Is Turkey Still a Reliable Ally?
The Case of the Black Sea[1]

Nikolett PÉNZVÁLTÓ[2]

The study examines Turkish foreign policy in the Black Sea region after the Russian annexation of Crimea. It focuses on two main issues: Turkey's policies within NATO and its balancing actions vis-à-vis Russia. The paper concludes that in spite of the sporadic Western criticism Ankara is still committed to NATO. Nonetheless, Turkey has taken only limited balancing actions to counter the Russian threat. Ankara evaluates and prioritizes threats often very differently from its Western partners, and considers certain balancing steps ineffective or too costly at a specific moment.

Keywords: *Turkey, Black Sea, NATO, Russia*

Introduction

In the past few years, Turkey has often been accused of being an unreliable ally and siding with Russia rather than its Western partners. The increasingly authoritarian Turkish domestic politics, the bilateral disputes within NATO, the disagreements on the Syrian war and Ankara's plan to procure Russian-made S–400 surface-to-air missile systems have strengthened the perception that Turkey's turning away from the West.

In this paper, the Black Sea was selected as a case study to see if this argument holds any merit. After drawing up the theoretical framework and explaining the reasons of the selection of the case study, we will examine the Turkish reactions to the Russian annexation of Crimea. The study attempts to answer two questions: 1. Is Turkey still a reliable ally considering its policies in the Black Sea region? 2. What are the reasons of Turkey's limited balancing actions against Russia in the Black Sea region?

Theoretical Framework: Balancing

As per Kai He, the concept of balancing is operationalized here as "state strategies that a state employs to change its relative power vs. its rival's to its advantage for pursuing security under anarchy". [1: 161] Balancing can take four different forms: it can be either positive balancing (by increasing a state's own power versus its rival) or negative balancing

---

2   Ph.D. student, National University of Public Service; e-mail: penzvalto.nikolett@uni-nke.hu; ORCID ID: 0000-0002-1114-1488

(by undermining the rival's relative power versus itself); and either military balancing or non-military balancing. [1]

Stephen Walt argues that states tend to balance against the most threatening country. Walt identifies four factors that will affect the level of threat that states may pose: aggregate power, proximity, offensive capability and offensive intentions. [2: 9]

Given the increased Russian offensive capabilities, Moscow's demonstrated offensive intentions, the two countries' geographical proximity and their shared history (they fought not less than twelve wars against one another), one would expect Turkey to take serious measures to counter Russia. Nonetheless, Turkey's threat perceptions regarding Russia seem to be aligned more closely with Hungary and Bulgaria among the Eastern Flank countries than with the threat perceptions of Poland, Romania and the Baltic states. The yearly survey of the Kadir Has University of the Turkish security perceptions reinforces this argument: in 2018 Turks saw Russia only the seventh most threatening country to Turkey (after the U.S., Israel, the EU countries, Syria, Armenia and Greece). However, this perception is volatile. In 2016, during the jet crisis, Russia suddenly became the second most threatening country to Turkey in the eyes of the Turkish people. [3]

The only time when Ankara had asked for additional troop deployment, was the period when the Turkish–Russian relations were strained (November 2015–June 2016) due to the downing of the Russian Su–24 aircraft. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan reportedly told NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg before the July 2016 Warsaw Summit that: "The Black Sea has almost become a Russian lake. If we don't take action, history will not forgive us." [4] This request has however not been repeated after the normalization of ties with Moscow.

The Importance of the Black Sea

The Black Sea region is usually not in the centre of debates when it comes to countering Russia. It is usually the Baltics, although, the aggressive Russian intentions have manifested so far almost exclusively around the Black Sea. The first one happened in 2008 with the war in Georgia then with the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014. The so called "frozen conflicts" of Moldova and Nagorno–Karabakh are also located in this area.

Nevertheless, the Black Sea plays an important role for several international actors. The region is part of Moscow's traditional "near abroad", where Russia perceives any enhanced Western presence as a direct threat to its state's survival. For Moscow, the Black Sea is a crucial buffer zone against the West. This is one of the main reasons why even the theoretical accession of Georgia and Ukraine to NATO is under no circumstances acceptable for Moscow. Furthermore, the Black Sea is an important window for accessing the warm waters of the Mediterranean and projecting power into the surrounding regions.

NATO's eastern and southern flank intersect at the Black Sea. The Alliance has three littoral members (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey), whose defence it is responsible for, and two partner countries (Ukraine, Georgia) around the Black Sea.

