taking advantage of Turkey's foreign policy mistakes as Ankara government basically created a number of problems with its neighbors especially with Israel which is a big mistake, now when you have that you have a Greek Cypriot administration taking advantage of all that, and then coming up with agreements here and there, and then basically bringing also the modern mainland Greece into the play and trying to declare an exclusive economic zone.

I mean the Greek Cypriot administration knew well that it would be opposed by Turkey at any rate, but they did it, and again don't forget now there is all this rattling between Athens and Ankara, and it seems as if it has been always like that but no. Over the last 10 years or so the Turco-Greek relations were quite sort of friendly in the sense, at least by the way I got married to a Greek wife and then through the Turco-Greek Cold War and I knew the change of attitude in the Greek mainlanders towards Turkey over the last 10 years or so but then all that

came to an abrupt end again because of what Turkey began to do in opposing Greek Cypriot across the Eastern Mediterranean.

That is why I would like to concentrate on the resolution of the Cyprus problem first because it seems to me that the arguments and counter arguments, by the way I participated in non-official Turco-Greek panels for years and years with Turkish and Greek delegations if you like, so you would have a retired ambassador a retired admiral a not retired academic, and you would have one or two businessmen, one or two journalists and but with strict Chatham house principles applied, then you would discuss all this.

You would hear the Greek side would come up with their arguments well in their quite logical explanation, and we would respond and then you would get together over dinner and with a couple of drinks and so and then you would come up with alternative views as to how to ease the tension and perhaps find a solution to some of the practical problems that could go on. There's no problem with that. I would certainly propose that there should be forums of that sort, and what Istanbul Aydin University is doing is a good thing perhaps it is going to be a pioneer work in the in that sense but what I'm saying is the Aegean dispute is a bit too complicated.

It's not easy to find a magical solution to it but the Cyprus problem appears to be a bit ripe for a resolution why because the constraints the European Union set basically in front of Turkey for the resolution of the Cyprus problem are no longer there and before the two countries begin to take unilateral military actions here and there to complicate the situation, what we need is a sober-minded re-evaluation of each and everybody's policy over Cyprus. For instance, if the Greek side sit down at the negotiating table to negotiate a two sovereign state solution to Cyprus, they could get a piece of land here piece of land there.



Some sort of length for peace agreement but if nothing comes up and no concrete action is taken in that direction, what would happen in about say five-ten years' time after both countries have taken a lot of unilateral actions, political, military and all of which would be hostile to each other. Then there would be no such given take either, so it would be basic, it would turn into a how shall I say a zero-sum option either you get it, or you don't. I'll give you an example now Azerbaijan is basically taking its occupied lands back and when that process is complete which I would expect in either in a few days or in a few weeks but no longer than that and if Azerbaijan would be prepared to recognize the Turkish Cypriot state and some others would come in the in the same direction that would be a different kettle of fish as the British say. It is time to perhaps concentrate on the Cyprus issue, but this doesn't of course exclude exploratory negotiations between officials, but also track to diplomacy between people like ourselves. Thank you for now.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** It has been two hours. This is the last round but let me remind you that it should not be more than one or two minutes. Mr. Cem Gürdeniz, you may start.

**CEM GÜRDENİZ:** First of all, again thank you very much to Istanbul Aydin University for providing this opportunity. There is no end for these discussions because we know that the maritime jurisdiction area conflicts continues for ages for decades look at the Canada and United States, there are five major issues they've been discussing in more than 100 years and it's not so easy to solve but what is easy to solve maybe to talk, to dialogue and to keep from armed conflicts. I would like to reiterate that the Turkey is not Turkey of 1930s, 40s, 50s or 60s a new Turkey we are talking about, new geopolitical requirements, new geopolitical realities, and therefore not only degrees but the whole world should understand the new Turkey's geopolitics. Turkey has faced a new era after the FETÖ coup attempt of 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2016.

Everybody should understand that they're facing a new Turkey after 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2016. Therefore, as long as United States, Greece and Germany and the some of the European Union countries supports the FETÖ organization which is subverting Turkey, trying to destroy the Turkey and the whatever political party comes to the power, it would not let's say gain hearts and minds of Turkish people as long as Greece and US and other so-called allies of Turkey supports Gülen. This is the real fact, and we understand in Cyprus there is an ongoing let's say negotiations since 1968 but you have to understand that the two nations cannot live together as we have seen from the Annan referendum as well as the latest polls from the Greek side, and don't forget the Greek per capita for armament, small arms armament in the world, Greek Cypriots are I think in the top five. I am asking a Greek Cypriots from here against whom you're going to use these guns in their homes?

Second, Greece is accepted to the European Union contrary to the Zurich Conference and London Agreements without the Turkish participation full participation in the European Union or membership, and they've been accepted and right now European Union considers themselves as the stakeholder in the in this process which is not. I think if the world needs a peace and quiet the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. They should understand that the two independent, totally independent states is the best solution not part of the Federal Cyprus solution. Once again, thank you very much for other colleagues for participating in this. I wish good, let's say, works on this never-ending this process of Eastern Mediterranean question, thank you once again.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Thank you very much, Admiral. Please, George.

