

THRACE ON THE EAST: GEORGIA?

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ABSTRACT

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Kiremitçi, İlker

M.A., Department of International Relations

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June 2004

Since Turkey has turned its face towards Europe, it can be concluded that one of its ‘backs’ is the Caucasian region. However, Caucasia may not constitute Turkey’s first security priority under present conditions, but this does not mean that it will not, in the future. Therefore, that Turkey should consider its ‘back’ from the security perspective is an indisputable reality. In that sense, this thesis examines one of the Caucasian states, namely GEORGIA, which is in the middle of the region, from the security point of view. How Georgia has been affecting Turkish security policies after the end of Cold War is the main concern of the thesis.

Keywords: Turkey, Georgia (Republic), United States, Russian Federation, Caucasia (Caucasus), security, interest, military, energy, security policy.

ÖZET

DOĞU' DAKİ TRAKYA: GÜRCİSTAN?

Kiremitçi, İlker

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Mustafa Kibaroglu

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Türkiye yüzünü Avrupa'ya döndüğü için, onun 'arkalarından' birinin Kafkasya bölgesi olduğu sonucuna varılabilir. Ancak, günümüz koşullarında Kafkasya Türkiye'nin birinci güvenlik önceliğini oluşturmaz, fakat bu gelecekte olmayacağı anlamına gelmez. Bu nedenle, Türkiye'nin güvenlik alanında 'arkasını' dikkate alması gerektiği su götürmez bir gerçektir. Bu manada tez, Kafkas ülkelerinden birini, bölgenin ortasında bulunan Gürcistan'ı güvenlik açısından incelemektedir. Soğuk Savaş sonrası Gürcistan'ın Türk güvenlik politikalarını nasıl etkilediği tezin ana ilgisidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Gürcistan, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Rusya Federasyonu, Kafkasya (Kafkas), güvenlik, çıkar, askeri, enerji, güvenlik politikası.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------|---|
| BSEC | : Black Sea Economic Cooperation |
| B–T–C | : Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan Oil Pipeline |
| CEPAR | : Center for Economic Policy Analysis and Reform |
| CFE | : Conventional Forces in Europe |
| CIS | : Commonwealth of Independent States |
| CTR | : Cooperative Threat Reduction |
| DoD | : Department of Defense |
| EU | : European Union |
| FMF | : Foreign Military Financing |
| FOG | : Friends of the UN Secretary–General for Georgia |
| FY | : Fiscal Year |
| GAF | : Georgian Armed Force |
| GRFT | : Group of Russian Forces in the Transcaucasus |
| GTEP | : Georgia Train And Equip Program’ |
| GUUAM | : Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova |
| IEC | : International Engineering Center |
| IMF | : International Monetary Fund |
| INOGATE | : Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe |
| MOD | : Ministry of Defense |
| NATO | : North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NCMD | : North Caucasus Military District |
| NGOs | : Nongovernmental Organizations |
| NIS | : Newly Independent States |
| OSCE | : Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| PfP | : Partnership for Peace |
| RF | : Russian Federation |
| TAF | : Turkish Armed Forces |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| TGS | : Turkish General Staff |
| TLE | : Treaty Limited Equipment |
| TRACECA | : Transport Corridor Europe – Caucasus – Asia |
| TSMA | : Theatre for Strategic Military Action |
| UN | : United Nations |
| UNOMIG | : United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia |
| US | : United States |
| USEUCOM | : US European Command |
| USSR | : Union of Soviet Socialist Republics |
| WTO | : World Trade Organization |

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever watched a wild wolf while it is fighting with its enemies by itself? In such a situation, the wolf, first of all, tries to secure its back by leaning it against a rock, a tree or something hard, so that it leaves only few directions for its enemies to attack. Thus, it can easily resist against them and can survive. This is what usually happens, but sometimes the contrary occurs either.¹

Since Turkey has turned its face towards Europe, it can be concluded that one of its ‘backs’ is the Caucasian region, where has a geopolitical importance as a threshold between natural resources-rich Central Asia and the West. It can be argued that, related with this example of course, whether Europe is its enemy or not, but Turkey should consider its ‘back’ from the security perspective. Caucasia may not constitute Turkey’s first security priority under present conditions, but this does not mean that it will not, in the future.

It is an indisputable fact that there are some problems on Turkey’s back. These problems can be solved by means of politics. Military, may also be one of the essential means, as it has been so far in this region. But, it should not be forgotten that “On top of the pyramid, which arranges countries’ power priorities, there is politics. Military is one of the tools to realize political objectives”.² Therefore, Turkey should develop effective security policies concerning the region.

¹ By giving a wild wolf as a symbol of this example, I should declare that I am not in favor of any political party or something else. As an officer, this can not be talked of. This is just a scene from nature, which affected me heavily while I was watching TV.

² Mustafa Kibaroglu. 2002. *Northern Iraq*. Conference in Bilkent University. Ankara, December 11.

Additionally, Caucasia is also important for the military strategies. Considering the military geographical criteria, it can be assessed that there are two main directions which can surround Anatolia completely. One of them is from Balkans and the other is from the Caucasian region. It is no doubt that in this kind of operation Georgia will be extremely important for Turkey's security.

In that sense, this thesis will try to examine one of the Caucasian states, namely GEORGIA, which is in the middle of the region, from the security point of view. **The effect of Georgia on Turkish security policies after the end of Cold War** will be the main concern of this study. Since most of the master's theses include descriptive theme, this thesis will also comply with this characteristic and clarify the subject in an explanatory manner. The thesis consists of four chapters.

The first chapter explains Turkish–Georgian relations after the end of Cold War. At first, it clarifies the importance of Georgia for Turkey's (regional) security policies. Apart from being one of the Caucasian states, there are also some other reasons such as its unique location and domestic instability, which make Georgia a particular security interest for Turkey. Then, bilateral relations – namely political, economic and military relations – between Turkey and Georgia will be dealt with. These affairs constitute one of the operationalization phases of the thesis. So, in this part, Turkey's Georgian policy will be linked to the observable realities. In other words, to what degree Turkey has performed what it has had to will be clarified. In the next part of the chapter, the reflections of Georgia's domestic factors, namely Abkhazian, Ajarian, South Ossetian crises and Armenian minority issue, to the bilateral relations and Turkey's security policies will be examined.

The second chapter analyzes the Russian Federation's (RF) view about the relationship between Turkey and Georgia. This chapter starts with explaining the

Caucasian policy of the RF briefly. In this part, the well-known ‘Near Abroad’ policy and its reflections on Georgia will be discussed. Then, in the second part of the chapter, RF’s security policies stemming from the South Caucasia will be dealt with in order to put forth its approach to the region and to Georgia. In addition, RF’s geopolitical and strategic objectives on Georgia will be emphasized in this chapter, and its main policy initiatives in Georgia such as; RF’s visa regime policy, its energy policy, its international terrorism policy and its military involvement in Georgia will be discussed. Actually, the latter is very important not only for Turkey but also for Georgia itself. This case also constitutes an example of the RF’s intent towards Georgia and Caucasia. Finally, RF’s view about the relationship between Turkey and Georgia will be clarified.

The third chapter focuses on the United States’ (US) policies toward the South Caucasia and Georgia, particularly after the demise of the Soviet Union. This chapter begins with explaining the changing priorities in the US policy towards the South Caucasia and its implications for Georgia. After examining its geopolitical and strategic objectives on Georgia, the US’s political, economic and military initiatives in Georgia will be studied in order to understand its strategy toward this country. Then, similarities and divergences in the Turkish and the US’s policies with respect to Georgia will be evaluated. While there may be differences on the relations with Armenia, Turkey and the US support the independence and territorial integrity of Georgia in order to prevent imperialistic policies of RF toward Georgia and to secure oil transportation routes.

The last chapter is devoted to an assessment of Turkey’s security policies with respect to Georgia by considering the US and RF’s initiatives. First of all, Turkey’s security policies towards Caucasia and Georgia will be overviewed. And then, considering all the reasons mentioned in above chapters, there will be an answer for the

question of what and how Turkey's prospective security policies could be towards Georgia.

Within the framework of these chapters, this study is prepared to give answers to the questions stated below:

- How does Georgia affect Turkey's security policies since the end of Cold War?
- How did Turkey's relations with Georgia develop since after the end of Cold War? What are the main initiatives in this progress?
- How did Russia view Turkish–Georgian relationship?
- What is the United States' policy toward Georgia and the Caucasia?
- How can Turkey's security policies – in relation with Georgia – be assessed by considering the United States and Russia's initiatives?

In order to reach the goals of descriptive research (describe a process, mechanism, or relationship; present basic background information or a context; find information to stimulate new explanations, and etc.), the thesis has been written through the use of various sources. The information and presentation notes of Turkish General Staff, books, journal articles, internet, press statements, official documents, research papers, theses, conference papers and interviews are the main sources.

CHAPTER 1

1. TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA

Georgia was the first country among the Soviet Republics to declare its independence (after the Baltic States) on 9th April 1991. It is bounded in the west by the Black Sea, north by RF and south by Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Its area is 69.700 km² and its population (%70 Orthodox Christian, %10 Muslim, %5 Gregorian³, %3 Jewish, %0,7 Catholic Christians, %11,7 other religions), which is the most heterogeneous in the region, containing Azerbaijanis (%5,7), Armenians (%8.1), Russians (%6,3), Abkhazs (%1.8), Ossets (%3), was 4.930.000 in July 2003.⁴ Within Georgia there are two autonomous republics: Abkhazia (3.600 km² and 600.000 population), Ajaria (3.000 km² and 400.000 population), and an autonomous region: South Ossetia (3.900 km² and 100.000 population). South Ossetia wants to be independent or join with North Ossetia, part of RF. Abkhazia also desires to separate from Georgia or merge with RF. Ajaria, on the other hand, was to avoid having contact with the central government in Tbilisi. There is one more problematic region in the country: Javakhetia, where is located in the south of Georgia. Ninety percent of this area consists of Armenian people, who do not accept the authority of the Georgian Government.

Actually, Turkey's relations with Georgia started long before the end of Cold War. In 1920, before the establishment of the Turkish Republic, there were bilateral relations developing increasingly between the two countries. For example, in the same

³ Member of the Armenian Orthodox Church.

year, the Foreign Minister of the Ankara Government, Bekir Sami Bey, visited Tbilisi. Then, Grand National Assembly recognized ‘Georgia Democratic Republic’ on 5 February 1921.⁵ After the recognition, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the Grand leader of Turkey, accepted the Ambassador of Georgia and made a speech addressing him:⁶

It is not only sympathy but also our common objectives which associate us with Georgia. We have strong enemy in the West, so we need a strong East, especially in the Caucasian region. Moreover, in Caucasia we need strong Georgians, who are the most important nation in the region. We require a strong and independent Georgia. We should struggle together with Georgia in order to make other Caucasian states independent. (Author’s Translation)

Unfortunately, soon after this talk, Georgia was occupied by the Red Army and the Soviet government was established on 25th February 1921 in Tbilisi.⁷ It can be assessed that after the Russian occupation, Georgia, where is a crossing points for Caucasia–Middle East–Anatolia–Europe, had disappeared from the history scene and had not appeared until the 1991.

Map 1: Caucasia⁸



⁴ “Türkiye–Gürcistan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri” Available at www.deik.org.tr/ikili/200325165744ikili%20iliskiler-eylül2003gurcistan.doc

⁵ Following the collapse of the Russian Empire in the wake of the First World War and the Revolution in St. Petersburg, Georgia had gained its first brief period of independence from 1918 to 1921.

⁶ Selçuk Çolakoğlu. 1999. “Türkiye’nin Gürcistan Politikası”, in Adnan Menderes University, eds., *Cumhuriyet’in 75 nci Yılına Armağan*. Aydın: Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Yayınları, p.122.

⁷ Ibid, p.123.

Since the Caucasian region⁹ consists of two parts; North and South, it is useful to conceptualize it here. In this chapter and throughout the thesis, Caucasia refers the South Caucasian region, which includes Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, borders Turkey, Iran, the Black and Caspian Seas, and RF's northern slopes of the Caucasus Mountains. Its importance lies in the fact that it has a unique geographic location: the region serves as a north–south and east–west trade and transport ‘land bridge’. Moreover, it also links Europe to the Middle East and Asia.¹⁰ For that reason, the strategic importance of this key region, sitting astride Europe and Asia – between Islam and Christianity, development and poverty – will be kept in mind throughout the thesis.

Turkey has close cultural, political, economic and social ties with the Caucasian states as a result of centuries of interaction. For this reason, maintenance of peace, welfare, stability and cooperation in the neighboring Caucasia is a matter of high interest for Turkey's own security and stability.¹¹ In line with these reasons, Turkey considers Georgia extremely important.

1.1 The Importance of Georgia

“Georgia's stability is no less important than Turkey's own stability”¹²

Indeed, Georgia has emerged as a state of growing strategic importance for Turkey in recent years. Before the collapse of USSR and the emergence of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia as independent states, Turkey had approximately two days to

⁸ The map of South Caucasia is available at www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/caucasus_cntrl_asia_pol_00.jpg

⁹ The region is also called Caucasus, Transcaucasia, and Transcaucasus.

¹⁰ Jim Nichol and Julie Kim “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf

¹¹ “Turkey's Relations with the Southern Caucasian States,” Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ae/caucasian.htm

¹² Stated by the then Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz during his visit to Georgia in 1998. He also identified Georgia as a country with which Turkey has joint interests and with which Turkey was willing to strengthen cooperation in every field, being an independent and sovereign country, which favors ensuring peace and stability in the Caucasus. In Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.58.

react militarily in case of any threat from the East, namely from RF. But now, since Turkey has no common border with RF – approximately 200 km away from the nearest border, the new *status quo* after centuries – this period is more than that. So, it can be concluded that Georgia forms a kind of ‘buffer zone’¹³ or a ‘forward defense’ between Turkey and RF despite the revival of Russian expansionism, although the likelihood of any military attack seems low.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the military presence of RF in Georgia, constitutes one of the security concerns of Turkey.¹⁵ Additionally, there are also some other reasons that make Georgia particular geopolitical interest for Turkey. First, Georgia is a gateway to Central Asia. Second, it provides direct access to the markets of the West for the Caspian oil and gas. Third, its independence and territorial integrity is regarded as indispensable for the security and stability not only of the Caucasus but also of Turkey.

Map 2: Georgia¹⁶



¹³ Martin Wight defines a buffer zone as “a region occupied by one or more weaker powers between two or more stronger powers; it is sometimes described as a ‘power vacuum’.” Cited at Alexander Rondeli. 2000. “Regional Security Prospects in the Caucasus” in Gary K. Bertsch, Cassady Craft, Scott A. Jones and Michael Beck, eds., *Crossroads and Conflicts: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*. New York / London: Routledge, p.52.

¹⁴ Mustafa Kibaroglu. 2003. *Turkey's Relations with its Neighbors*. Conference in Gendarme Academy. Ankara, October 20.

¹⁵ On 15th September 1995, RF and Georgia signed an agreement: ‘Treaty on Russian Military Bases on the Territory of the Republic of Georgia’. This document granted Russia a 25 year lease of four military bases in Vaziani, Akhalkalaki, Bat’umi, and Gudauta with some 9,200 servicemen on Georgian soil. This subject will be elaborated in the second chapter in detail.