For Turkey, the region has a historical significance. Between 1475 and 1774 the Black Sea was regarded as an inner Ottoman lake. Today Turkey is still one of the most dominant

Black Sea powers. Additionally, the 1936 Montreux Convention[3] makes Turkey the gatekeeper of the Black Sea, thus provides a special status and responsibility for Ankara. The Black Sea (and Georgia) are important buffer zones for Turkey vis-à-vis the historic rival Russia. Besides, there are several Turkic-origin people (Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks, Gagauz) living around the Black Sea, whose protection is also a priority for Ankara. The Turkish Naval Forces (TNF) Command adopted a new Naval Forces Strategy [5] in 2015, which was published for the first time ever. This decision implies both the growing importance of the maritime domain in general for Turkey, and the large extent of the perceived change in the country's maritime security environment.

From an economic point of view, the Black Sea is a key transit corridor for energy resources, which makes it more significant for every actor. The stability around the Black Sea is necessary to ensure the security of the sea lines of communications (SLOCs) between the several regions it intersects: the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and the Middle East.

The Changing Security Environment around the Black Sea

After the Cold War a peaceful environment and various forms of regional cooperation (Black Sea Economic Cooperation since 1992, BLACKSEAFOR since 2001, Black Sea Harmony since 2004) dominated the region, however the wars in Georgia, Ukraine and Syria have remilitarized the Black Sea. Besides the different interests of the coastline countries, the conflicts gained a bipolar frame. The West and Russia are facing each other again, in terms of both their different integration schemes they have offered to the states in the region and their physical force presence.

After the annexation of Crimea, the military balance has dramatically changed in favour of Russia and created a new security environment. Now, Russia's Black Sea coastline (1171 km) is almost as long as Turkey's (1329 km). Although the modernization plan of Russia's Black Sea Fleet outlined in the 2011–2020 State Armament Program has not been fulfilled as originally thought (Moscow plans to deploy 30 new warships in addition to the existing 47 by 2020), it has achieved remarkable results. Russia has introduced new ships (including three Admiral Grigorovich class frigates), submarines (including six new Project 636.3 diesel submarines) and aircraft (including 12 new Su–30SM). Since 2014, Crimea has also been completely militarized: among others, four battalions of S–400 air defence system, Bastion and Bal missiles and Nebo–M radars have been deployed on the peninsula. Moscow has established an anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) zone covering almost the whole Black Sea, particularly when it comes to air defence. [6]

---

[3] The Montreux Convention regulates international naval access to the Black Sea. The treaty gives Turkey sovereign rights over the Bosporus and Dardanelles straits (Turkish Straits) in wartime.
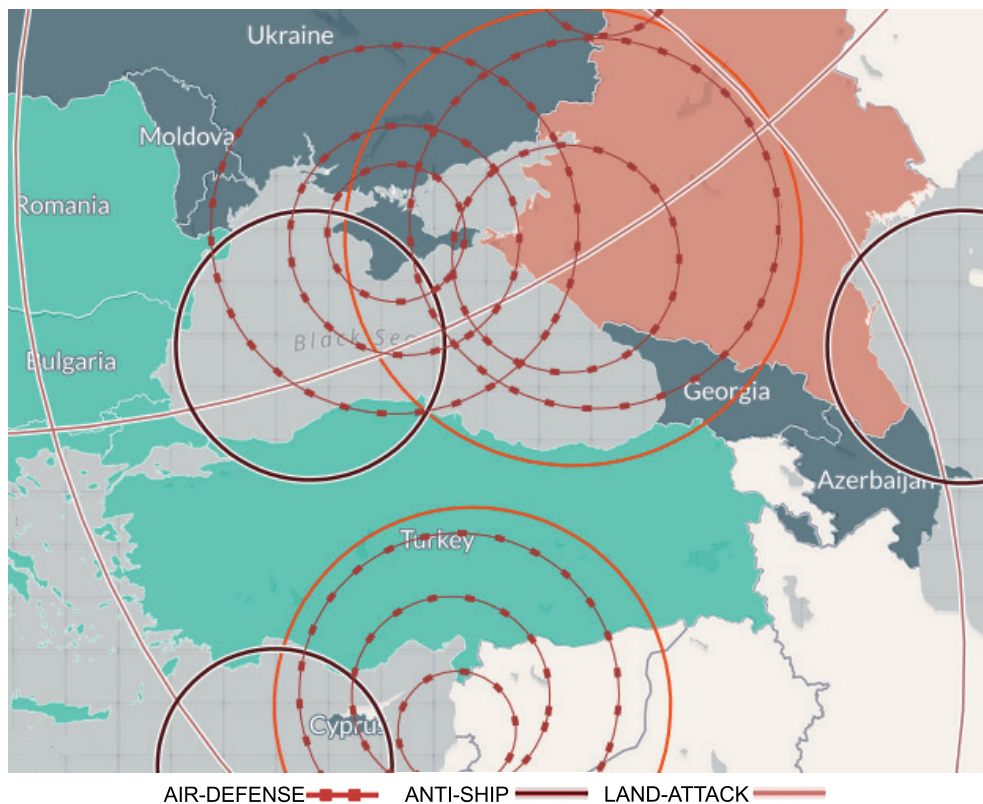
AIR-DEFENSE ▪▬▪▬▪ ANTI-SHIP ▬▬▬ LAND-ATTACK ▬▬▬