**GEORGE TZOGOPOULOS:** Perfect. Thank you very much, thank you once again for this invitation I've done very much research into history, the period you mentioned especially from 35 until 55 has been a model indeed for the two countries. Unfortunately, the current situation is not similar to that, and I don't

see how it will be in the future but still even that we disagree, it is important that we talk. This is what I want to keep from today's discussion and praise you once again for organizing this. It's very important that the two sides talk to each other, the more we talk to each other the better it is to understand each other, even if we disagree. This message of dialogue and peace should be sent. From a Greek point of view, I think that the country has been, and it is proud for its foreign policy especially in the neighborhood concerning maritime zones. A few days ago, it reached an agreement with Albania to solve their maritime difference in the international court of justice, recently signed an agreement with Egypt and Italy and I hope that this will happen in the future with Turkey in order to guarantee common prosperity for the two sides and reaching a mutually accepted solution in the continental shelf.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Thank you George. Mr. Hasan Ünal, continuing with you.

**HASAN ÜNAL:** Right the only thing I'd like to add to what I've already said is that we need alternative thinking. How much does it cost to carry on with our conflicts both over the Aegean and over Cyprus? How much would we earn if we basically resolve our disputes here and there? That would I suppose give us or broaden our horizons and the other day I was thinking about the exploratory talks, for instance under the European Union auspices or within the framework of the European Union. Apparently more than 60 plus meetings took place but not 60 inches of improvement have been made. As Professor Meierowitz pointed out, it's because the European Union is not an honest rocker in the whole thing. Why the two countries basically established good friendship which lasted for more than two decades in the 1930s, 40s and well into 50s, was because the two countries negotiated their disputes and the two countries basically acted on their own initiatives all the time without seeking outside support or outside interference one way or the other, against one or the other.

If we if the two countries basically keep the diplomatic channels open, but to keep the diplomatic channels open sometimes means the least diplomatic contact possible. I think what we need it would be much more than that and how what shape it would take requires a lot of further thinking, but what is clear is that to keep the conflict going is quite costly. It is going to be further costly for instance in terms of armament and whatever you Turkey will have to continue spending quite a bit with or without Greece in its projections about military spending. In terms of Greece what Greece could actually get out of an overall settlement both over the Aegean and Cyprus is immense. Thank you again Istanbul Aydın University and particularly you Kutay for making this possible and available to all of us. I also thank all the members and hope that this this type of track two diplomacy will continue.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Professor Hasan Ünal, thank you very much. The last sentences are from Mark Meirowitz.

**MARK MEIROWITZ:** I want to thank you very much and I wanted to add two very small points. First is that I've learned a great deal, I want to thank everyone, it was a great discussion, I learned a lot but here's the thing what comes out of this takeaway is the failure which we can talk about of United Nations and international institutions to address the issue of Cyprus, Eastern Mediterranean and all these issues. The UN has been an active participant in the Cyprus discussions, there's always their meetings on a regular basis come and I give them an F as a note on their meetings. George mentioned the ICJ but the only way you get to the ICJ is both parties have to agree to the jurisdiction of the court, forget that one in the context of this this issue, it's never going to happen. What has to happen is some out of the box thinking here and I think we had some good out of the box thinking into how to solve this problem, but I think we need to be very candid get over this period of COVID, the pandemic, all of this dislocation in the word. Try to get to stability and then to figure out how to deal with these issues.

Lastly two-state solution, a two-state solution again, I'm not a prognosticator and I don't get a percentage. Remember the other two-state solution, that one never happened and I'm going to say and look I want peace in Cyprus, peace between Turkey and Greece, peace is the best way and good relations with the United States are very important but there will never be a two-state solution in Cyprus. If the idea is to still have the two parents Turkey Greece being the key elements there, and they're just going to be considered to be you know I guess children or states under the influence Finlandized by the big powers. That's a no starter. I think we should still they should still keep talking and try, and try, and even Mr. Tatar, no matter what his view was before his campaign should still try to reach out to the other people on the island because they should all get together. I sound like a peacenik, we should've call them that back in the 70s but you know peace is the best way but peace has to be based on recognition of fairness, and that was my point at the beginning that would be fair also about treating the people particularly in the Turkish Cyprus in a dignified way and let them have freedom to have a plane ride or a cruise ship when COVID is over and not have this boycott. Thank you very much it was really a pleasure and a privilege, I think it was a lot of fun too and I learned a lot. Thank you, Admiral.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Thank you very much, Professor Mark Meirowitz. The last sentence might be the slogan of this webinar, peace is the best way. Maybe in next webinar we will we need to discuss or talk on how the international system is changed, and how the regional powers occurred, and this regional power are more powerful on their regional issues. We can talk on that topic and see the Turkey's new position at the statement.

Lastly, I would like to thank to all of our panelists once again, Mr. Mark Meirowitz, Mr. Hasan Ünal, Mr. George Tzogopoulos and Mr. Cem Gürdeniz. Take care of yourselves because you know the pandemic in our life, and don't forget taking your masks. Thank you very much again. Also George, we might

have a webinar organization on Chinese policy on Turkey, and also on Europe, and also on Greece. It's so fantastic for me. I will write to you.

**MARK MEIROWITZ:** I do a lot of work on China myself, I just wrote a piece about it. China is the number one issue in American politics today, in world politics, there is no other issue as important which also overshadows some of the important things.

**RAGIP KUTAY KARACA:** Next webinar is about China then. Thank you very much for everybody.