¹⁶ The map of Georgia is available at www.geographic.org/maps/new1/georgia_maps.html

Turkey's access to the Central Asian states and Azerbaijan, which Turkey shares common language, culture and history, could be impeded if any destabilized situation occurred in Georgia. Because, a destabilized Georgia would endanger an important land corridor between Turkey and Central Asia.¹⁷ Looking a map up, it is explicitly seen that Georgia is on the center of Turkey's communication and trade routes through Central Asia. Due to Turkish–Armenian deadlock¹⁸, Georgia is the only country through which Turkish transport–trucks can pass to Russia and Central Asia.¹⁹ For that reason, these roads are important for Turkey's economic and commercial relations with Azerbaijan and the states in Central Asia, especially with the Turkic republics such as Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Therefore, Turkey should think about the security and function of these roads. One of the ways to manage this mission is to have strong, independent and stable allies in the region. If this 'land bridge' collapsed, Turkey's contact with these states would break off either.

It is highly believed and accepted that, in the modern global economy, oil is a strategic economic resource. And to control over or to guarantee access to oil supplies are crucial state security concerns. In other words, it is not important to product petroleum, but to acquire its 'tap' is more significant. So, for Turkey, a stabilized Georgia can provide the construction of oil and gas pipelines, such as Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (B–T–C), that will connect the Caspian region with Turkey and Europe. But, first of all, peace and stability is essential for this purpose. Therefore, Turkey needs a stable Georgia. On the other hand, the construction of pipelines to and through Turkey from Caspian Basin can boost the economies of not only Georgia, but also of Azerbaijan,

¹⁷ Gareth Winrow. 2000. *Turkey and the Caucasus – Domestic Interests and Security Concerns*. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, pp.1–5.

¹⁸ Stalin, the then USSR president, gave the land corridor between Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan to Armenia in 1936. So, Turkey does not have a direct land connection between Azerbaijan and Central Asian Turkic States except Nakhichevan Autonomous Region. Turkey can only make connect with these republics via Georgia.

Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and reduce their economic and political dependence on RF, and can also help to satisfy Turkey's energy needs and enhance its stature in the region.²⁰

To surround Armenia via Georgia–Azerbaijan–Nakhichevan with the help of cooperative policy in every field constitutes one of Turkey's security purposes. Thus, Armenia will have no way to open outside except Iran and have to revise its relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan. Armenia is the most important ally of RF in the region. With the bilateral treaty, on 21st August 1992, between RF and Armenia, RF's military unities continue to emplace in Armenia. Depending on this support, it acts as if it is a direct threat for Turkey's security interests in the region. Certainly, Turkey feels uncomfortable to have such a neighbor. All it tries to do, for now, is to avoid Armenia and other states to form a 'influence area' in the region. Besides, this strategic axis will impede RF to expand its influence to the South Caucasia. Therefore, the territorial integrity of both Georgia and Azerbaijan is a vital consideration for Turkey.²¹

Political instability and secessionist warfare in Georgia pose other security problems for Turkey. Because, the separatist movements in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Ajaria and Javakhetia may have a demonstration effect on the Kurdish problem in Turkey and thus undermine its territorial integrity. Accordingly, from the outset, Turkey has consistently supported a peaceful resolution of these conflicts within the framework of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia.²² Turkey has backed both the UN observer force in Abkhazia and international endeavors to solve the

¹⁹ Mehmet Tütüncü. 1998. "The Caucasus Policy of Turkey (1990–1997): An Evaluation" in Mehmet Tütüncü, ed., *Caucasus: War and Peace*. Haarlem, Nederland: SOTA, p.197.

²⁰ Levent Demirci. June 2002. *Turkey's Political Objectives in the Caucasus*. Thesis: The Department of International Relation Bilkent University, Ankara, pp.43–60. And Edmund Herzig. 1999. *The New Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*. London: Chatham House Papers, pp.91–92.

²¹ February 19, 2004. Interview with one of the project officers about Caucasia in Turkish General Staff.

²² "Turkish Foreign Policy," Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupg/gb/default.htm#06

crises²³ that Georgia faced after its independence. The resolution of these problems is essential for the establishment of peace, stability and welfare for the whole region. Additionally, Turkey has been concerned about Moscow's use of overt and covert measures in the conflicts in Georgia to increase its strategic presence in the region. The ethnic strife and political instability can also undermine Turkey's energy imports from the Caspian region and the construction of the B–T–C pipeline,²⁴ which is an important project to break the hegemony of Russia in the region.

On the other hand, Georgia is the only state that has border with Black Sea among other eight states, which has appeared after the collapse of the USSR in Caucasia and in Central Asia.²⁵ Moreover, Georgia plays the key role for TRACECA²⁶ (Transport Corridor Europe – Caucasia – Asia). This European-funded (Approximately 5 billion dollars) project will, it is hoped, serve as a contemporary counterpart to the ancient Silk Road. In this project, Georgia's highways, railroads and its geographical location will be so important.

²³ Paul B. Henze. 2001. "The Lands Of Many Crossroads: Turkey's Caucasian Initiatives". *Orbis*, 45:1, p.86.

²⁴ The legal framework of the B–T–C (Capacity: 1,000,000 bpd, Length: 1,100,000 miles, Cost: \$2.3 billion to \$3.7 billion) oil pipeline project was finalized by the end of 2000. The detailed engineering process was completed by June 2002. The third and last phase, namely the construction stage of the BTC project, which will last 32 months, was launched on 10th September 2002 and the ground-breaking ceremony took place on 18th September 2002 at Sangachal, Azerbaijan with the participation of the Presidents of Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia and the US Secretary of Energy. Furthermore, in October 2002 Turkey and Azerbaijan and, in December 2002 Turkey and Georgia approved the 'Environmental and Social Impact Assessments' for the project. The first tanker to carry Caspian oil is expected to be loaded from Ceyhan in the first half of 2005. The B–T–C pipeline will not only transport Caspian oil to Western markets in a safe way, but also by lessening the passage of oil tankers through the Turkish Straits, will contribute to the safety of navigation and environment. In Oxford Analytica, "Caucasus – Pipeline Issues," Available at www.ciaonet.org/pbei/oxan/oxa991110.html

²⁵ Oil and gas pipelines from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are to cross Georgia from east to west, bringing at least 5 million tons of oil per year to Georgian ports. Uzbek cotton and Kazakh metal ores also are being shipped by way of Georgia. In Ariel Cohen, "Ethnic Interests Threaten U.S. Interests in the Caucasus," Available at www.heritage.org/Research/RussianandEurasia/BG1222.cfm

²⁶ The TRACECA Program is a project which aims to develop a transport corridor on a west–east axis from Europe, across the Black Sea, through the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea to Central Asia. TRACECA's main objective is to connect the Black and Caspian Seas by means of modern transport and communications systems, and to develop a coherent and integrated transport infrastructure within the region. Thus, TRACECA will contribute to integration of South Caucasus to Europe and world economy. For more information see Niyazi Abbasov. 2003. "TRACECA: A Tool for Regional Cooperation in the Caucasus" Paper presented at the Conference on "Regional Perspectives" held in Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, 23–25 June 2003, And www.traceca.org/docs/main.php

For Georgia, Turkey is very important too. Because, Georgia deems Turkey as a gateway to the West, a significant neighbor that can contribute to its economic development and a bridge that connect it with Europe and NATO. For instance, during his US visit in John Hopkins University in October 2001, then Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze stated that “Georgia is not the southern wing of the strategic region of Russian Federation, [instead], it is the wing that the strategic interests of Turkey and NATO will extend from Turkey and Israel to Central Asia.”²⁷

In line with the abovementioned considerations, Georgia’s stability has enormous geostrategic importance for Turkey’s regional policy and for the successful realization of its regional projects. For that reason, preservation of the territorial integrity and the maintenance of the existing ties with Georgia are of great importance for Turkey in point of gaining and protecting its long term interests in Caucasia. So, being aware of its significance, Turkey, starting from the recognition of the independence of Georgia in 1991, has provided political, economic and military support to Georgia.

1.2 Bilateral Relations

In today’s world, security is much more than tanks, submarines, and guided missiles, and its dimension goes far beyond these traditional military security matters. Therefore, for each geographic region, other aspects of the security concept, such as economic characteristics of security, border and ethnic issues, environmental degradation, organized crime, and drug trafficking should also be assessed.²⁸

²⁷ Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası *Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri*. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.19.

²⁸ Rajan Menon, Yuri E. Federov and Ghia Nodia (eds.). 1999. *Russia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia: the 21st Century Security Environment*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, p.xiv.

Also, in line with the abovementioned classification, MT 145–1 Turkish Armed Forces Joint Operations Manual defines how to shape a security region as:²⁹

Aiming at opponent and probable target countries, political, economic, psychological and military measures, which are taken beginning from peace, are determined, and carrying out them, an axis that consists of friendly and stable states is created, the crises are thus provided be conclude in a suitable way, and if it is absolute necessity to fight, an atmosphere that will provide superiority in the operation area is established. (Author's Translation)

The same guidebook also explains the objectives of a security region as:

1. decrease the threats and risks that stem from unstable states.
2. provide and increase the regional security and stability.
3. provide deterrence.
4. prepare the necessary surroundings for probable operation.

Consequently, Turkey, considering the geopolitical importance of Georgia and corresponding to its Caucasian policy, has established close and friendly relations with this neighbor since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. These relations, such as political, economic and trade, and military, will be examined in the next parts of the chapter and their contribution to Turkey's security policies will be emphasized during the assessment.

1.2.1 Political Relations

Though Turkey formally recognized Georgia's independence on 16th December 1991 along with other NIS³⁰, full diplomatic relations between Turkey and Georgia were not established until May 1992, after the US and Germany had opened diplomatic

²⁹ MT 145–1 *TSK Müşterek Harekat Talimnamesi* (MT 145–1 Turkish Armed Forces Joint Operations Manuel), pp.1–16.

³⁰ Turkey is not the first state that recognized Georgia as clarified in most of the sources. In fact, the first one is Romania, which recognized Georgia in August 1991. But, however, Turkey is the first state that recognized Georgia as a state outside of the Eastern Bloc.

channels with Tbilisi.³¹ There may be several reasons for this inconspicuous policy about Georgia. For example, some scholars clarify that this strategy only derived from the lack of the strategic importance of Georgia for Turkey until 1994.³² And the others believe that, since Turkey had earlier focused on expanding links with the newly independent Turkic states and had been distracted by the Nagorno–Karabakh crisis, it could not give enough significance to Georgia.³³ In fact, the opening of Sarp Border Crossing in 1988 was the first signal about the relationship between the two states. But, since Georgia was not independent at that time, this important progress could not pave the way for complete diplomatic relationships.³⁴

On 21th May 1992, then Foreign Minister of Turkey, Hikmet Çetin, paid an official visit to Tbilisi and signed a protocol, which envisages diplomatic relations between two countries, with his Georgian counterpart, Aleksandr Çikvaidze.³⁵ Later on, on 30th July 1992, then Prime Minister of Turkey, Süleyman Demirel, paid a daily visit to Georgia. It was the first Prime Minister–level visit made to Georgia after its independence. With this visit, also, Süleyman Demirel took a plane full of medicine and food together with himself to Georgia, which had become hard up for nourishment. Moreover, he also provided 50 thousand tone wheat to Turkey’s new neighbor.³⁶ During the visit, a ‘Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neighborliness Agreement’ was signed between Demirel and Shevardnadze, then the President of state council. This is the first

³¹ The first Western state that opened up embassy in Georgia was Germany, then United States of America. Turkey was the third one. In “Gürcistan Ülke Raporu,” Available at www.foreigntrade.gov.tr/pazaragiris/ulkeler/gur/gur-rap-dig-yi3.doc

³² Rovshan Sadıgbeyli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2002, p.89.

³³ Gareth Winrow. 2000. *Turkey and the Caucasus – Domestic Interests and Security Concerns*. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.14.

³⁴ Kadir Sancak, *Gürcistan’ın Kafkasya’ daki Yeri*, Istanbul: The Institution of Middle East and Islam Countries Marmara University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2000, p.85.

³⁵ Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.1.

³⁶ Eduard Shevardnadze named these aids as “Light of Independence for Georgia”. In Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.3.

bilateral agreement between the two countries. In this agreement, attributing the Kars Agreement signed in 1921, both Turkey and Georgia agreed on maintaining the designated border and being faithful to the principles of United Nations (UN) and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).³⁷

During the 1993, significant progress was not achieved between the two countries. The most important factor about this stagnation was the unstable structure in Georgia. The Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts obstructed Georgia to establish domestic stability. For that reason, it had to become dense on its internal affairs rather than concentrating on foreign associations. On the other hand, that Turkey directed its regional policy towards the Turkic states in Central Asia and Azerbaijan was also a significant factor in Georgia's negligence.³⁸ Furthermore, it can be deduced that Turkey's policy in regard of Georgia was also influenced by pro-Abkhaz émigré lobbies. Nevertheless, Turkey kept its neutrality in Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts.³⁹

In the year 1994, Turkey recognized that the only available export route for Azerbaijani oil was through Georgia. So then, closer ties between Georgia and Turkey became desirable to both parties. As a result, on 14th July 1997, the 'Declaration on Cooperation' signed by the Georgian and Turkish presidents.⁴⁰ The year 1998 was so crucial in Turkish-Georgian political relations. Because, the two states have started to call each other as 'strategic partner' since then. Later, together with Azerbaijan, they have strived to establish regional structure.⁴¹ For example, on 30 April 2002, during the State

³⁷ Kadir Sancak, *Gürcistan'ın Kafkasya' daki Yeri*, Istanbul: The Institution of Middle East and Islam Countries Marmara University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.86.

³⁸ Kadir Sancak, *Gürcistan'ın Kafkasya' daki Yeri*, Istanbul: The Institution of Middle East and Islam Countries Marmara University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, pp.85–86.

³⁹ Rovshan Sadıgbeyleli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2002, p.89.

⁴⁰ Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.58.

⁴¹ Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.4.

Presidents Summit in Trabzon, a ‘Security Cooperation Agreement’⁴² was signed among Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan by their Ministers of Internal Affairs.

Since the independence of Georgia, both countries have participated in several regional organizations. One of them is ‘Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation’ (BSEC)⁴³, which has crucial importance not only for the contribution of Turkish–Georgian economic and politic relations, but also for uniting the regional states on the basis of economic ground as well. BSEC, for Georgia, is one of the essential ways to open itself to the West and, whether in economic meaning or in political sense, to establish relationships among the regional states.⁴⁴ Accordingly, active membership of both Georgia and Turkey within the BSEC can be expected to bring forward realization of security returns in the long run. Besides, Turkey and Georgia participate in ‘Great Silk Road’, TRACECA, and INOGATE⁴⁵ (Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe) projects.

As a result, it can be concluded that Turkey’s political relations with Georgia has been improving gradually on the basis of mutual friendship and cooperation since the end of Cold War. Hence, Turkey considers territorial integrity and independence of

⁴² Turkey and Azerbaijan has completed the ratification process of this agreement. But, Since Georgia has not finished the ratification procedures, it has not gone into force yet. February 19, 2004. Interview with one of the project officers about Caucasia in Turkish General Staff, Ankara.

⁴³ This association was first proposed by retired ambassador, now a deputy, Prof.Dr. Şükrü ELEKDAĞ. The project has come into force after the summit meeting in Istanbul in 1992. The members of this organization are Turkey, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine. Tunisia, Egypt, Slovakia, Poland and Israel are the observer members. The idea underlying this regional organization is to form a large community of Black Sea littoral states and other interested Balkan and Caucasian nations by means of economic joint ventures and increased trade. This is intended to create peaceful interdependence among them. The BSEC characterizes an approach to strengthen peace in the region by economic confidence–building. For more information see Nicholas Dima. Spring 2003. “The Black Sea Region: New Economic Cooperation and Old Geopolitics” *The Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies* 28:1.

⁴⁴ Kadir Sancak, *Gürcistan’ın Kafkasya’ daki Yeri*, Istanbul: The Institution of Middle East and Islam Countries Marmara University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2000, p.89.