Figure 1. *Russia's anti-access area denial (A2/AD) capabilities in November 2018:*
Air Defence: S–300 and S–400 systems; Naval strike: SS–N–27 Sizzler anti-ship missiles,
SS–N–30 (Kalibr) LACM; Land-based strike: Iskander–M SRBM. [7]

Russia is militarily active around the Black Sea as well. An additional S–300 missile system was deployed in Abkhazia in 2017. Russia delivered Iskander–E systems to Armenia in 2016 and S–300 systems to the Syrian regime in 2018. Additionally, Moscow secured its military presence in Syria. In 2017 Russia extended the lease of its naval base in Tartus and its Khmeimim Air Base by a further 49 years. Among others, S–400 systems, Pantsir–S1 and Pantsir–S2 systems, and Iskander–M systems have been deployed to the country. The majority of Russian armaments and ammunition used in Syria has been delivered from the Russian Black Sea port in Novorossiysk to Tartus through the Turkish Straits (this route is often referred to as the Syrian Express).

As a result, Turkey is practically encircled by Russia. The changes in the region and the altered power balance are not in Turkey's favour. In spite of this, Ankara has given only a muted response to the Russian expansion. What is more, in April 2017 the Turkish Navy conducted a bilateral exercise with the Russian Navy. [8]

How Have NATO And Turkey Responded to the Russian Annexation of Crimea?

Regarding their political rhetoric both NATO and Turkey condemned the Russian aggression in Ukraine. NATO considers the annexation of Crimea "illegal and illegitimate", which the member states "do not and will not recognize". [9] [10] [11] The Alliance condemned "Russia's ongoing and wide-ranging military build-up in Crimea" and is "concerned by Russia's efforts and stated plans for further military build-up in the Black Sea region". [10] Without Turkey's consent, these declarations could not have been accepted. Turkish politicians have rhetorically made their view on the war in Ukraine clear several times in line with NATO's official position. Erdogan, for example stated in November 2018 at a joint press conference with his Ukrainian counterpart Petro Poroshenko, that "we strongly reiterated the stance with regard to the preservation of Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political unity. We once again stressed that we do not, and will not, recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea." [12]

On the other hand, Turkey is the only NATO member that has not joined Western sanctions against Russia. Among the EU candidates, besides Turkey, Serbia and Macedonia are the only ones who have rejected to join the sanctions. [13] Ankara did not expel any Russian diplomat either, in retaliation for the poisoning of former intelligence operative Sergei Skripal. Although, even the EU was not unified in this latter case: only 19 EU member states did. [14]

After the Wales Summit, NATO focused mainly on the northern part of the eastern flank, but after the 2016 Summit in Warsaw, the Alliance has also stepped up its activity in the Black Sea and agreed to develop a tailored forward presence there. The tailored forward presence encompasses air, land, and maritime components. [15] The core of the land presence is the multinational brigade deployed in Romania. Allies have contributed to the protection of the airspace of Romania and Bulgaria. Standing NATO maritime forces are present with more ships and more naval exercises in the region. Besides, the cooperation with Georgia and Ukraine has also intensified after 2014.

Ankara did not veto any of the proposed measures. Turkey has continued participating in multinational military exercises even after the Russian annexation of Crimea, including the Romanian-led yearly Sea Shield and the U.S. and Ukrainian co-hosted yearly Sea Breeze naval exercises. Turkey also maintained its participation in NATO's Standing Maritime Group (SNMG2).

However, there are certain limitations for NATO in enhancing its military presence. The 1936 Montreux Convention limits the presence of non-littoral powers in the Black Sea. The treaty establishes tonnage restrictions (15,000 tons) on vessels of war that seek passage through the Turkish Straits. The 2008 war in Georgia has already demonstrated what this restriction can imply in practice. During the war, Turkey barred two U.S. hospital vessels from crossing through the Bosporus in line with the treaty's tonnage limit. Furthermore, according to the Convention: "Vessels of war belonging to non-Black Sea Powers shall not remain in the Black Sea more than twenty-one days, whatever be the object of their presence there". [16] This is why non-littoral NATO states are forced to maintain rotational rather than permanent presence.