⁴⁵ The INOGATE Program, which is funded by EU, aims to improve the security of Europe’s energy supply by promoting the regional integration of the oil and gas pipeline systems and facilitating their transport both within the region in question and towards the export markets of Europe and the West in general. Available at www.inogate.org/html/brief/brief2.htm

Georgia as utmost importance for its own security and stability. But, this relationship has shown itself largely on economic and military associations.

1.2.2 Economic and Trade Relations

Parallel to its political support to Georgia, Turkey has extended considerable economic and technical assistance to the country since 1991. The legal framework of economic and trade relations were provided by the ‘Bilateral Agreements on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments’ and the ‘Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation’ which were signed on July 30th 1992. In addition, with the ninth article of the latter agreement, a ‘Joint Economic Commission’, providing a firm basis to discuss and enhance the economic and commercial relations, between the governments was set up.⁴⁶ Actually, before these dates, there was ‘suitcase trade’ – unregistered economy – started right after the independence of Georgia between the states.

In 1991, that Turkey began to give electricity to Georgia got started the first official economic relations between the said states. The next year, eight agreements and protocols, which would increase trade, investment and international transportation between Turkey and Georgia, were signed.⁴⁷ Furthermore, a ‘Credit Agreement’, which was to finance importation of consumer goods and capital items, total of \$50 million was signed in February 1993 between Turkish Eximbank and Export–Import Bank of Georgia.⁴⁸ In January 1994, Georgia received a \$50 million loan, promises of electricity, and other assistance from Turkey. In the year 1996, Georgia represented only 0.5 percent

⁴⁶ “Turkey’s Relations with the Southern Caucasias States” Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ae/caucasian.htm

⁴⁷ Ali Faik Demir. 2003. *Türk Dış Politikası Perspektifinden Güney Kafkasya*. İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, p.228.

⁴⁸ “Turkey’s Relations with the Southern Caucasias States” Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ae/caucasian.htm

of Russian trade within the CIS⁴⁹, while Georgian trade with Turkey increased dramatically as seen on Table 1.

Table: 1⁵⁰

| TURKEY – GEORGIA TRADE (MILLION DOLLAR) | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| YEARS | EXPORT (X) | IMPORT(M) | X/M | BALANCE | VOLUME |
| 1992 | 11.5 | 6.3 | 1.82 | 5.2 | 17.8 |
| 1993 | 34.4 | 21.8 | 1.57 | 12.6 | 56.3 |
| 1994 | 67.1 | 25.6 | 2.63 | 41.5 | 92.8 |
| 1995 | 68.1 | 50.1 | 1.35 | 17.9 | 118.2 |
| 1996 | 110.3 | 32.5 | 3.39 | 77.8 | 142.8 |
| 1997 | 173.5 | 65.9 | 2.72 | 107.6 | 239.4 |
| 1998 | 164.1 | 91.0 | 1.80 | 73.1 | 255.1 |
| 1999 | 114.2 | 93.3 | 1.22 | 20.9 | 207.5 |
| 2000 | 131.7 | 155.3 | 0.84 | -23.5 | 287.0 |
| 2001 | 144.0 | 127.2 | 1.13 | 16.8 | 271.2 |
| 2002 | 100.6 | 137.5 | 0.73 | -36.9 | 238.1 |

When the Table 1 is examined it can obviously be seen that Turkey is one of the considerable foreign trade partners of Georgia after the end of Cold War. For example, while the trade volume between Turkey and Georgia was 17.8 in 1992, it was 287.0 in the year 2000 (approximately 16 fold). This enormous increase also complies with Turkey's Georgian policy. But, there is one more important signal in the table too. Since after the year 2000, when Turkey's foreign trade volume was the highest level, the volume has reduced significantly. Especially, the decrease in export is more than that of in import. This situation only means that Turkey has started losing its market share in Georgia. In other words, some of the western countries, such as England and Germany, have been in the market heavily. The situation would be worse if Russia captured the market. This would also be contrary to Turkey's policy towards Georgia and affects its regional security policy. Consequently, although Turkey had replaced RF as Georgia's

⁴⁹ Dov Lynch. 2000. Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS – The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan. New York: Palgrave, p.149.

⁵⁰ "Türkiye–Gürcistan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri" Available at www.deik.org.tr/ikili/200325165744ikili%20iliskiler-ocak2003gureistan.doc

main trading partner in the year 2000, it has lost this priority since 2001 and regressed the second. (See Table 2 and 3)

In 2000 the Georgia's first ten largest trade partners according to the trade turnover were the following:

Table: 2⁵¹

| Main partners | Thousands USD | % |
|---------------|---------------|-------|
| Turkey | 173,727.2 | 17.3% |
| Russia | 164,748.2 | 16.4% |
| Azerbaijan | 83,772.8 | 8.3% |
| Germany | 76,982.8 | 7.7% |
| Ukraine | 61,185.8 | 6.1% |
| UK | 48,089.8 | 4.8% |
| Turkmenia | 46,505.7 | 4.6% |
| USA | 37,310.0 | 3.7% |
| Italy | 34,115.3 | 3.4% |
| Switzerland | 29,563.5 | 2.9% |

In 2002 the main trade partners of Georgia were the following:

Table: 3⁵²

| EXPORT | | | IMPORT | | |
|------------|------------|-------|------------|------------|-------|
| Partners | Million \$ | % | Partners | Million \$ | % |
| Russian F. | 61.2 | 17.3 | Russian F. | 115.0 | 15.6 |
| Turkey | 53.8 | 15.2 | Turkey | 87.7 | 11.9 |
| England | 32.9 | 9.3 | Azerbaijan | 80.3 | 10.9 |
| Azerbaijan | 30.8 | 8.7 | Ukraine | 59.0 | 8.0 |
| USA | 13.8 | 3.9 | Germany | 56.7 | 7.7 |
| Italy | 7.4 | 2.1 | Italy | 38.3 | 5.2 |
| Germany | 5.7 | 1.6 | USA | 32.4 | 4.4 |
| Others | 148.2 | 41.9 | Others | 267.5 | 36.3 |
| Total | 353.8 | 100.0 | Total | 736.9 | 100.0 |

Today, within the framework of developing economic relations between Turkey and Georgia, these two countries engage in active trade and cooperation on several joint

⁵¹ Available at web.sanet.ge/gic/economy.htm

⁵² "Türkiye–Gürcistan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri," Available at www.deik.org.tr/ikili/200325165744ikili%20iliskiler-eylül2003gucistan.doc

civil-engineering projects such as the construction of Kars–Tbilisi railway⁵³, renovation of Tbilisi Airport, Shah Sea Project⁵⁴, Sarp–Batum–Poti highway, hydro-power projects⁵⁵, modernization of Bat’umi’s airport, renovation of seaports in Bat’umi and Poti, construction of communication links between Poti and Baku, Rize–Poti Fiber Optic Cable Line, and, the most important, the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan Oil pipeline.

On the other hand, the mutual trade is provided by two border crossings: Sarp, in Artvin, and Türkgözü, in Ardahan. The most significant imported goods from Georgia are raw materials from industry sector, whereas exported items are consumer items. In other words, Turkey sells consumer items based upon industry and bought raw materials and investment products from Georgia. Furthermore, Turkey invests heavily on food sector (%23.6 share), services (%20) and bus administration (%12.7) in Georgia⁵⁶

Both Turkey and Georgia have also found it logical and necessary to improve their economic relations with each other. Because, Georgia, as mentioned previously, is just like a gateway for Turkey to reach Caucasian and Central Asian markets, while Turkey stands as a doorway for Georgia to get into the western world. So, nowadays, Turkey's economic interests and orientations coincide in many respects with those of

⁵³ Georgia and Turkey have announced plans to utilize a 172-mile railway line between Tbilisi and Kars to transport up to 200,000 bbl/d of crude oil from the planned B–T–C pipeline to Turkish refineries. The plan, which could cost \$400 million, will require refurbishing an existing line from Tbilisi to Akhalkalaki for \$200 million, as well as extending the rail line 77 miles to Kars. This project will also pave the way or the Central Asian and other Caucasian states to facilitate from the services of Turkey in Black Sea Ports.

⁵⁴ ‘The Treaty on Searching, Developing and Producing’ for Shah Sea Project was signed on 4th June 1996 in Baku and came into force with the ratification of the Azerbaijan Parliament on 17th June 1996. In this context, a ‘Governmental Agreement’ was signed between Turkey and Georgia on 12th March 2001. With this project, along 15 years, 6.6 billion cubic meters gas will be transported to Turkey per year. (It will start with 2 billion cubic meters in 2004, and then it is going to be 6.6 billion m³ in 2007). Furthermore, its ‘Developing and Producing’ phase was determined as total 30 years. Meanwhile, in order to transport Shah Sea natural gas to Turkey, ‘South Caspasia Pipeline’ has been planned to construct. It starts from Baku, and then via Tbilisi arrives the border of Turkey. Available at www.tpao.gov.tr/bckp2002/rprte/ydpg.htm

⁵⁵ One of them is Deriner Dam and Hydroelectric Power Plant on Çoruh River. Its construction has been started in January 1998. It will have been finished by the year 2005. It consists of four units, its power is 670 mw and average annual production capacity is 2118 GWh. This project will provide Georgia to overcome its energy problem and to strengthen its relations with Turkey.

⁵⁶ Ali Faik Demir, *Türk Dış Politikası Açısından Transkafkasya’nın Yeir ve Önemi*, İstanbul: Institution of Social Sciences İstanbul University, PhD Dissertation-, 2000, pp.229–230.

Georgia.⁵⁷ However, although both countries are so close to each other and have more than \$100 million foreign trade volume between each other, it cannot be deemed that their economic relations have gained their own dynamics, instead, they are quite behind the existing potential. There are several reasons for this situation: First, apart from the instability in Georgia, the shortages in infrastructure that connect the two states; second, undeveloped banking; and third, emptiness in law.⁵⁸

In line with its good-neighboring relations with Georgia, Turkey, since it believes that the enhancement of economic activity will also serve the regional peace and stability, considers great importance to further develop its economic and commercial relations with this friendly country. In regard with this strategy, Turkey should cooperate with Georgia in every field, especially in energy and transportation subjects. Also, it should contribute the agricultural development of Georgia. Consequently, whatever it imports or exports, Turkey should not submit this country to RF economically. Because, Georgia is the key that, in the future, will open every energy door for Turkey and energy is closely related with security.

1.2.3 Military Relations

Since Georgia has not been powerful from the political aspect yet, to get strong from the military point of view constitutes the first of its state priorities. Because, Georgia, as in many parts of the developing world, is aware of the fact that the armed forces are important in the political process. In that point, Turkey's military assistance plays a vital role. However, Georgia has confronted with the challenge of building its own national armed forces. It had to start everything from the beginning with its limited

⁵⁷ Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.58.

⁵⁸ "Türkiye – Gürcistan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri" Available at www.deik.org.tr/ikili/200325165744ikili%20iliskiler-ocak2003gucistan.doc

financial resources. In the first stage, it had to admit, to some extent, pre-Soviet military traditions. But, then new security policy thoughts have emerged after mid-1990s in the region and clashed strategies of RF and Western powers, such as US, over the Caspian Oils made Georgia near to NATO and EU states.

When Georgia gained its independence, in 1991, it inherited few military assets from RF. Some Georgian officers and soldiers from the Soviet Armed Forces returned to Georgia to serve their country. Only modest amounts of equipment, mostly obsolescent, were left to the Georgian military. For that reason the armed forces have required wide-ranging reform, restructuring, and modernization.⁵⁹

Georgia's regular army began to develop seriously in 1994. Today, the estimated strength of the Georgian Armed Force (GAF) is about 20,000. However, total armed forces consist of only 4 brigades and numerous military units. On the other hand, Georgia is trying to resurge its armed force through programs not only with Turkey, but also with Germany, Ukraine, and even RF. Because, Georgia itself knows very well that it must possess capable military and internal security forces. The reason of this inference is that "Georgia aspires to play a leading role in strengthening stability and security in the Caucasus region. The Government of Georgia also understands the importance of protecting such vital assets as the oil pipelines running across its territory".⁶⁰

There are reportedly some problems in the Georgian army. These troubles are namely: being lots of soldiers who are complete inability to speak Georgian, deficiency of supplies, high rate of dissertations, corruption, and being disposed of radioactive substances.⁶¹ Consequently, Turkey's support seems absolutely necessary. Then Georgian Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Davit Apistauri, emphasized the same requirement by saying "Turkey's relations with Georgia is a model that reflects

⁵⁹ Murat Tosun. 2002. *Military Power in the Caucasus*. Thesis: Istanbul Yeditepe University, p.92.

⁶⁰ Georgia's Defence and Security Strategy. Available at www.mfa.gov.ge/defence.html

relationships between big powers and small powers all around the world. So, it would be so hard for Georgia to carry on its independence without the contributions of Turkey”.⁶²

Turkey’s 114-kilometer neighbor, Georgia, signed its first defense cooperation agreement – ‘Military Training Cooperation Treaty’ – with Turkey on 24th July 1997. With that agreement, Georgian officers have been trained by Turkish Armed Forces (TAF).⁶³ Since then, fifteen military treaties have been concluded between Turkey and Georgia. And, TAF and the government have donated approximately \$45 million total military equipment and resources up to now. (The cost of the training projects has amounted to \$12 million). This is more than Georgia’s annual defense budget, which is approximately \$20 million.⁶⁴

Since, Turkey has agreed to provide Georgia’s Armed Forces with financial and technological assistance, in September 1997, it started this support by granting Georgia two coastal guard cutters and training Georgian coast guards.⁶⁵ Moreover, in May 1997, a delegation from the Turkish General Staff (TGS) visited Tbilisi to deepen military cooperation and discuss issues of border protection. In 1997–1998, TGS made several agreements with Georgia on equipping and training its forces and in April 1998, conducted a joint peacekeeping exercise within the framework of the PfP.⁶⁶ In the year 1998, also, an ex-Turkish Navy AB-25 patrol craft was donated to Georgia. Because, Turkey realizes that without an effective navy of its own, Georgia had been dependent on the Russian Navy to protect its territorial waters. In March 1999, Turkey and Georgia

⁶¹ Murat Tosun. 2002. *Military Power in the Caucasus*. Thesis: Istanbul Yeditepe University, p.116.

⁶² October 9, 2002. “TSK Üç Koldan Diplomasi Yürütüyor”. *Zaman*.

⁶³ Up to now, 507 Georgian officers, noncommissioned officers and cadets have been trained in the establishments of TAF. Besides, 176 Georgian personnel have taken course on the basis of PfP. Turkish General Staff. 8 December 2003. *Türkiye–Gürcistan Askeri Eğitim İş Birliği Faaliyetleri*. Ankara: Information Notes, pp.1–3.

⁶⁴ Turkish General Staff. February 2004. *Gürcistan’a Lojistik Destek*. Ankara: Presentation Notes, pp.1–3.

⁶⁵ Rovshan Sadigbeyli, “Trans–Regional Linkages in Turkey’s Foreign Policy: The Case of the South Caucasus, Available at www.ir.metu.edu.tr/conference/papers/sadigbeyli.pdf

signed another treaty on military assistance and collaboration, which provides for training of Georgian troops in Turkey and modernizing training facilities in Georgia. The accord also envisages further Turkish assistance in creating training centers in Kodori and Gori and a modern shooting range outside of Tbilisi. Also, according to this treaty, the Military Cooperation and Coordination Committee⁶⁷ connected to TGS was established on 26th April 1999.⁶⁸ In the summer of 1999, Turkey decided to grant an additional \$5.4 million. Items in the amount of 200.000\$ were provided in September 1999 for the Naval Forces Command of Georgia. Besides, Turkish experts helped the Georgian government repair the Vaziani military base after the Russian withdrawal and TAF has given Turkish language education in Georgia at four classrooms.⁶⁹

In September 2000, Turkey and Georgia executed ‘Turkey–Georgia Border Maneuver’ at the border districts. In 2001, Turkey delivered 2 UH–1H helicopters to GAF and carried out a \$1million reconstruction (runway, taxiway, parking pool etc.) project at Marneuli airfield in Georgia. Moreover, in 2003, Turkey also indicated that it would assist in training a marine anti–terrorism unit for Georgia’s Black Sea flotilla.⁷⁰ Besides, Turkey encouraged Georgia to join its regional cooperation scheme the ‘Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group’ (BLACKSEAFOR) created in 2001.⁷¹

⁶⁶ The PFP program will be explained in the third chapter of the thesis in detail. Dov Lynch. 2000. *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS – The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan*. New York: Palgrave, p.144.

⁶⁷ There are 1 General, 31 officers and 4 noncommissioned officers at the headquarter of the committee. Turkish General Staff. 8 December 2003. *Türkiye–Gürcistan Askeri Eğitim İş Birliği Faaliyetleri*. Ankara: Information Notes, p.9.

⁶⁸ “Armed forces in Georgia,” Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

⁶⁹ Up to now, 502 personnel have taken Turkish language course and at present 616 Georgian officers, noncommissioned officers and cadets continue the course. Turkish General Staff. 8 December 2003. *Türkiye–Gürcistan Askeri Eğitim İş Birliği Faaliyetleri*. Ankara: Information Notes, p.3.

⁷⁰ Igor Torbakov, “Expanding Turkish–Georgian Strategic Ties Rankle Russia,” Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav042503_pr.shtml

⁷¹ Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey, and Ukraine signed on 2nd April 2001 in Istanbul the ‘Agreement on the Establishment of the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group’ after the successful conclusion of the process of negotiations that was initiated by Turkey in 1998. The aim of BLACKSEAFOR, which is a regional initiative in the Black Sea, is to contribute to further strengthening of friendship, good relations and mutual understanding in the Black Sea region through enhancement of cooperation and interoperability among the naval forces of the littoral countries. It enables the participating

Additionally, Turkey has been participating in the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG)⁷² with five military observers since its deployment in Georgia on 21th October 1994. Turkey has also been providing three officers to the OSCE Observer Mission in Georgia since 20 February 2000.⁷³ Furthermore, the activities for the reorganization of the 11th Mechanized Infantry Brigade suitable to the NATO standards continue with the support of the TAF, who gives greatest importance to this project. Likewise, the activities for the reorganization of the Border Units' Headquarters structure and education of the Motorized Maneuver Groups continue with the support of Turkey, US, Germany and England. On the other hand, The Georgian authorities express their desire for the establishment of a similar organization to the Turkish Gendarmerie, responsible from the security and public order.⁷⁴

TAF is also active as a consultant for the below Georgian establishments:⁷⁵

- a. Georgian Joint Military Academy,
- b. The Commandership of Lilo Frontier Units and Training Team,
- c. The Commandership of 11th Mechanized Infantry Brigade,
- d. Inner Forces and The Commandership of Training Group,
- e. Georgian Special Forces, The Commandership of Georgian Ground Aviation Units,
- f. The Commandership of Air Force and Team in Marneuli Airport.

countries to call their naval elements to come together in order to perform tasks such as search and rescue, humanitarian assistance and environmental protection operations, as well as mine counter measures. "Joint Press Release on the Establishment of the Blackseafor Istanbul," 2 April 2001, Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/af/bsec9.htm. "Turkey's Security Perspectives and Its Relations with NATO," Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/af/secure.htm and see also agreement on the establishment of the Blackseafor, Available at www.blackseafor.org/establishment.htm

⁷² In July 1993, UN approved Resolution 849, which provided for the deployment of UN military observers and, in August 1993, a small UN observer mission (UNOMIG) was established in Georgia. UNOMIG was charged monitoring functions after fighting resumed in Abkhazia September 1993. UNOMIG's tasks changed after the May 1994 'Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces' between Georgia and Abkhazia. Now, UNOMIG is to monitor and verify the implementation, to observe the operation of the peacekeeping force of the CIS and various tactical redeployments aimed at maintaining peace. For more information see www.un.org/Depts/dpkol/missions/unomig/index.html.

⁷³ "Turkey's Relations with the Southern Caucasia States" Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ae/caucasian.htm

⁷⁴ Turkish General Staff, February 2004. *Gürcistan'a Lojistik Destek*. Ankara: Presentation Notes, p.2.

⁷⁵ Turkish General Staff, 8 December 2003. *Türkiye-Gürcistan Askeri Eğitim İş Birliği Faaliyetleri*. Ankara: Information Notes, pp.4-10.

There are also some other completed logistic projects realized by TAF in Georgia. The first one is the construction of an officer club in Tbilisi. It was completed on 7th April 2000 with its interior decoration. The second project is the construction of a sport hall and shooting range of 25 meters. The third project is the modernization of the tank artillery range in Gori training center. The forth project is the procurement of band materials for the Joint Military Academy. Together with these projects, there are several ongoing logistic schemes: ‘Renovating and Equipping Maintenance Service Building of 11th Mechanized Brigade’; ‘Procurement of Vehicles, Radios and Spare Parts for 11th Mechanized Brigade and for Border Guard’; ‘Land Rover and special equipment for Special Forces Battalion’. Moreover, \$450.000 source is allocated to provide physical security and illuminate the Marneuli Airbase. In addition, from 2002 to 2006 Turkey will provide 40 ton fuel per year. (So far, 5250 ton diesel and 200 ton aircraft fuel have been provided, and will continue to). Lastly, 20 middle class navigation systems were procured for the Georgian Air Forces. Hitherto, various items, radios and 15 tactical vehicles have been procured.⁷⁶

There are as well several military exercises between Turkey and Georgia. These are: ‘Training Support for Maintenance and Use of Helicopters’, ‘The Project of Mobile Training Team’ (an exercise was done on 08 April – 10 May 2002 with the contributions of Turkey, US, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan), ‘Cooperative Best Effort’ (light infantry exercise) and ‘Eternity’ (an exercise among Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan with the help of computer support). Besides all these support, TAF also supports the Georgian Peace Force in Kosova.⁷⁷ There is also the ‘Caucasian Labor

⁷⁶ Turkish General Staff. February 2004. *Gürcistan’a Lojistik Destek*. Ankara: Presentation Notes.

⁷⁷ Turkish General Staff. June 2002. *Gürcistan*. Ankara: Presentation Notes, pp.1–5.

Group' that was established on 13th October 1999 by Turkey and US. This organization is also a factor in resurging Georgian Armed Forces.⁷⁸

To cooperate on military subjects together with economic and political issues is one of the inevitable facts of international relations. Furthermore, relations' security dimension depends, mostly but not wholly, on military cooperation. In this respect, there have been good military connections between Turkey and Georgia in all branches; assistance in army building, transfer of non-combat military equipment, frontier cooperation, establishing regional security system and PfP cooperation. As a result, not only political and economic cooperation, but also military cooperation between Turkey and Georgia has expanded since the end of Cold War. In other words, Turkey's military assistance to Georgia constitutes the most important part of the support that is directed towards the territorial integrity and independence of Georgia.

1.3 Georgian Domestic Security Dimension

In this part of the chapter, the reflections of Georgia's domestic factors to the bilateral relations and to Turkey's security policies will be examined.

In May 1991, the nationalist Georgian leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected as the first president of Georgia with % 86.5 vote of the nation. But, he undervalued the acquired rights of autonomous republics and regions, and usually based his political thoughts on excessive Georgian nationalism. He also accepted the 1918-constitution, which did not recognize the existence of autonomous republics in Georgia. In reply, Abkhazia, Ajaria and South Ossetia suddenly reacted to that situation. As a result, this reaction caused a conflict in Georgia and resulted in a kind of civil war at the end of

⁷⁸ The Georgian related objectives of this organization: 1. Planning, arranging and coordinating the security and logistic assistance to Georgia. 2. To reduce the dependence of Georgian Armed Forces to RF. 3. To prepare Georgian Armed Forces as a self-sufficient army. Turkish General Staff. 19 November 2003. *Türkiye – Amerika Kafkas Çalışma Grubunun Faaliyetleri*. Ankara: Information Notes, pp.1–3.

1992. Thus, it can be concluded that “Georgia was the first Soviet republic to demonstrate what a real civil war in the post–communist world could be like”.⁷⁹ These crises seem to continue to be a ‘hum’ in the back of Georgia and, inevitably, affect Turkey’s security.

Abkhazian, Ajarian, South Ossetian crises and Armenian minority issue are the most important internal problems of Georgia. South Ossetia and Abkhazia aim to unite with the RF. Currently, in Abkhazia there is a peace force established entirely from the Russian soldiers and also there is another force in South Ossetia established from Russian, Georgian and Ossetian soldiers. Until May 2004, Ajaria had been on the way of going away from the central administration (Now, it is under the authority of central government) and today, in the south, government authority becomes ineffective on the settled Armenian minority in Javakhetian region.

Map 3: Problematic Regions in Georgia⁸⁰



⁷⁹ Ghia Nodia. 1996. “Political Turmoil in Georgia and the Ethnic Policies of Zviad Gamsakhurdia”. In Bruno Coppieters, ed., *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*. Belgium/Brussels: VUB University Press, p.73.

1.3.1 Abkhazia

Abkhazia, whose capital is Skhumi, has 3.600 km² area and its population is 600.000. There are Georgians (%44), Abkhazians (%17), Russians (%14) and Armenians (%12) in this autonomous republic. More than %60 of the population are Orthodox Christian and the most of the rest are Muslim.⁸¹

Abkhazia declared its first independence in 1925 with the same-year constitution. But, in 1937, it was transformed into the ‘Abkhazia Soviet Socialist Autonomous Republic’ by the USSR. Then, encouraged by Mikhail Gorbachev’s *Perestroika*, in March 1989 thirty thousand Abkhazians had signed a petition demanding the restoration of a sovereign Abkhazia. But, Georgia had reacted and established a branch of Tbilisi University at Skhumi to consolidate Georgian power and influence. However, affected by the Gamsakhurdia’s abovementioned decision, Abkhazia declared its second independence by accepting the 1925 Constitution again on 23rd July 1992. Since then, there have been a lot of conflicts and revolts against the Tbilisi Government.⁸²

Since it has no direct secure way that connects it to the South Caucasia and Abkhazia has several strategical Black Sea ports, RF gives so much importance to this republic. In order to continue its existence in the region, RF perceives Abkhazia as one of the most significant pawns. Because, an Abkhazia away from Georgia means close to RF. Thus, it could protect the importance of its Black Sea ports such as Novorossiisk, where RF deems absolute necessary for the transportation of Caspian oil. For that reason, there are 1.800 Russian soldiers in Abkhazia in the name of peacekeeping.⁸³ Abkhazia wants to be independent from Georgia or join with RF.

⁸⁰ The map is available at www.geographic.org/maps/new1/georgia_maps.html

⁸¹ Turkish General Staff. November 2003. *Gürcistan*. Ankara: Information Notes, p.4.

⁸² Selçuk Çolakoğlu. 1999. “Türkiye’nin Gürcistan Politikası”, in Adnan Menderes University, eds., *Cumhuriyet’in 75 nci Yılına Armağan*. Aydın: Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Yayınları, pp.124–126.

⁸³ Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.9.

Consequently, the Abkhazian conflict endangers peace and stability in Georgia and thus in the entire region. Turkey, in contrast to the desire of Abkhazian origin people live in Turkey, has supported the peaceful resolution of the conflict within the internationally recognized borders of Georgia right from the outset. Because, Turkey is aware of the fact that any alteration on Georgia's territorial integrity is going to affect Turkey's regional security intensely. First, it is contrary to what Turkey has been supporting since the independence of Georgia. Second, another close ally (after Armenia), especially in the Black Sea, of RF in the region does not comply with Turkey's security policies. Third, this kind of situation would mean that RF would be 100 km closer to Turkey's border. In this context, Turkey has advocated sustained dialogue between Georgian and Abkhazian sides. Therefore, it also hosted a conference in İstanbul on 7–9 June 1999 and brought the parties together with a view to contributing to the peace process.⁸⁴ Turkey has also declared to the parties its readiness to reassemble such a meeting in the future.

1.3.2 South Ossetia

South Ossetia, whose capital is Tsinvali, has 3.900 km² area and its population is 100.000. There are Ossetians (%66), Georgians (%29) and others (%5) in this autonomous region. %60 of the population are Orthodox Christian and the rest are Muslim. South Ossetia conflict is also one of the secessionist movements that threatens Georgia's territorial integrity.⁸⁵

Ossetians have been divided into two: Some of them live in North Ossetia, part of RF, and the others live in South Ossetia, part of Georgia. In 1922, the South Ossetian

⁸⁴ "Turkey's Relations with the Southern Caucasian States," Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ae/caucasian.htm

Autonomous Region was created as part of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic. This status gave limited autonomy to the South Ossetians. For example, they could use their indigenous language and preserve some cultural symbols. However, skirmishes, which led to a civil war in 1992, broke out in 1989 between South Ossetia and Georgia. In December 1989, Georgian Supreme Soviet Commission abrogated the autonomous status of South Ossetia and declared 'Unusual Condition' in the region. Then, South Ossetia declared its independence in August 1990. There had been many clashes⁸⁶ until the Sochi Agreement in June 1992, which established an armistice and deployed tripartite peacekeeping forces of Russian, Georgian government troops and Ossetian military units (4.000 personnel in total).⁸⁷

Whereas Ossetians have wanted to join their territory with North Ossetia in RF or be independent, Georgians regard the district as a part of their historic lands, arguing that Ossetians settled there only in the 17th century and thus do not have any right for special status. Nevertheless, Georgia has announced that it is ready to recognize complete liberty on the basis of economic and cultural subjects to the South Ossetia.⁸⁸ On the other hand, RF does not want South Ossetia to join with the North, but supports its demand for autonomy. There are two main reasons for this thought. First, RF has enough trouble with the nations in North Caucasia. Although, the Ossetians are the most faithful nation of Russia, a 'United Ossetia' may require undesirable rights from RF. Second, present

⁸⁵ Turkish General Staff. November 2003. *Gürcistan*. Ankara: Information Notes, p.8.

⁸⁶ In the South Ossetian conflict, between 1989 and 1992, 1.000 people were killed, more than 1.800 were wounded, and 120 people disappeared without a trace. The industrial infrastructure of the South Ossetian Autonomous Region was completely destroyed. In Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.26.

⁸⁷ Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.10.

⁸⁸ Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.26.

status of South Ossetia pleases RF sufficiently. Because, this region is one of the trumps of RF against Georgia. It does not want to lose it.⁸⁹

What about Turkey? How does the current and probable situation of South Ossetia affects or will affect Turkey's regional security policies? First, Turkey does not want South Ossetia to join with the North. Because, this will completely contrary to its regional security policy, since it has advocated the territorial integrity of Georgia. Second, RF would be a step closer to its regional ally, Armenia, and thus to South Caucasia. Third, in case of any unwanted situation in Javakhetian region (will be explained in the fourth section of this part), Turkey would be wedged into a narrow corridor in order to connect with Azerbaijan and Central Asia.