Consequently, the littoral NATO members' maritime development is needed for a more significant permanent presence. The idea of reflagging non-littoral NATO ships may also arise but given the historical experiences, it will be very difficult to convince Turkey about it. [17] The Ottoman Empire was dragged into the first World War thanks to two reflagged German ships (Goeben and Breslau, renamed to Yavuz Sultan Selim and Midilli), which, having escaped the British and entered the Straits, attacked Russian ports ordered by their German commander. [18: 348–349] One must also take into account that Russia would surely react very sensitively to any reflagging.

Among the littoral NATO members, Romania is the one who has been pushing for a bigger NATO, and if that is not possible then American military presence actively, while Bulgaria and Turkey are very lukewarm about it. In 2016, Bucharest proposed a permanent NATO Black Sea Fleet. Bulgaria did not support the idea and declared it would not join. Thus, the proposal was taken off the agenda. The Turkish position on the initiative has never been clearly articulated. [19]

In parallel with developments in NATO, Turkey has been modernizing its naval forces. In July 2017, Turkey inaugurated the corvette Kınalıada, equipped to fight submarines. In the same year, Turkey received two Bayraktar class Landing Ship Tanks (LSTs) and started the construction of a new class (Istanbul class) of frigates. [20] In December 2018, the Turkish Ministry of National Defence announced the construction of a new naval base on the Black Sea coast in Trabzon province. The Turkish Navy currently has a total of eight bases in the four seas, this will be the ninth one. [21]

However, this modernization project shows a continuity rather being an adaptation of Ankara's maritime strategy as a response to the annexation of Crimea. [22] The Turkish Undersecretariat for Defence Industries (SSM) published its Defence Industry Sectoral Strategy Document in 2009 for the period of 2009−2016. The document envisaged ambitious development plans for the maritime sector, focusing mostly on indigenous production. [23] The next sectoral strategy (2018−2022) only continued this line. [44]

Considering our first research question, we cannot state that Turkey has done significantly less than other NATO member countries. Ankara has not raised unilateral vetoes, and contributed to the common actions. The improvement of NATO capabilities in general is in Turkey's interest. For Ankara, it is even better, if it is directed against no one specifically. The new Turkish Naval Forces Strategy refers to NATO several times, and highlights the importance of „participation in and contribution to NATO-initiated miscellaneous activities concerning security related issues". [5: 11]

Examining Turkey's Balancing Choices

As for balancing, Turkey has taken positive military and non-military balancing actions. Besides investing in its military, Turkey has intensified cooperation with Ukraine [24] and Moldova, [25] and the Azerbaijan–Georgia–Turkey trilateral formation has remained active as well. [26] On the other hand, limited, if any, negative balancing measures can be observed by Turkey. Ankara's balancing actions through the West (positive external military balancing) have remained limited as well. On the rhetorical/normative side, Turkey sided with NATO and condemned certain Russian actions. Yet, Ankara has not joined

Western sanctions and does not ask for additional NATO presence, even if the Russian military build-up is alarming. Furthermore, Ankara has also continued its cooperation with Moscow in other areas, for example in the settlement process in Syria and the procurement of the S–400 system. This way we cannot talk about strategic non-cooperation as a negative balancing tool, either.

In this section we will examine Ankara's balancing choices. We are taking a Western perspective, and looking for answers for two questions: why Turkey 1.) does not balance negatively, namely that it does not join the sanctions and does not challenge Russia in the Black Sea; and 2.) does not balance externally against Russia through the West, that it does not ask for additional NATO deployment, and is lukewarm about the enhanced Western presence.

In choosing different balancing strategies, threat perception is the most decisive factor. Additionally, states consider at least two issues: the effectiveness and the cost of balancing. [1] In line with this, we divide the possible arguments into three groups.

Issues of Threat Perceptions

Different Threat Prioritization

Ankara simply prioritizes threats differently than the West. The threat posed by Kurdish separatism and a West versus Russia collision is more imminent and threatening for Ankara right now than the Russian expansion. Syria is the main focus of the Turkish leaders, which also means that they concentrate all of their resources in that direction instead of the Black Sea. If Ankara wants to achieve results and secure its interests in Syria, it has no chance but to accommodate either Washington or Moscow. And since the normalization of bilateral ties in 2016, Russia seems to be more open to take into consideration the Turkish concerns, than the country's traditional Western allies—even if Ankara understands that it can be abandoned by Moscow any time.[4]

This point does not necessarily imply that Turkey does not fear Russia at all. To put it differently, based on the model of Steven R. David called omnibalancing, [27] it can be argued that Turkey is collaborating with "the second most important" threat in order to fight more effectively the perceived "number one" threat, namely the Kurds. The fight against Kurdish "terrorism" is important from a political perspective as well. Nationalist sentiments have been helping the Turkish governing elite to stay in power.