1.3.3 Ajaria

Ajaria, whose capital is Bat'umi, has 3.000 km² area and its population is 400.000. There are Georgians (%80), Russians (%10) and Armenians (%5) in this autonomous republic, which is the closest autonomous republic to Turkey. Most of the population is Muslim.⁹⁰

First of all, USSR recognized Ajaria as an autonomous republic of Georgia Soviet Socialist Republic in 1937. Since then, there had not been any disagreement between Ajaria and Georgia until the dissolution of the USSR. However, there have not been any skirmishes between them even during the South Ossetian and Abkhazian crises, 1991–1994. So, it can be concluded that Ajaria is the only autonomous region, where there have not been any armed clashes against the central government. On the other hand, the 1995 Constitution of Georgia did not recognize the Ajaria's autonomy. But,

⁸⁹ Kamil Ağacan. August 2000. "Gürcistan'a Yönelik Artan Rus Baskıları ve Türkiye" *Stratejik Analiz* 1:4, p.31.

⁹⁰ Turkish General Staff. November 2003. *Gürcistan*. Ankara: Information Notes, p.6.

this status has changed with the law that became legal in April 2000.⁹¹ So then, Ajaria has been accepted as an autonomous republic by Georgia officially.

Nevertheless, there had been several disagreements between Ajaria and Georgia until the May 2004. First, authorities between them had not been shared. For example, some of the decisions, which were taken by the central government about the Ajaria, had not been put into practice by Ajaria since it had perceived them as an intervention to its internal affairs. This situation caused many problems as seen in March 2004.⁹² Second, Ajaria had opposed the control and share of the central government on the incomes that it gained mostly from the Bat'umi Port and Sarp Border Crossing. In this context, central government claimed that Ajaria, declaring these incomes lower than normal, did not give the real ratio of it, whereas Ajaria asserted that the central government did not assign enough source for projects related with its infrastructure. Third, it also wanted to be independent from Georgia or merge with RF.⁹³

RF also gives so much importance to Ajaria. Because, it has a military base in Bat'umi and by means of this base, it could incite some of the ethnic groups against the central government since it desires to control Georgia. For that reason, RF have been threat for territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia. Ajaria, either, had exploited the base as a hinge against the central government. This situation is contrary to Turkey's security policies. Because, Turkey wants to balance and, in the longer term, put an end to the existence of RF in its eastern border.⁹⁴

Since Turkey borders on Ajaria, it is also highly interested in the status of this autonomous republic. But, there is also one more important matter about security for

⁹¹ Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası *Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri*. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.10.

⁹² Saakashvili wanted to visit Batumi, the capital of Adjara, on 14 March 2004. But, the board guards of the Adjara did not let him go into the republic. Furthermore, they shot at his convoy.

⁹³ Turkish General Staff. November 2003. *Gürcistan*. Ankara: Information Notes, p.7.

⁹⁴ Ibid, p.7.

Turkey's attention: Turkey is the guarantor of Ajaria and Nakhichevan in accordance with the sixth article of the Kars Agreement, signed in 1921. According to this article, the status and borders of Ajaria cannot be altered and its territory must be integrated. Moreover, the population can continue to live Islam as a Muslim and agricultural fields, means of livelihood for the local people, cannot be disposed of. That the legal and political validity of Kars Agreement still continues is understood when Aslan Abashidze, the former Ajarian leader, appealed to Turkey to act as a 'guarantor state' of Ajarian autonomy because of the economic blockade by the central government in March 2004. According to Abashidze, the 1921 Kars Treaty, which established Ajaria as an autonomous entity, gives Turkey the ability to become a direct participant in regional developments in order to maintain Bat'umi's status.⁹⁵ In this context, Ajaria affects Turkey's security policies intensively. If Turkey uses its authorities and responsibilities, which it has gained by Kars Agreement, and if Bat'umi–Tbilisi and Bat'umi–Javakhetia relations develop in undesired manner, like the events in March 2004, Ajaria is going to be more important for Turkey's security.⁹⁶ In addition, any destabilized situation in Ajaria would be a threat to B–T–C's viability, too. So, the status of Ajaria is critical and similar to that of Cyprus. Consequently, lack of central government's authority in Ajaria could create an unwanted *de facto* situation both for Turkey and Georgia.

1.3.4 Javakhetia

Javakhetia (Akhalkalaki) is neither an autonomous republic nor a region. It is only a district, where Armenians constitute 91.3 percent of the population, in the south of Georgia. But, it is economically more powerful than both Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

⁹⁵ Jon Gorwett, "Turkey Concerned Georgian–Ajarian Tension Could Disrupt Regional Pipeline Plans," Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav032304.shtml

⁹⁶ Yaşar Kalafat. 2004. *Karadeniz ve Kafkasya'da Gelişen Dini ve Siyasi Olaylar İtibariyle Türkiye'nin Güvenliği*. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası.

The Armenians in Georgia (approximately 440.000) had been a problem for the Georgian government since the independence of Georgia. For example, they have resisted the authority of Tbilisi and refused to serve in the Georgian army during 1992–1995. Moreover, some of them took part in the Nagorno–Karabakh war and transferred arm–belongings to the Russian army, fuel and lubricants to the Nagorno–Karabakh Armenians. Recently, they do not let Georgian security forces go into the region. Furthermore, they also use the Armenian or Russian monetary unit and local nation does not speak Georgian. In addition, the Javak illegal organization, which was established in 1996, has been active in the region and struggled for Javakhetia’s autonomy. As a result, it can be concluded that Georgia can not get this district under control.⁹⁷

Javakhetian Armenians have demanded the constitutional right of political self–government within the framework of a united Federal Republic of Georgia. But, Georgian authorities, who have serious problems with autonomous regions, have refused to discuss a federal state for Javakhetia.⁹⁸

Armenia gives so much importance to the region. According to the analyses, if Armenia had not invaded the Nagorno–Karabakh, then it would have occupied the Javakhetian region.⁹⁹ However, if Nagorno–Karabakh crisis was solved and Armenian and Azerbaijan came to an agreement, then there would be a kind of Karabakh *fait accompli* in Javakhetia. Therefore, the status of Javakhetia is closely related with Turkey’s security. As well, this district is also economically significant for Armenia.

⁹⁷ Kamil Ağacan. 2004. Soğuk Savaş Sonrası *Türkiye – Gürcistan İlişkileri*. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası, p.11.

⁹⁸ Kukhianidze Alexander. 1998. “The Armenian and Azeri Communities in Georgia: On Georgia’s Nationalities and Foreign Policies,” in Bruno Coppieters, Alexei Zverev and Dmitri Trenin, eds., *Commonwealth and Independence in Post-Soviet Eurasia*. London: Frank Cass Publishers, p.123.

⁹⁹ Hasan Kanbolat. February, 16 2004. Interview with the author in ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası. Ankara.

Because, consumer items of Armenia are provided by the Javakhetian Armenians, who sell the goods that come from Turkey and Azerbaijan to Armenia.¹⁰⁰

It is known that Armenia has a ‘Greater Armenia Ideology’. One of the parts of this ideology is Javakhetia, as Karabakh. Armenia dreams to have a territory from sea to sea. For this reason, Javakhetia, for Armenia, is a strategic point. Because, if it invaded this district, it would be a step closer for its wish. According to this ‘dream’ imaginary Armenia would be among the Caspian, Black and Mediterranean Seas. After the Javakhetia, Armenians, most probably, would aim to capture the Ajaria region. In this way, Armenia would be able to reach the Black Sea. Then, since the B–T–C pipeline is in this region, it would not be realized, and Turkey’s connection with Caucasia would be partly blocked. Moreover, Turkey would get caught in a narrow corridor. Therefore, this policy of Armenia directly threatens the security of Turkey.

Another important factor about Javakhetia’s significance for Turkey’s security is the Akhaltsian Turks, who were sent into exile in 1944 by Stalin. The Akhalkalaki region is their homeland. These Turks, approximately 300.000–400.000, have right to turn back to their native soil with the decision of European Council, who has allotted 12 years to Georgia for the procedures in 1999. Yet, naturally but not justly, Armenians oppose the return of the Turks to the region. Because, they are afraid of the fact that Turkey may use these Turks as a kind of buffer zone between Javakhetia and Ajaria.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, there is 62nd Russian military base in Akhalkalaki. The Armenians in the region consider this base very important. Because, %80 of the personnel of the base are Armenians, who also have the citizenship of RF. The others sell consumer items and other goods to the personnel. So, they perceive here as a place where one earns living. Therefore, Armenians do not want the withdrawal of the Russian forces from

¹⁰⁰ Yaşar Kalafat. 2004. *Karadeniz ve Kafkasya’da Gelişen Dini ve Siyasi Olaylar İtibariyle Türkiye’nin Güvenliği*. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası.

Akhalkalaki. Meanwhile, the base also supports and provokes the secessionist movement in the region obscurely. Although Georgia is not pleased with the status of the region, in order to avoid potential problems with the ethnic Armenians, it refrains from imposing any burdens on the population and permits Armenians to serve in the local Akhaltiskhe Brigade of the Georgian border department. In other words, it does not want to assume a radical stance to the region. Because, Georgian officials think that in case of any skirmishes between Javakhetia and Georgia, Armenia could interfere, and thus the state could be partitioned.¹⁰² As a result, if the proper authority of the central government was not established in Javakhetia, there would be instability which affects Turkey's security.

Lastly, examining the map 3, which also shows the probable status of Georgia if autonomous regions somehow joined with RF or be independent, it can be concluded that Georgia would have narrower mainland than it has now. Saakashvili is also aware of the significance of these 'renegade' regions. For example, he stated that "[my] responsibility before the history of Georgia means that I must unify Georgia."¹⁰³ So, one of the main goals of Saakashvili's presidency is the reestablishment of Tbilisi's authority over all of Georgia's territory. But, will RF allow this to happen?

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Yaşar Kalafat. 2004. *Karadeniz ve Kafkasya'da Gelişen Dini ve Siyasi Olaylar İtibariyle Türkiye'nin Güvenliği*. ASAM Kafkasya Araştırmaları Masası.

¹⁰³ "Georgian President Announces End To Ajaria Blockade," Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav031804.shtml

CHAPTER 2

2. RF'S VIEW ABOUT TURKISH – GEORGIAN RELATIONSHIP

“All my country's trouble come from Russian Federation”¹⁰⁴

In this chapter of the thesis, RF's view about the relations between Turkey and Georgia, and its effects to Turkish security policies will be examined. The research has so far indicated that RF's Georgian policy cannot be thought apart from its Caucasian policy. So, it will be meaningful to start the chapter with the brief explanation of this subject together with RF's security strategies derived from the region.

2.1 General Caucasian Policy of Russian Federation: The ‘Near Abroad’

After the dissolution of the USSR, RF had mostly and compulsorily focused on its own domestic political and economic restructurings. For that reason, it had to reduce its relations in the Caucasia by withdrawing both politically and militarily from the region until the mid-1992, when ‘Eurasianist’ views gained popularity in RF's policy. Actually, RF's ‘retrenchment’ from South Caucasia in 1991 was received as an overwhelming action to the security of the federation. Because, it caused the ‘security vacuum syndrome’ within the RF, in case other powers – whether regional players like Turkey and Iran, or global ones like the US – could fill it to the detriment of RF's own

¹⁰⁴ Teimuraz ZAVRAŞVİLİ, Staff Colonel, The Former Vice President of Georgian Defense Intelligence Service. He was also one of the students of ‘Turkish War Academy’ during 2001–2002. This statement is in his thesis Teimuraz ZAVRAŞVİLİ, *Gürcistan'ın Güvenlik Sorunları*, İstanbul: Turkish War Academy, 2002, p.48.

interests.¹⁰⁵ So then, Caucasia again has become one of the key regions towards which RF redefined its policy. One of the first signs of the RF's policy shift in the South Caucasia was the formation of the 'Group of Russian Forces in Transcaucasus' (GRFT) in January 1993. The ultimate aim of this establishment was to prevent total withdrawal of the Russian forces from the region. The GRFT included almost all the former Soviet forces that remained in Georgia.¹⁰⁶

Actually, Caucasia has always been a strategic area for RF, who has always acknowledged the region and Anatolia not only as a gateway to the peripheral seas, but also as a possible occupation route to Russia.¹⁰⁷ RF, apart from Caucasia's geostrategic importance, has been aware of the fact that South Caucasia could be a buffer or a barrier for any threat from the Middle East if this region were under the control of hostile powers.¹⁰⁸ Also, Russia has claimed that this region is its living space and sphere of interest. In addition, Russian minority in the region is also another important factor that has determined RF's regional policies. But, to protect Russian minorities rights and interests, for RF, is a means for its military-strategic and economic interests in the region. On the other hand, the rhetoric of 'Turkic world', which caused the fear of 'Pan-Turkism', also has been effective on RF's policies.¹⁰⁹ Later other factors, notably the desire to remain a great power and major international player, have also affected RF's attitude towards the Caucasia.

In line with the abovementioned considerations, politico-military presence of RF in the South Caucasia would help it to preserve and expand its interests in Central Asia,

¹⁰⁵ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer. 2000. "Turkish-Russian Relations: The Challenges of Reconciling Geopolitical Competition with Economic Partnership". *Turkish Studies* 1:1, p.68.

¹⁰⁶ Rovshan Sadıgbeyle, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2002, p.35.

¹⁰⁷ Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu. 1988. "Turkey and the Southern Flank: Domestic and External Contexts", in John Chipman, ed., *NATO's Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenge*. London: Routledge, p.87.

¹⁰⁸ Nikolai Hovanissian, "Views from the Region: Armenia," *Seminar on Russia and the NIS*, Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/sam/1.96/1-3.ht

the Black Sea region and the Middle East.¹¹⁰ In other words, if RF had lost its power in the South Caucasia, where it deems its ‘backyard’, then it would have also mislaid its activity in these regions. For that reason, the new Russian policy, the so-called ‘Near Abroad’, which proclaims the newly independent states a zone of RF’s vital interests, towards the South Caucasia developed. It had three main principles: First, newly independent non-Russian republics, where almost ten million Russians live, of the former Soviet Union must be reintegrated into the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which has been regarded as a tool for such integration. Second, the external boundaries of these states would be protected by Russia. Third, Russian military bases should be present within the territory of the Caucasian states.¹¹¹ In company with these principles, RF has pursued a three-branched security strategy in the Caucasia. Diplomatically, it has tried to appear as a mediator or a peacekeeper in the regional conflicts. Militarily, RF has pressed for the establishment of Russian bases on the territories of Caucasian states. Multilaterally, RF has sought to increase the sub-zonal limits of ‘Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty’.¹¹² In short, RF has wanted to dominate the region and always keep the Caucasia in its own sphere of influence.

RF, in order to realize its objectives, has also exploited domestic instability and regional conflicts in the Caucasian states as mentioned previously. Because, a weak, unstable, and divided Caucasia is in RF's interests. The most important reason behind this inference is that it has wanted to prevent the growing involvement of NATO countries, especially Turkey, from the region. Moreover, RF has also sought to use the pipeline issue as a means of reasserting its political influence over the Caucasia. For that

¹⁰⁹ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, “Turkish–Russian Relations a Decade Later: From Adversity To Managed Competition”, Available at www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/percept/VI-1/dbsezer.05.htm

¹¹⁰ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer. Summer 1996. “Russia and the South: Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus”. *European Security*, 5:2, p.314.

¹¹¹ Svante E. Cornell. January 2001. “The Caucasus under Renewed Russian Pressure: Realities on the Ground and Geopolitical Imperatives,” *Caspian Brief*, No. 10 Available at www.cornellcaspien.com/pub/10_0101russianpressure.html

reason, it has insisted that a northern pipeline route, from Baku to the Russian port of Novorossiisk¹¹³ on the Black Sea, should be the main transit route for the transport of Caspian oil. Because, this direction would allow RF to control the region's resources strategically.¹¹⁴

As a conclusion, it can be accepted that one of the main elements of the RF's South Caucasus policy is to reinforce its southern border adjoining Turkey, and to keep Turkey out of the area by every means possible. For this reason, the RF has stationed military bases and established military installations in Georgia, near Turkey's borders. These subjects, which are also matching with its security policies, are elaborated in the following parts.