Sticking to the (Mis)Perceived Status Quo and the Montreux Convention

With the Russian military build-up following the annexation of Crimea, Turkey lost its clear lead as the largest military power in the region. According to many, Ankara is sticking to a status quo that no longer exists, thus the Turkish argument of maintaining the power

---

[4] The analysis of the war in Syria is beyond the scope of this case study. Nonetheless, the importance of the Syrian conflict in the context of the Turkish–Russian–American relations cannot be exaggerated. For a more detailed overview, see e.g. [30].

balance is based on a "reality-denying position". [28] On the other hand, as a study of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute points out, "the Turkish Navy as a whole (which is in or near the Black Sea) remains larger than the Russian Black Sea Fleet". [29]

The Montreux Convention is another reason why Turkey is sticking to the status quo. The Turkish maritime strategy also underlines that "Turkey has given utmost importance to the preservation of the Montreux Regime". [5: 10] Ankara is against any amendment of the treaty which grants Turkey sovereignty over the Straits. The abolition of the Convention could be perceived as a bigger threat to Turkey than the current Russian deployment.

Regional Ownership Approach

The regional ownership approach is considered the traditional Turkish position in the region. In the words of the former foreign minister and prime minister Ahmet Davutoglu, this approach suggests finding "regional solutions to the regional problems, rather than waiting for other actors from outside the region to impose their own solutions". [31] This principle can be observed in the Turkish behaviour after the Cold War. This motivated the creation of regional organizations and initiatives, such as BLACKSEAFOR and Black Sea Harmony, which was supposed to send the message that there is no need for the destabilizing presence of the United States in the region. The Turkish Naval Forces Strategy also refers to the principle of regional ownership: "Turkey continues to show sensitivity to the maintenance of the 'sense of regional ownership' and the regional security initiatives established in this context." [5: 10]

Framing the Ongoing Conflict as a Conflict Between Russia and the West

Gülnur Aybet, a senior adviser to Erdogan said about the conflict in Ukraine that "Turkey knows this is something between Russia and the West […] and it will keep quiet and let them work it out". [32] Turkey tries to stay impartial and does not want to take a side in a conflict that is seen as a conflict between Russia and the West. Erdogan has made it clear already at the time of the Georgian war. In September 2008 he stated: "It would not be right for Turkey to be pushed toward any side. Certain circles want to push Turkey into a corner either with the United States or Russia after the Georgian incident. One of the sides is our closest ally, the United States. The other side is Russia, with which we have an important trade volume. We would act in line with what Turkey's national interests require." [33] Turkey fears the possible escalation of conflict in the Black Sea region. The presence of more NATO troops in the region would threaten with even the unintended escalation of tensions, which is something Turkey intends to avoid. In such a scenario Ankara would be forced to clearly take a side, and could not maintain its current balancing stance.

Assessment of NATO Guarantees

Opinions differ on the assessment of NATO guarantees. Paradoxically, Turkey's unwillingness to bolster its military presence could be a sign of trust in NATO guarantees.

Turkey is not afraid of a Russian military attack because of the ensured collective defence. The contrary is also possible. Ankara perceives a lack of credibility from its allies and doubts the Western commitment to the region. As Dimitar Bechev puts it: "In a worst-case scenario, Ankara would be left to fend alone against resurgent Russia. Therefore, it chose to bandwagon with Moscow." [33]

Issues of Effectiveness

Avoiding the Security Dilemma

As John Herz puts it, the security dilemma is: "A structural notion in which the self-help attempts of states to look after their security needs tend, regardless of intention, to lead to rising insecurity for others as each interprets its own measures as defensive and measures of others as potentially threatening." [34] Turkey does not see external balancing measures effective in the de-escalation of the conflict. As Mustafa Aydın, "the doyen of Black Sea studies in Turkey" [20] explains: "Turkey opposed moves to counter Russia openly in the region, mainly fearing that a cornered Russia might destabilize the region and create further security challenges." [35] This view is in line with those opinions which see the Russian aggression as a response to the enlargement of NATO and the aggressive intentions of the West perceived by Moscow. [36]

Protecting the Turkic Minorities

It is often stated that Ankara should be more confrontative with Russia for the sake of the Turkic minorities, especially (but not exclusively) for the Crimean Tatars.[5] From another perspective, however, Ankara needs to maintain good relations with Moscow precisely in order to engage the Russian leadership on the status and rights of the Turkic minorities. [37] A less visible Turkish support may be favourable for the Tatars, thus this way they will not be treated with suspicion by the locals and so avoid being regarded as a potential "fifth column". [43]