2.2 Caucasian Security Policies of Russian Federation

*According to RF's security policy, national defense begins at the CIS borders.*¹¹⁵

In this part of the chapter, RF's security policies stemming from the South Caucasus will be dealt with in order to put forth this state's approach to the region and to Georgia for consideration. One of the most important components of the RF's official security policy is the 'Military Doctrine', which was adopted in November 1993. From 1993 to the present, the military doctrine has remained significant in understanding the security policies, threat perceptions, and interests of the RF.

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, RF's security environment has undergone fundamental changes, so has its Caucasian security perceptions. First of all,

¹¹² Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer. Summer 1996. "Russia and the South: Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus". *European Security*, 5:2, pp.316–317.

¹¹³ Turkey has rejected this project as not feasible on ecological and security grounds. According to the 'Straits Reports', published jointly by the managers of the Turkish oil company Botas and the Transport Ministry, traffic in the Straits is already so heavy that any addition to it, especially tankers, should be refused. In Freddy De Pauw. 1996. "Turkey's Policies in Transcaucasia" in Bruno Coppieters, ed., *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*. Brussels: VUB Press, pp.186–187.

¹¹⁴ F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Available at www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1241.pdf, p.108

¹¹⁵ İdil Tuncer. Autumn 2000. "The Security Policies of the Russian Federation: The Near Abroad and Turkey" *Turkish Studies* 1:2, p.104.

South Caucasus region, with its violent conflicts, has always been perceived by Russians in terms of vital security interests. For example, for that reason, during the USSR period the Caucasus was divided into Transcaucasus Military District, the Transcaucasus Border Guard District and North Caucasus Military District (NCMD). So, this region represented one of the most militarized areas, not only in the former Soviet Union but also in the world. Also, during the Cold War the Caucasus was a part of USSR's Southern Theatre for Strategic Military Action (TSMA), which was an important element of Soviet Union's power projection capabilities into the Near and Middle East.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, Pavel Felgengauer, a prominent military analyst, states the strategic significance of the South Caucasus for Russian security as "The Southern Caucasus is RF's main strategic defense area directly affecting the military situation in the NCMD."¹¹⁷

Besides, for RF, South Caucasus:¹¹⁸

- a. constitutes the starting point of the shortest strategic directions that will provide RF to reach 'Hot Waters' and is also a region that controls these routes.
- b. controls the Persian Gulf and East Mediterranean remotely as long as it is available.
- c. is a region that will provide economy of force in the defense of RF's south front.
- d. is a suitable starting region for an attack to the south.

¹¹⁶ Rovshan Sadıgbeyleli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2002, p.32.

¹¹⁷ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer. 2000. "Turkish – Russian Relations: The Challenges of Reconciling Geopolitical Competition with Economic Partnership". *Turkish Studies* 1:1, p.69.

¹¹⁸ Savaş Yanar. 2002. *Türk – Rus İlişkilerinde Gizli Güç Kafkasya*. İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, p.72.

e. assists to employ the enemy forces as being used as a secondary attack direction in an operation done by the Balkans.

Accordingly, RF has insistly declared that the “South Caucasia belongs to the countries in which it could legitimately claim to defend specific security interests and special rights of intervention.”¹¹⁹ Because, RF thinks that if it did not stabilize its predominance in the independent republics of the Caucasia, it would also lose the North Caucasia, where belongs to itself.¹²⁰ At the same time, RF’s West, North and East borders form a kind of natural security zone, which is produced by strict climate conditions. Napoleon and Hitler are the most famous historical characters that were defeated by these conditions. On the other hand, there is not a similar condition in the south of RF. Here is ‘soft abdomen’ of the RF. On account of that reality, it has felt the need for expanding its security zone by carrying its south border too far.¹²¹

RF, in order to keep its security presence in the South Caucasia, ascertained a strategy that hoped to make the CIS function as a security structure by maintaining the old external borders and strategic defenses of the former Soviet Union. This strategic intention was expressed by the 1992 Tashkent Agreement on collective security, to which Georgia acceded in 1993. In other words, RF using domestic instability in Caucasian states forced their central governments to ‘request’ Russian peacekeeping forces on their territories. In that sense, in a February 1993 speech, Boris Yeltsin concluded that, “...the time has come for distinguished international organizations, including the UN, to grant RF special powers as a guarantor of peace and stability in the

¹¹⁹ Bruno Coppieters. 1996. “Introduction”. In Bruno Coppieters, ed., *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*. Belgium/Brussels: VUB University Press, p.8.

¹²⁰ Selçuk Çolakoğlu. 1999. “Türkiye’nin Gürcistan Politikası”, in Adnan Menderes University, ed., *Cumhuriyet’in 75 nci Yılına Armağan*. Aydın: Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Yayınları, p.127.

¹²¹ February 19, 2004. Interview with one of the project officers about Caucasia in Turkish General Staff.

former regions of the Soviet Union.”¹²² However, the CIS failed to evolve into an effective security system. For that reason, RF has attempted to pursue the same objectives in terms of RF’s interests – securing its southern flank from instability and excluding foreign penetration of its sphere of influence – through bilateral arrangements.¹²³

As a conclusion, to have territories under control and to maintain military bases in Caucasia give RF several opportunities to defend its own country in depth. Moreover they also provide deterrence and great strategic occasions in case of any probable intervention to the region. Finally, RF does not want any state to enter in its ‘backyard’ and applies every security policy to protect its regional interests. In this regard, RF has given importance to its connection with Armenia and has coerced Georgia on which it has also some other geopolitical and strategic objective.

2.3 Geopolitical and Strategic Objectives of RF on Georgia

As mentioned in the previous parts, Georgia has vital geostrategic situation as “the western portal to the Great Silk Road and the newest conduit of Caspian oil to the world markets ... a strategic gateway of energy and trade routes linking East and West”.¹²⁴ Therefore, Georgia has been viewed as an important geopolitical linchpin in the Caucasian region. So, on a place like Georgia, RF has many reasons to be effective.

First of all, RF sees Georgia as a key component in its own security policy in the South Caucasia because of its immediate proximity to the North Caucasia and the Black Sea. For that reason, it actively supported the separatist moves and masterminded the

¹²² After his speech, in March 1993, the Foreign Ministry officially applied to the UN and the OSCE for recognition of the RF’s peacekeeping activities within the CIS. In İdil Tuncer. Autumn 2000. “The Security Policies of the Russian Federation: The Near Abroad and Turkey” *Turkish Studies* 1:2, p.104.

¹²³ Edmund Herzig. 1999. *The New Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*. London: Chatham House Papers, p.49.

ethnic conflicts, which caused Abkhazia and South Ossetia's *de facto* separation, in Georgia's territory as a means to retain the republic within its sphere of influence. Actually, one of the reasons behind this perception is that RF has been endangered to become isolated from its traditional ally – Armenia – in the region since Azerbaijan has taken an open anti-Russian stand. Thus, a pro-Russian Georgia is crucial for RF to have land access routes to Armenia, in which there are important Russian military bases. Otherwise, maneuvering capabilities of Russian troops in the region could also potentially decrease.¹²⁵ In view of that, RF fears that if Georgia gains enough support from the West, it will permanently slip its 'leash'.

Secondly, Georgia, for RF, is a natural corridor for trade and communication networks and a keystone on energy shipments through the South Caucasia. Because, RF cannot stop oil extraction in the Caspian, but it can pursue an active policy in controlling the oil transportation routes – acquiring the 'tap'. So, control over Georgian energy shipments would allow Russia to dominate almost all existing pipelines for Caucasian and Azerbaijani oil and gas.¹²⁶ Hence, this is the most important mean for RF to make Georgia less attractive to Western energy companies and governments. For that reason, RF fears and perceives that Western influence in Georgia as a threat to its security and economic interests. On the other hand, Russia's exclusion from the primary East-West transport project, refers to as the Silk Road or the East-West Transport Corridor, may also be one of the reasons why RF wishes to see an unstable Georgia.¹²⁷ In this way, RF also wants to make Georgia less attractive to the western constructive companies. Third, since it is situated in the strategically important area on the Black Sea coast, Georgia is also particularly important for stronger Russian presence in the Black

¹²⁴ Jim and Julie Kim, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf

¹²⁵ Rovshan Sadigbeyli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2002, p.35.

¹²⁶ Stephen J Blank, "The Prospects of Russian-American Partnership: The Georgian Litmus Test," Available at www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=47

¹²⁷ Jared Feinberg, "The Armed Forces in Georgia," Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

Sea. As Grachov stated in 1993, “Russia should take every measure to ensure its troops would remain in Georgia, otherwise, it would loose the Black Sea”.¹²⁸ As is known, RF, because of its dissolution, has been almost deprived of Black Sea, where it had reached toward its aim to arrive ‘Hot Waters’ since Pedro I. Now, RF, who shares Black Sea coastline with Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, has the inconvenient portion of the Black Sea coastlines in terms of navigation. Since the sea depth of RF’s Black Sea coastline is not suitable, only the Novorossiisk Port is used. Likewise, it also has to share its Black Sea connection to West with Estonia and Latvia. Hence, this situation increases its necessity of further coastlines. But, it is not easy to pressure on these states in opposition to Georgia for they have gone out of RF’s penetration zone and rapidly integrated with West since the end of Cold War. So, RF has chosen to coerce Georgia.¹²⁹ In addition, Russia, whose coastline was reduced to 300 km. after the conflict with Ukraine over the division of the Black Sea fleet and dispute over the access to naval bases in the Crimea, could not afford the loss of naval infrastructure along the Georgian Black Sea coast.¹³⁰

According to all these reasons, when Georgia seemed reluctant to join the CIS, RF overcame Georgia’s reluctance by inciting riots in Abkhazia in 1992. Throughout the conflict in Abkhazia, Russia covertly provided the separatists with arms, ammunition, and intelligence, and Russian soldiers participated directly in the hostilities on the Abkhaz side. Consequently, in return for Russian support against Abkhaz secessionists, Georgia was forced to join the CIS as in Shevardnadze’s statement “We have to co-operate with Russia...otherwise Georgia will collapse and disintegrate.”¹³¹ So, on 23rd October 1993, Shevardnadze issued a decree about Georgia’s joining the CIS. With this

¹²⁸ Ulaş Mangıtlı, *Rusya, Türkiye ve Avrasya: Türk ve Rus Dış Politika Alanlarının Avrasya’ daki*

Kesişimleri, Ankara: Institution of Social Sciences Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2001, p.87.

¹²⁹ Savaş Yanar. 2002. *Türk – Rus İlişkilerinde Gizli Güç*. İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, p.216.

¹³⁰ Rovshan Sadıgbeyli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2002, p.35.

¹³¹ Dov Lynch. 2000. *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS – The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan*. New York: Palgrave, p.139.

decision, Shevardnadze also accepted RF's dictation of Georgia's policies, which includes discouragement of Georgia's attempt to set up independent regional cooperation mechanisms, the manipulation of Georgia's access to energy resources, the introduction of a visa regime on Georgia, and implementing severe cuts in electricity.¹³² Nevertheless, many people in Georgia believed that CIS would provide Georgia with security and bring economic benefits. Such expectations proved unrealistic because of the inefficient process within the CIS itself. In other words, membership in the CIS, for RF, did not prevent outside interference in Georgia's internal affairs. Moreover, it did not prevent the violation of Georgia's territorial integrity, which constitutes one of the major threats to Georgia's national security, either. So, membership in the CIS brought neither security nor economic benefit to Georgia. Subsequently, Georgia quit the CIS Collective Security Treaty in 1999.¹³³

In line with abovementioned reasons, Russia considers Georgia as a safety 'valve' that would allow Russia to prevent penetration of Turkey's political effect into the RF's space, as well as further to the Central Asia, if it is under control. Also, control over Georgia provides influence for Russia to exclude any possibility of future NATO expansion from Turkey into the Caspian Basin. Additionally, a subdued Georgia would ease Russia's goal of obstructing the progress of the East–West energy corridor, as well as hindering the entrance into the Caspian Basin of Western interests.¹³⁴ At the same time, by controlling Georgia, RF wishes to secure its interests in the North Caucasia. Because, if this region was not under control, then, RF believes that it could become the political base of the probable independence activities, and Chechnya and the other

¹³² Svante E. Cornell, "Straightening U.S. Policy in Eurasia," Available at www.cornellcaspiant.com/pub/0101uspol.html

¹³³ M.A Smith, "Russian Foreign Policy 2000: The Near Abroad," Available at www.da.mod.uk/CSRC/Home/documents/pdfs/F71-mas.pdf

¹³⁴ Archil Gegeshidze, "Georgia: In Quest of a Niche Strategy," Available at www.ciaonet.org/olj/co/co_sept02b.pdf

nations in the region would gain a strategic depth. Furthermore, control over Georgia would in turn enable Moscow to put pressure on Azerbaijan, whose success in energy projects is dependent the energy transportation networks that has been supposed to pass through Georgian territory.¹³⁵

These are also the main reasons that Georgia is the central country in the continuing ‘new great game’ in the former Soviet Union. If RF seeks to reintegrate the CIS under Russian control, and to restore a new form of the Russian empire, control over Georgia is an essential part of those tasks. But, since the independence of Georgia, RF’s–Georgian relations have been characterized by threats, recriminations, tension, and mutual suspicion. Because of the RF’s active but negative interferences in the internal conflicts of Georgia in the past, today Georgia suspects RF of undermining Georgian sovereignty, destroying domestic political stability, and preventing the economic increase that is expected to result from the export via Georgia of Azerbaijan's oil.¹³⁶

As a conclusion, the RF’s Georgian policy is aimed at weakening Georgia. Thus, it wants to realize its interests by undermining Turkish and Western influence in the region, controlling access to oil, gaining control over the long Black Sea coastline in Abkhazia, protecting the Russian ports of Novorossiisk and Tuapse, and moving closer to the Georgian oil–exporting ports in Poti, Supsa, and Bat’umi.¹³⁷ For that reason, for the last three years, under Putin’s authority, RF has intensified its long–standing efforts to control the focus of Georgia’s foreign policy.¹³⁸ Imposing a unilateral visa regime, the ‘habitual’ threats of cutting off energy supplies, international terrorism policy, and

¹³⁵ Rovshan Sadıgbeyli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2002, pp.45-46.

¹³⁶ Fuller Liz, “See change in Georgian-Russian relations?,” Available at www.atimes.com/c-asia/AA12Ag02.html

¹³⁷ E. Nuriyev Elkhani, 2000. “Conflicts, Caspian Oil, and NATO” in Gary K. Bertsch, Cassady Craft, Scott A. Jones and Michael Beck, eds., *Crossroads and Conflicts: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*. New York / London: Routledge, p.143.

¹³⁸ Rovshan Sadıgbeyli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2002, p.63.

backtracking on prior commitments to withdraw military bases from Georgia are all initiatives being used by RF to this end.

2.4 RF's Initiatives in Georgia

It can be assessed that the foreign policy of RF after the end of Cold War can be divided into two: before Putin and after Putin. Since Putin came to power in 2000, between what he has pronounced as a 'pacifist and defensive' leader differs from what RF has followed in the region as a policy to get itself accepted by the regional states forcefully. Consequently, RF's relations with Georgia has gradually become tense. Now, in the following parts, the tangible examples of this policy will be examined.