Issues of Costs

Buck-Passing

Buck-passing is a situation where states avoid balancing by "counting on third parties to bear the costs of stopping" the aggressor. [38: 138] This behaviour stems from the collective action problem. In case of the security of the Black Sea, Romania is slowly becoming

---

[5]   Tatars are not the only Turkic minority around the Sea. There are for example the Gagauz in Moldova and the Ahiska/Meskhetian Turks in Ukraine and Georgia. Because of the war in Ukraine about 3,000 Meskhetian Turks was settled in Turkey from Ukraine part of an official program. [41]

the most important ally for the United States against Russia, which goes "with periodic threats of annihilation for hosting American ballistic missile defence, exercises simulating Romania's invasion, and repeated violations of air space". [39] Turkey benefits from the additional American deployment but takes no such direct negative consequences.

Buck-passing also gives an answer to the question why Turkey has not joined the Western sanctions: it provides Ankara economic benefits. In spite of the clear rhetoric on supporting the territorial integrity of Georgia and Ukraine, and despite the Western sanctions, Turkish ships have been trading with Abkhazia and Crimea. Turkey has been attempting to build close relationship with every actor in the region, including Russia and Ukraine simultaneously, and this way minimize the costs of the war. From a definitional point of view, it could even be questioned, whether sanctions can be considered as real balancing actions, because the introduction of sanctions would probably result in not an increase but a decrease in Turkey's relative power versus Russia: considering the effects of the expected Russian counter-sanctions, the Turkish economy would likely suffer more strikingly.[6]

Energy Dependency

In 2008, Turkey emphasized its energy dependence on Russia. It was the main argument of its unwillingness in taking a harsh stance against Moscow. Today the situation is different. Turkey is facing a new energy environment. In the words of Chris Miller, "the era of the West and Russia clashing over pipeline projects is being supplanted by a new, more flexible energy regime. Russia's energy leverage is declining. […] Turkey was in the past dependent on Russian gas, but it is increasingly Gazprom that will depend on Turkish transit." [40] Turkey hopes to become an energy hub. It may decrease the extent of asymmetry and its dependence on Russia. It is also worth noting that the Russian "energy weapon" has its own limits. After the downing of the Russian fighter jet by a Turkish pilot is 2015, Moscow introduced several serious sanctions against Ankara, but the issue of stopping the gas transit to Turkey did not even emerge as an option. These are the reasons why we do not consider energy dependency the decisive factor here.

Conclusion

In spite of the several disputes between Turkey and other NATO members it cannot be stated that Turkey is turning away from the West in strategic terms. Ankara has contributed to NATO actions after 2014 which helped preserve its credibility within the Alliance.
Yet, Turkey has given only limited balancing responses to the increased Russian threat in the Black Sea region, though the Russian activity is contrary to its interests. Turkey has taken positive military and non-military balancing actions but limited, if any, negative

---

[6]   After the shooting down of the Russian Su–24 aircraft by Turkey, Moscow introduced harsh sanctions in response. Turkish–Russian bilateral trade contracted by a third from USD 23.9 billion in 2015 to USD 16.8 billion in 2016. Turkey lost over 1% of GDP. [42]

balancing measures can be identified. Ankara is traditionally very cautious of balancing against Moscow openly through the West and prefers regional options instead.

There are several reasons of choosing this balancing mix. First, Turkey's threat perceptions differ from other NATO countries' to a large extent. It is important to understand these perceptions since a more effective cooperation within the Alliance is achievable only this way. The threat posed by Kurdish separatism, the possible amendment of the Montreux Convention, or a direct military clash between the West and Russia, in the case of which it would be forced to clearly take a side, seem to be more serious threats for Ankara at the moment. Secondly, the Turkish government sees certain balancing actions ineffective, sometimes even counterproductive. Accordingly, they could lead to an arms race, a new act of 'defensive aggression' from Moscow, increased risks of military accidents between the two sides and as a result they would destabilize the region even further. Thirdly, Ankara finds balancing disproportionately costly, and seeks economic advantages while avoiding sanctions.

In the short run Turkey will likely continue its current strategy. In case of a direct bilateral conflict with Russia, however, we can expect Turkey's turning more closely toward its Western allies, as it happened after the Su–24 incident. This forecast is also supported by the above cited survey of the Kadir Has University: the jet crisis suddenly made Russia the second most threatening country to Turkey—though only temporarily. [3] Time will tell how it will work out in the long run. According to realist theories, Turkey as a rational actor must balance against Russia's growing military posture in the Black Sea, if it does not want to put its state's survival at risk.