2.4.1 Visa Regime Policy

RF has exaggerated the conflict raised from the visa regime application with Georgia in order to keep it in its sphere of influence. Parallel with this aim, RF has made a change on the visa regime, which it had applied to Georgian citizens, on 5th December 2000 by dropping the requirements. The most striking point in the new regime application is the RF's envisagement of continuation of Abkhazian and South Ossetian residents' right of traveling in RF without a visa. This visa regime also includes to freely distribute Russian passports to the Abkhazian and South Ossetians too. But, that these autonomous republics receive different treatment than any other nations live in Georgia gives a kind of challenge impression against Georgia's independence and territorial integrity. In accordance with these developments, Georgian Parliament asserts that RF follows imperialist policies openly towards Georgia. Moreover, it also claims that RF is going to annex the Abkhazian and Ossetian territories at the end.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ F. Oktay Tanrısever, "Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkilerinde Artan Gerilim: Bir Sağırlar Diyaloğu mu?," Available at www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_08.html.

The new visa regime, which RF has put into practice as regards the regions where Georgia can carry on its sovereignty (The Georgian territories except Abkhazia and South Ossetia), also aims to hold almost 500.000 Georgian citizens, who work in RF, under pressure. Moreover, this new visa regime also can cause Georgian economy to decline, poverty to increase even more, and rise the unemployment in Georgia. Thus, RF expects that this policy will bring Georgia a kind of social unease, which will pressure Georgian Government to accept RF's demands.¹⁴⁰

2.4.2 Energy Policy

RF's desire to keep Georgia in its sphere of influence cannot be thought apart from its wish to control the exportation of the Caspian oil and natural gas to the international markets. All along, RF has opposed to the construction of the B–T–C, which does not pass through RF's territory. The main reason for RF's objection to this project is the fact that this pipeline is going to weaken the RF's monopoly on the transit routes of the Caspian oil and natural gas. RF also fears that with the help of this route Caucasian and Caspian states could improve their economy independent from itself.¹⁴¹

In this context, Georgia, as a strategic actor on East–West energy corridor, could weaken RF's monopoly on the transportation of the Caspian oil and natural gas. But, Georgia's economic and social problems and also its dependence of RF's gas products openly make it vulnerable to the Russian pressure. Georgia is heavily indebted to Russia for energy supplies. In order to decrease Georgia's support to the B–T–C pipeline, RF has given its all. Moreover, it has also strived increasingly to impose that Georgia's long

¹⁴⁰ F. Oktay Tanrısever, "Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkilerinde Artan Gerilim: Bir Sağırlar Diyaloğu mu?," Available at www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_08.html.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

term interests are on the continuous energy that RF will provide to Georgia, rather than on the construction of the B–T–C.¹⁴²

According to this strategy, RF has intensified its policy that manipulates Georgia's dependence of RF's gas delivery. So, RF has periodically cut off the natural gas, which it has provided to Georgian republic, since the December 2000. These gas cuts, which realize in the deliveries to the most important electric supplier of the Tbilisi, cause electric cuts leaving the capital with a couple of hours of daily and parts of the countryside totally devoid of it. As a result, this policy has paved the way for very important energy crisis in Georgia. Although RF has indicated the bills that Georgia has not paid so far as a reason to these cuts, the real cause stems from the RF's politic motivation to control Georgia's gas dispatching. RF also implies that the electric and natural gas cuts would continue in the event that Georgia did not accept RF's demands, parallel to its relations with other republics after the USSR.¹⁴³ Paradoxically, this energy policy may provide Georgians, who feel cold in winters, to be against RF increasingly.

2.4.3 International Terrorism Policy

The already tense relationship between RF and Georgia has reached its dramatic dimension when RF accused Georgian Government of making international terrorists to use its territories to fight in Chechnya. RF, also, has asserted that Georgia has provided Chechens for secure environment – 'safety heaven' – and tacit assistance by opening bases in the Pankisi Gorge¹⁴⁴, which is a mountainous area formally under Georgian

¹⁴² F. Oktay Tanrısever, "Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkilerinde Artan Gerilim: Bir Sağırlar Diyalogu mu?," Available at www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_08.html.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Located some 150 kilometers northeast of Tbilisi, the Pankisi Gorge has been a major source of contention between Georgia and RF, which claims that hundreds of Chechen fighters are hiding among the estimated 6,000 refugees who have sought refuge in the area since RF started its second Chechen campaign. RF also says the fighters are using Pankisi as a rear base for operations in Chechnya. In Jaba Devdariani and Blanka Hancilova, "US Involvement in Caucasian Security Architecture Grows," Available at www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=8

control that borders Chechnya to the south, throughout the Russian–Georgian borderline.¹⁴⁵ RF bases its claim on almost 6000 Chechen refugees in Georgia and approximately 7000 local ethnic Chechens who live northeast of Georgia. In reply to this assertion, Georgia, who has opposed to RF's demand to settle its troops in Pankisi Gorge, denied the accusations and declared that RF's special services have been acting as *agents provocateurs*.¹⁴⁶ These acts have also been perceived by Georgia as a violation to its sovereignty under the guise of antiterrorist operations.¹⁴⁷ In addition, Georgia has also expressed that it is going to increase security measurements throughout its Russian border. However, RF criticizes Georgia's these initiatives on the ground that "they are nonfunctional operations done to postpone RF's great operation, which will be realized to get rid of terrorists' dens in Georgian territory."¹⁴⁸ Moreover, this indicates as well that RF is determined to realize a military operation in Pankisi Gorge.

RF's pressure on Georgia has increased with the letter written by the President Vladimir Putin to the world leaders on 11th September 2002. In this letter, Putin complained from Georgia's indifference and not allowing it to make an operation in Georgia using its right to defend itself stemming from United Nations' Provision:¹⁴⁹

The last bandits who could survive after our successful operations realized against terrorism, could manage to pass into Georgia. But, so far, Georgian officials have condoned them and they have been carrying on comfortable and free life there. They also continue to receive military, financial and other assistances from abroad (...) too. The abovementioned considerations are all related with Georgia's violation of United Nations Security Council's resolution of 1373, to which every state is obliged and is about the anti-terrorism. Therefore, we should guarantee Georgia's execution of obligations towards the international community in this domain (...) In this context, RF has been left no choice but to use its

¹⁴⁵ Robert M. Cutler, "Ajaria, the Russian Military in Georgia, and Stability in the South Caucasus," Available at www.robertcutler.org/consult/topical/ge0001aj.htm

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Sergei Blagov, "Military Issues Block Russia–Georgia Détente," Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav010603.shtml

¹⁴⁸ F. Oktay Tanrısever, "Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkilerinde Artan Gerilim: Bir Sağırlar Diyalogu mu?" Available at www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_08.html.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

individual and collective defense right, which is appropriate to the Provision of United Nations and has become bound by the resolution 1368 of the Security Council after the barbaric attack realized against USA in September the last year. The subject I want to emphasize is that we are not against the territorial integrity and the rights of sovereignty of Georgia or we do not feel emotions to change its political regime. (Author's Translation)

2.4.4 RF's Military Involvement in Georgia

"We have been in Caucasia and continue to be!"¹⁵⁰

First of all, it will be meaningful to emphasize the significance of the South Caucasia for RF from the military domain. As mentioned previously, RF, as the ex-possessor of the region, has given vital strategic importance to the region, which is located between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, and which has served throughout the centuries the role of a bridge or barrier for Russia, depending on the international situation.¹⁵¹ Actually, this importance has not decreased in the post-cold war era either. Therefore, RF, to maintain control over borders between the South Caucasian states and Turkey and Iran, has aimed to have – somehow – military forces in Georgia and Armenia. In this part, only related section of this strategy, RF's military involvement in Georgia will be examined and its effect to Turkey's security interests will be highlighted.

The first treaty, which led to the settlement of Russian forces in Georgia – in South Ossetia – was the 'Dagomys Agreement' signed by Shevardnadze, who had been threatened with death on several occasions, on 24th June 1992.¹⁵² (By the way, at that time RF hoped that the military agreements would lock Georgia into an exclusive

¹⁵⁰ One of the slogans written at the entry of Russian 102nd military base in Armenia. Turkish General Staff. September 2002. *Ermenistan*. Ankara: Information Notes, p.5.

¹⁵¹ Jim Nichols, "Transcaucasus Newly Independent States: Political Developments and Implications for US Interests," Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/95-024.htm

¹⁵² Bruno Coppieters. 1998. "Form and Content in Soviet and Post-Soviet Nationality and Regional Policies," in Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters and Alexei Malashenko, eds., *Conflicting Loyalties and the State in Post-Soviet Russia and Eurasia*. London: Frank Cass Publishers, p.12.

Russian sphere of influence.¹⁵³) Perhaps, Shevardnadze may have believed that Georgia had to consider the interests of RF to neutralize its negative impacts on the internal affairs, such as Abkhazian and South Ossetian crises. However, this agreement also warranted that Georgia would continue to take the share of equipment from the Soviet Armed Forces in accordance with Tashkent CIS Summit decisions, which were agreed upon in July 1992.

The second one was the CIS Collective Security Treaty, which called for mutual defense consultations. It was signed by Shevardnadze on 22nd October 1993. Actually, Shevardnadze, in line with his words, had to decide to cooperate with Russia in order to avoid the complete collapse of Georgia. The reasons behind this by–force decision were the economic decline, the situation in Abkhazia, the hostile manners of Gamsakhurdia’s supporters and the growing unrest in the ethnic clans. Most probably, Shevardnadze felt himself under severe pressure because of these evil circumstances. Nevertheless, one day later, on 23rd October 1993, he agreed to a Russian peacekeeping operation with a CIS mandate under UN observation.¹⁵⁴

In February 1994, Boris Yeltsin traveled to Tbilisi and held a meeting with Shevardnadze about military cooperation between two states.¹⁵⁵ At the end, he signed the ‘Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighborly Relations, and Cooperation’ (signed 3 February 1994 and ratified 17 January 1996 by the Georgian parliament). After that visit, Russia began to assist Georgia in the establishment of a new unified army. Furthermore, in April 1994, Lieutenant–General Vardiko Nadibaidze (an ethnically Georgian General in the Russian army who could barely speak Georgian), was appointed Minister of Defense in

¹⁵³ Edmund Herzig. 1999. *The New Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*. London: Chatham House Papers, p.49.

¹⁵⁴ Pavel Baev. 1997. *Russia’s Policies in the Caucasus*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.47.

¹⁵⁵ Dov Lynch. 2000. *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan*. New York: Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.131.

Georgia.¹⁵⁶ Initially, it can be assessed that Shevardnadze succeeded to protect Georgia's sovereignty with Russian military aid. But, he received this support as a *quid pro quo* for joining the CIS¹⁵⁷ and allowing the development of Russian forces in Georgia's spaces.

In September 1995, RF and Georgia signed another agreement: 'Treaty on Russian Military Bases on the Territory of the Republic of Georgia'¹⁵⁸ (signed 15th September 1995 but never ratified). This document granted Russia a 25 year (the deadline is 2020) lease of four military bases in Vaziani (137th Military Base, 30 km. south of Tbilisi, manpower is not known), Akhalkalaki (62nd Military Base and 147th Motorized Rifle Division, 3.000 manpower), Bat'umi (12nd Military Base and 145th Motorized Infantry Division, in the capital of Ajaria, manpower is not known), and Gudauta (50th Military Base and 345th Parachute Infantry Regiment in Abkhazia, 1.701 manpower) with some 9,200 servicemen on Georgian soil. With the help of these bases, Russians controled 2,264 military objects on Georgian territory left by the Soviet Union's Armed Forces in 1991.¹⁵⁹ RF, with this agreement, also had a right to protect all of Georgia's borders, especially along the Georgian-Turkish border, both from land and maritime. In this way, RF intended to border again on Turkey as a *de facto* neighbor. The first goal pursued by RF in this strategy was to control the gates of the Central Asia and to shut them to Turkey. RF's this approach is such a drawback that affects Turkey's security policies. However, in response to these initiatives, Russia was to provide training and equipment to Georgia in order to rebuild the Georgian Armed Forces.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Jonathan Aves. 1998. "The Caucasus States: The Regional Security Complex." In Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth, eds., *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.184.

¹⁵⁷ Jared Feinberg, "The Armed Forces in Georgia," Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, two years before the period ended, if the parties had not raised an objection against this agreement, then it would have automatically continued.

¹⁵⁹ Jared Feinberg, "The Armed Forces in Georgia," Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

¹⁶⁰ Roy Allison. 1998. "Introduction." In Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth, eds., *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.18. And Pavel Baev. 1997. *Russia's Policies in the Caucasus*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.47.

In fact, this military base issue, which still continues today, is the most important matter to the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Georgia. The examination has so far indicated that this policy of RF is much more effective than the previous three ones. For, Russian military presence in Georgia have provided several advantages to Russia. First, it has enabled Russian forces to interfere with Chechen militants in Georgia's territory. Second, RF has envisaged that if there was instability in Georgia, then this would jeopardize the implementation of the B–T–C project and thus facilitate the implementation of the alternative pipeline, which would come to Novorosisk harbor.¹⁶¹ By this way, Russia would have the control of the energy reserves and penetrate in Georgia more easily. For this purpose, RF has used these military bases. Actually, RF's intend is to prevent the 'security vacuum' keeping its military forces permanently stationed within the region.¹⁶²

RF's delay in closing its military bases in Georgia is another but the most important component of pressure it has applied against Georgia. For, at the OSCE Istanbul Summit¹⁶³ in November 1999, RF undertook to reduce, by 31st December 2000, the levels of its Treaty Limited Equipment (TLE) located within the territory of Georgia so that it would not exceed 153 tanks, 241 armored combat vehicles (ACV) and 140 artillery systems. Moreover, according to this 'Modified OSCE Treaty', RF also accepted to dispose of the TLE located at the Russian military bases at Vaziani and Gudauta and at the repair facilities in Tbilisi no later than 31st December 2000. The Russian military bases at Gudauta and Vaziani would be totally disbanded and withdrawn by 1st July

¹⁶¹ Halil Siddik Ayhan, *Dynamics of the Alliance Between Turkey and USA: The South Caucasus Case*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2003, p.166.

¹⁶² Dmitri Trenin. 1996. "Russia's Security Interests and Policies in the Caucasus Region". In Bruno Coppieters, ed., *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*. Belgium/Brussels: VUB University Press, p.97.

¹⁶³ This agreement signed in Istanbul is technically a modification and clarification of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. The Caucasasia is considered part of Europe, so CFE sets limits on Russian troops in the Caucasasia. For more information about the 'Joint Declaration Between RF and Georgia' dated 17th November 1999 see also www.osce.org/docs

2001.¹⁶⁴ Consequently, the Russian pullout, which coincided with the holding of the first US–Georgian naval exercises, began at the beginning of August 2000 and has been completed by now. But, the negotiations on the closure of two other military bases (Akhalkalaki – Bat’umi) are still under way.¹⁶⁵

Russian officials insist that the withdrawal from military bases in Bat’umi and Akhalkalaki and the development of alternative places for the bases inside Russia will take 11 years.¹⁶⁶ Russia has also proposed that it would cost itself \$6 billion¹⁶⁷ to close them, but might be able to move more quickly if the West paid for the closings. Actually, RF had used the similar tactic while it was withdrawing its troops from East Germany and taken a great deal of money. Whereas, Georgia wants to get rid of these remaining bases within three years, until 2007.¹⁶⁸ According to Georgian calculations, the total amount due is only \$704 million.¹⁶⁹ Likewise, the reply to RF’s this demand came from USA: Washington promised to give \$10 million assistance¹⁷⁰ to RF in order to finance the closure of these military bases. Besides, on 14th July 2000, England proposed to designate a fund for this purpose in the meeting of OSCE Permanent Council.¹⁷¹

Although it signed an agreement, RF has acted as if it does not want to withdraw from these bases. Because, RF has believed that withdrawing from the bases would cause

¹⁶⁴ On the eve of the scheduled RF withdrawal from Vaziani and Gudauta, Georgia for the first time in its history hosted military maneuvers “Cooperative Partner–2001” under NATO’s Partnership for Peace with the involvement of over 4,000 ground and naval troops from 10 countries – USA, Turkey, France, Greece, Italy (NATO member–states) plus Georgia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Romania, and Ukraine in western Georgia on June 11–22. In Ivlian Haindrava, “Georgia to NATO,” Available at www.ideoe.org/nij230.htm

¹⁶⁵ M.A. Smith, “Russian Foreign Policy 2000: The Near Abroad,” Available at www.da.mod.uk/CSRC/Home/documents/pdfs/F71-mas.pdf And In Kamil Ağacan. August 2000.