References

[1] HE, K.: Undermining Adversaries: Unipolarity, Threat Perception, and Negative Balancing Strategies after the Cold War. *Security Studies,* 21 2 (2012), 154–191. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2012.679201

[2] WALT, S.: Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power. *International Security,* 9 4 (1985), 3–43. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/2538540

[3] CTRS: *Türk Dış Politikası Kamuoyu Algıları Araştırması – 2018.* Istanbul, Kadir Has Üniversitesi, Center for Turkish Studies, 2018. http://ctrs.khas.edu.tr/post/27/turk-dis-politikasi-kamuoyu-algilari-arastirmasi-2018 (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[4] HAINES, J. R.: *By Love, Money, or Violence: The Struggle for Primacy in the Black Sea.* Philadelphia, Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2016. www.fpri.org/article/2016/05/love-money-violence-struggle-primacy-black-sea/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[5] TNF: *Turkish Naval Forces Strategy.* Istanbul, Turkish Naval Forces, 2016. www.dzkk.tsk.tr/data/icerik/392/Turkish%20Naval%20Forces%20Strategy.pdf (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[6] GORENBURG, D.: Is a new Russian Black Sea Fleet coming? Or is it here? *War on the Rocks* (online), July 31 2018. https://warontherocks.com/2018/07/is-a-new-russian-black-sea-fleet-coming-or-is-it-here/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[7] WILLIAMS, I.: *The Russia – NATO A2AD Environment.* Washington, D.C., Center for Strategic and International Studies. (Missile Defense Project, Missile Threat), 2017. https://missilethreat.csis.org/russia-nato-a2ad-environment/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[8]   Russian MoD: *The Russian Black Sea Fleet and the Turkish Navy held a joint naval operation in the Black Sea. [В Черном море прошло совместное учение с кораблями ЧФ России и ВМС Турции.]* Moskva, MoD, 2017. https://structure.mil.ru/structure/okruga/south/news/more.htm?id=12117438@egNews (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[9]   NATO: *Wales Summit Declaration.* 2014. www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[10] NATO: *Warsaw Summit Communiqué.* 2016. www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[11] NATO: *Brussels Summit Declaration.* 2018. www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[12] *Turkey will continue to defend the rights and interests of the Crimean Tatars.* Ankara, Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2018. www.tccb.gov.tr/en/news/542/99528/-turkey-will-continue-to-defend-the-rights-and-interests-of-the-crimean-tatars- (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[13] HELLQUIST, E.: Either with us or against us? Third-country alignment with EU sanctions against Russia/Ukraine. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs,* 29 3 (2016), 997–1021. https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2016.1230591

[14] DEWAN, A. − VESELINOVIC, M. – JORDAN, C.: These are all the countries that are expelling Russian diplomats. *CNN* (online), March 28 2018. https://edition.cnn.com/2018/03/26/europe/full-list-of-russian-diplomats-expelled-over-s-intl/index.html (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[15] NATO: *Boosting NATO's presence in the east and southeast.* 2019. www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[16] *Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits.* 1936. http://sam.baskent.edu.tr/belge/Montreux_ENG.pdf (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[17] ÇELIKPALA, M. – ERŞEN, E.: Turkey's Black Sea Predicament: Challenging or Accommodating Russia? *Perceptions,* 23 2 (2018), 72–92.

[18] MELVIN, M.: *Sevastopol's Wars: Crimea from Potemkin to Putin.* Oxford, Osprey Publishing, 2017.

[19] BOZHILOV, Y.: The brief life of the idea for the creation of NATO black sea fleet. *New Europe* (online), January 8. 2017. www.neweurope.eu/article/brief-life-idea-creation-nato-black-sea-fleet/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[20] *Russia and Turkey in the Black Sea and the South Caucasus.* Brussels, Crisis Group, 2018. www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/250-russia-and-turkey-black-sea-and-south-caucasus (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[21] KARAKAŞ, G.: Deniz Kuvvetleri'nden Karadeniz'de yeni hamle! *Milliyet* (online), 11.12.2018. www.milliyet.com.tr/turk-donanmasi-sularin-isindigi-gundem-2793003/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[22] AAMODT, S. G.: *Away from NATO toward Russia? Turkey's Quest for Security, Autonomy and Regional Power Status.* Oslo, University of Oslo, 2018. www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/63962/Aamodt_2018Master.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[23] SSM: *2009−2016 Savunma Sanayii Sektörel Strateji Dokümanı.* Ankara, Savunma Sanayii Müsteşarlığı, 2009. https://marmarabasin.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2009-

2016-Savunma-Sanayii-Sekto%CC%88rel-Strateji-Doku%CC%88man%C4%B1.pdf
(Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[24] URCOSTA, R. B.: Prospects for a Strategic Military Partnership Between Turkey and
      Ukraine. *Eurasia Daily Monitor* (online), 15 170 (2018). https://jamestown.org/program/
      prospects-for-a-strategic-military-partnership-between-turkey-and-ukraine/ (Downloaded:
      15.02.2019)

[25] POPŞOI, M.: Increasingly Isolated Moldovan Government Looks to Turkey for Support.
      Eurasia Daily Monitor, 15 150 (2018.)https://jamestown.org/program/increasingly-isolated-
      moldovan-government-looks-to-turkey-for-support/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[26] MoFA: *Istanbul Statement of the Seventh Trilateral Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the
      Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Turkey.* Baku, Ministry of Foreign
      Affairs of Azerbaijan, 2018. www.mfa.gov.az/en/news/909/5908 (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[27] DAVID, S. R.: Explaining Third World Alignment. *World Politics,* 43 2 (1991), 233–256.
      DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/2010472

[28] SOCOR, V.: Turkey Stalls NATO, Clings to Defunct Status Quo in the Black Sea. *Eurasia
      Daily Monitor* (online), 15 116 (2018). https://jamestown.org/program/turkey-stalls-nato-
      clings-to-defunct-status-quo-in-the-black-sea/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[29] MELVIN, N. J.: Rebuilding Collective Security in the Black Sea Region. *SIPRI Policy
      Paper,* 50 (2018). www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/sipripp50_0.pdf (Downloaded:
      15.02.2019)

[30] POPESCU, N. – SECRIERU, S. eds.: Russia's return to the Middle East. Building
      sandcastles? *Chaillot Papers,* 146 (2018). www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/
      CP_146.pdf DOI: https://doi.org/10.2815/777831

[31] DAVUTOGLU, A.: *Interview by Mr. Ahmet Davutoglu published in AUC Cairo Review
      (Egypt) on 12 March 2012.* Ankara, ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, 2012. www.mfa.
      gov.tr/interview-by-mr_-ahmet-davuto%C4%9Flu-published-in-auc-cairo-review-_egypt_-
      on-12-march-2012.en.mfa (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[32] Turkey waiting for Russia, West on Ukraine problem. *Hürriyet Daily News,* May 12 2014.
      www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-waiting-for-russia-west-on-ukraine-problem-66311
      (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[33] BECHEV, D.: *Turkey and Black Sea Security: Ten Years after the War in Georgia.*
      Washington, D.C., Atlantic Council, 2018. www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/
      turkey-and-black-sea-security-ten-years-after-the-war-in-georgia (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[34] HERZ, J. H.: Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma. *World Politics,* 2 2 (1950),
      171–201. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/2009187

[35] *AYDIN,* M.: Turkish Policy towards the Wider Black Sea and the EU Connection. *Journal of
      Balkan and Near Eastern Studies,* 16 3 (2014), 383–397. https://doi.org/10.1080/19448953.
      2014.928541

[36] MEARSHEIMER, J. J.: Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions
      That Provoked Putin. *Foreign Affairs,* 93 5 (2014), 77–89.

[37] KAYA, K.: The Crimean Crisis: Turkey's Priorities Differ from the Western Powers. *Turkey
      Analyst,* 7 6 (2014).

[38] CHRISTENSEN, T. J. – SNYDER, J. L.: Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting
      Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity. *International Organisation,* 44 2 (1990), 137–168. DOI:
      https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300035232

[39] JOJA, I-S.: Dealing with the Russian lake next door: Romania and Black Sea security. *War on the Rocks* (online), August 15 2018. https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/dealing-with-the-russian-lake-next-door-romania-and-black-sea-security/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[40] MILLER, C.: Black Sea's Back, Alright? A New Special Series. *War on the Rocks* (online), July 26 2018. https://warontherocks.com/2018/07/black-seas-back-alright-a-new-special-series/ (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[41] Anadolu Agency: Turkey to host Meskhetian Turks fleeing Ukraine war. *Daily Sabah Turkey* (online), 16 October 2015. www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2015/10/17/turkey-to-host-meskhetian-turks-fleeing-ukraine-war (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[42] BECHEV, D.: *Normalizing Russian-Turkish Economic Relations.* Istanbul, Al Sharq Forum, 2018. www.sharqforum.org/2018/02/20/normalizing-russian-turkish-economic-relations/#_edn4 (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)

[43] BLANK, S.: A Double Dispossession: The Crimean Tatars after Russia's Ukrainian War. *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal,* 9 1 (2015), 18–32. http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/1911-9933.9.1.1271

[44] SSB*: 2018–2022 Savunma Sanayii Sektörel Strateji Dokümanı*. Ankara, *Savunma Sanayii Başkanlığı, 2017.* www.ssb.gov.tr/Images/Uploads/MyContents/F_20190402102925477924.pdf (Downloaded: 15.02.2019)