“Gürcistan’a Yönelik Artan Rus Baskıları ve Türkiye” *Stratejik Analiz* 1:4, p.32.

¹⁶⁶ At first, RF demanded a 14–year period to withdraw from its bases at Bat’umi and Akhalkalaki.

¹⁶⁷ This is approximately equivalent to one third of RF’s annual budget. In Kamil Ağacan. August 2000. “Gürcistan’a Yönelik Artan Rus Baskıları ve Türkiye” *Stratejik Analiz* 1:4, p.33.

¹⁶⁸ Nichol, Jim and Julie Kim, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for US Interests,” Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf

¹⁶⁹ Sergei Blagov, “Military Issues Block Russia-Georgia Détente,” Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav010603.shtml

¹⁷⁰ Paul Joyal, USA senator who made an official visit to Tbilisi in June 2000, declared that USA had allotted \$10 million assistance to RF in order to facilitate its withdrawal from the military bases in Georgia.

the lost of its influence on Georgia and thus its interests in the region. For that reason, it has stopped the negotiations about this issue. As a reason for this situation, RF has set forth an idea that since Georgia has been unstable and insecure from the political point of view, these military bases are the stability components of RF. On the other hand, the delay of RF's closure of the bases can be deemed as a precaution of NATO's capture the control of them. As, two members of NATO, Turkey and USA, has modernized the Vaziani military base after the withdrawal of RF.¹⁷²

The reluctance of Moscow about the closure of Russian bases is also supported by Abkhazians on the ground it could pave the way for new skirmishes in Georgia. Abkhaz officials also required the transfer of equipment in Gudauta military base to Abkhazia. In the same way, Ajaria demanded its own representatives to be in the Georgian–Russian negotiations about the closure of the Bat'umi military base.¹⁷³

In this condition, RF has asserted that “the postponement of the closure of the bases is not a selfish behavior that serves the interests of RF.”¹⁷⁴ Rather, it claims that this attitude stems from the anxiety about the continuation of the peace and stability among the main ethnic groups. Actually, in this way, it wants to gain legitimate. Consequently, RF wants to create an image on international public that Georgia is a ‘weak state’ that cannot provide security in its own territory. Here, the most important tendency is the RF's legitimization itself about the military bases via minority nationalism. (This utilization was also examined in its visa regime policy). Because, it is a well-known secret that for both of these bases, servicemen are recruited largely from

¹⁷¹ Kamil Ağacan. August 2000. “Gürcistan’a Yönelik Artan Rus Baskıları ve Türkiye” *Stratejik Analiz* 1:4, p.33.

¹⁷² F. Oktay Tanrısever, “Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkilerinde Artan Gerilim: Bir Sağırlar Diyalogu mu?” Available at www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_08.html.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

the local population, giving these minorities an important advantage against the capital.¹⁷⁵

Apart from its huge influence on the minorities in Georgia, RF's military presence in this country has also caused itself to gain great initiative about its regional policy applications. Therefore, RF may not abandon the two regions, where it still has two division-sized military bases, although it has vacated the Vaziani base and pulled out its military equipment from the Gudauta base. If Georgia insisted on the subject, then it would incite the Abkhazian, South Ossetian and Armenian problems in Georgia. Thus, it will try to make Georgia give up from its insistent stance.¹⁷⁶

New Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili¹⁷⁷ is also exerting pressure on Russia to close down the two remaining military bases. Saakashvili has asserted that Russia's desire to maintain a military presence in Georgia is connected more to 'emotional' factors about strategic considerations. Saakashvili also clarifies that he is trying to take a restrained approach: "Russia should have already withdrawn from these bases in Georgia, but we are treading carefully as to the resolution of these issues."¹⁷⁸ Saakashvili has also elucidated that the normalization of relations can occur only if Russia changes its imperial ambitions and treats Georgia as an equal partner. It can be inferred from the Saakashvili's words that, if Moscow continues to adhere to the 11-year withdrawal timetable, then Georgia is likely to take it as a sign that RF is disinclined to compromise on other difficult issues, including Abkhazia's future political status.¹⁷⁹ As

¹⁷⁵ Ulaş Mangıtlı, *Rusya, Türkiye ve Avrasya: Türk ve Rus Dış Politika Alanlarının Avrasya' daki Kesişimleri*, Ankara: Institution of Social Sciences Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2001, p.

¹⁷⁶ Ercan İnceoğlu, *Kafkaslar Bölgesinde Rusya Federasyonu*, Istanbul: Turkish War Academy, Thesis, 2002, p.4-3-10.

¹⁷⁷ Saakashvili's January 25 inauguration offered the Georgian president an opportunity to raise the base issue's international profile. The guest of honor at the ceremonies was US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who was repeatedly asked about the US stance towards the Russian withdrawal.

¹⁷⁸ Igor Torbakov, "Moscow Views Military Withdrawal Issue as Litmus Test for Georgian-Russian Relations," Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav010603.shtml

¹⁷⁹ Stephen J Blank, "The Prospects of Russian-American Partnership: The Georgian Litmus Test," Available at www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=47

for today, the timetable of Russian military withdrawal from Georgia still remains the subject of discussions. But, remaining of these two Russian bases in Georgia has been perceived as the most important threat against the territorial integrity, independence and security of Georgia.¹⁸⁰

What about the transfer of border control from Russian forces to Georgian border guards? As can be deemed that this is one of the most basic of a state's sovereign functions. Until 1998 Russian border guards were stationed at all Georgia's external borders. Only in 1998 did RF agree to hand over all border guard functions. In April 1998, Georgian and Russian officials signed a formal agreement whereby Georgia would assume full control over guarding its sea borders as of 1 January 1999. Georgian units began to replace Russian's in the same year. The first phase would be Georgian border Guards' taking over the Black Sea coast line, primarily the Bat'umi and Poti sectors. On the other hand, the Georgian parliament, had passed a law in July 1998 calling for Georgia's border guards to have full control over the country's land frontiers within two years. As a result, in January 1999, Georgia assumed full control over guarding its sea borders except Abkhazian coastlines, and in October 1999, most of the Russian border troops left¹⁸¹, except for some liaison officers.¹⁸²

However, the presence of Russian Armed Forces in Georgia provided RF with great leverage over Georgian economic and most importantly political decisions. On the other hand, Russia failed to solve the Abkhaz and Ossetian conflicts, strengthen the army as the Georgian officials wanted and restore the Georgian territorial integrity although

¹⁸⁰ Then Georgian Foreign Minister, Irakli Menegarişvili, openly stated his displeasure about the Russian Bases as "There are many disagreements between RF's and our opinions. But, our attitude is so clear. We do not want any foreign military presence in our territories. RF's withdrawal from the bases provides the relations increase positively. These bases only creates tension, nothing else."

¹⁸¹ For example, the components of RF's Coast Guards in Black Sea, whose duty is to control Georgian territorial waters, departed from Georgia in 10th July 1999.

¹⁸² Edmund Herzig. 1999. *The New Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*. London: Chatham House Papers, p.50. And Feinberg, Jared, "The Georgian Military: Nowhere to Go but Up," Available at

Georgia had given military bases to Russia on its own territory. As a result, the presence of Russian military started to disturb Georgian officials, as the then Georgian Foreign Minister Irakli Menegarashvili described it a “major point of irritation in bilateral relations.”¹⁸³ So, the Georgian parliament has not ratified the agreements on Russian forward basing and on joint border protection. Then, Georgia has turned its face to the West in the military domain. In other words, all these insufficiencies caused Georgia to be alienated from RF. Therefore, western powers, particularly the US, has become a strategic partner of Georgia¹⁸⁴ as examined in the third chapter.

If need to assess all these policies of RF, it can be concluded that they all serve the interests of RF in Georgia and thus in the region. In addition to these strategies, the Russian Federation Duma amended a law related with the ‘Acceptance to Russian Federation and Establishment of New Subjects’ on Russian citizenship on 28 June 2002. If this law is evaluated synonymously with RF’s inexecution of the obligations that it accepted in the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999, its recent intentions can be understood better. Because, this law recognizes possibility of a foreign state(s) or part of it join with RF. Moreover, it is not obligatory that these kind of states have a common borderline with RF. If this law is ratified, then Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Ajaria, Nagorno–Karabakh and even Javakhetia could join with RF.¹⁸⁵ Or, in other words, the residents of these regions could become Russian citizens. This move was viewed by Georgia as equal to indirect annexation. The Duma’s action can be perceived as for strengthening the continued Russian military presence in Georgia by arranging ‘volunteer participants’ against the possibility of complete lost of the two bases.¹⁸⁶

www.cdi.org/weekly/1998/issue26/#4 And Liz Fuller, “See Change in Georgian-Russian relations?,” Available at www.atimes.com/c-asia/AA12Ag02.html

¹⁸³ Jared Feinberg, “The Armed Forces in Georgia,” Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

¹⁸⁴ Maxim Shashenkov. 1994. “Russian Peacekeeping in the ‘Near abroad,” *Survival*, 36: 3, p.50.

¹⁸⁵ Hasan Kanbolat and Kamil Ağacan, “Gürcistan’daki Rus Üslerinin Tasviyesinde Mehter Adımları: Bir Geri İki İleri” Available at www.avsam.org/turkce/yayinlar/stratejikanaliz/stranl/sas16.htm

¹⁸⁶ F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Available at www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1241.pdf

2.5 RF's View

“[We are going] to counteract any attempts of third countries to establish a politico–military presence in the countries bordering Russian Federation.”¹⁸⁷

The all abovementioned ‘punitive’ actions can be deemed as the exemplars of RF’s objection to Georgia’s Western foreign policy orientation, its desire to join NATO, its support for the B–T–C oil pipeline, its membership in the GUUAM¹⁸⁸ organization, and its alleged acquiescence to Chechen fighters operating along its Russian border. However, in this part of the chapter, only RF’s view about the Turkish–Georgian relations will be explained as one of the reasons of all aforementioned policies.

It is no doubt that while Turkey has expanded its relations with Georgia in political, economic and military domains, Russia has looked suspiciously to Turkey’s expanding policies in Georgia and used regional conflicts and domestic instability in this republic as an instrument to prevent its penetration. In other words, the intensification of closer strategic ties between Ankara and Tbilisi have been irritating Russian leaders, who have already cautioned Georgia against taking “steps that violate the existing balance [of powers] in the Transcaucasus.”¹⁸⁹ Then, what are the main discomforts of RF towards the relations between Turkey and Georgia? There are mainly three:

First, starting in the final years of USSR, the expansion of Turkey’s sphere of influence into the South Caucasus has been considered one of the most serious challenges to RF’s national interest with the attendant danger that RF would be drawn into broader conflicts. Therefore, RF feels great concern about the increasing

¹⁸⁷ Margot Light. 1996. “Russia and Transcaucasia,” in John F. R Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, eds., *Transcaucasian Boundaries*. The SOAS / GRC Geopolitics Series 4. London: UCL Press, p.49.

¹⁸⁸ GUAM was established by Gorgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldavia in 1997. Uzbekistan joined the group in 1999 (GUUAM) and left it in 2002. The main objectives of this arrangement are to reinforce the states’ sovereignty, to coordinate their national politics and to weaken RF’s effect on the region. Actually, it was the first political–economic organization established within the CIS without RF. Common security worries, common financial interests related with energy and economic cooperation are the other factors that caused GUAM to be set up. For more information see www.guam.org

cooperation, particularly in the military domain, between Turkey and Georgia. In this context, it deemed Shevardnadze's initiatives about this cooperation as a 'betrayal' towards itself. The reason behind this worry is so obvious when RF's national security strategies are examined. As emphasized in the previous parts, RF does not accept Turkey's military presence both in the Caucasian region and Central Asia. So, that Turkey, who is an ally of US and one of the powerful members of NATO¹⁹⁰, has intensified its influence and military presence in Georgia is one of the most important subjects and sources of anxiety to which RF desires to put a stop. For that reason, it can be hoped that RF would put pressure on new Georgian Government about Turkey's military presence in Georgia or at least, make this situation as a 'bargaining tool' for its own military bases in this state.¹⁹¹

Second, Georgia's positive approach to the B-T-C pipeline is another subject that makes RF feel uneasiness about its regional energy interests. In the recent years, RF has changed its strategy and formed a kind of foreign policy that bases on selling of energy sources, which will create economic dependence. That is to say, RF wants to make neighbor states be dependent to itself via energy resources it has, as in Blue Stream Project¹⁹² and control the existing pipelines. The most important obstruct for RF's this strategic turn is obviously B-T-C pipeline.¹⁹³ On the other hand, in case of realization of the project, contrary to RF's regional strategy, Turkey would increase its influence both politically and economically in the regional and international field and have a larger

¹⁸⁹ Igor Torbakov, "Expanding Turkish-Georgian Strategic Ties Rankle Russia," Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav042503_pr.shtml

¹⁹⁰ Russian commentaries frequently portray Turkey as a 'spearhead' of Western and NATO's strategic influence. In Rajan Menon, Yuri E. Federov and Ghia Nodia (eds.). 1999. *Russia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia: the 21st Century Security Environment*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, p.36.

¹⁹¹ Cem Oğuz. 2004. *Gürcistan' daki Gelişmeler ve Azerbaycan'a Etkileri*, p.1.

¹⁹² The Blue Stream agreement was signed with the Russian firm Gazprom in December 1997. Under the agreement, Gazprom will supply Turkey with 16 billion cubic meters of gas per year for 25 years. In 2004 and 2005 12 billion cubic meters, in 2006 14m³, and from 2007 on 16m³.

¹⁹³ Cem Oğuz. 2004. *Gürcistan' daki Gelişmeler ve Azerbaycan'a Etkileri*, p.1.

movement opportunity against RF.¹⁹⁴ Consequently, the positively increasing Turkish–Georgian energy relationship does not comply with RF’s strategical thoughts.

Thirdly, in the post–Cold War period, RF has feared that Turkey might play the pan–Turkic card¹⁹⁵ to extend its influence throughout the Caucasia and Central Asia. In addition, RF has also suspected that Turkey has been aiming to form a Turkic alliance along RF's southern periphery, where Georgia may be the first springboard to reach this objective. According to Russians one of the evidence of this strategy is pan–Turkic groupings’, in Turkey, participation in the struggle of Chechens, whom RF has blamed getting assistance from Georgia.¹⁹⁶ Moreover, another indirect signal of RF’s this view seems to be in an article with anti–Turkish overtones. The commentary in the ‘Journal Konservator’ discusses the potential threat posed by the concept of pan–Turkism to Russia’s territorial integrity. “Of all the major irredentist movements in Europe, pan–Turkism is the only one that is active today,” says the commentary. The article also warns that “the ideas of pan–Turkism are being openly disseminated in Russia.”¹⁹⁷ For that reason RF has been striving to keep deployment of its military forces in Georgia and in South Caucasia. This is directly affecting Turkish security policies.

Actually, one of the important events that aroused great concern in Russia was the President Süleyman Demirel's sudden visit to Georgia in 2000, and statements made by him during his press conference. As a result of his statements, “... history obliges Turkey to be present in the Caucasus,”¹⁹⁸ then Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Ivan

¹⁹⁴ Zakir Avşar. July–August 1997. “Kafkasya – Rusya Federasyonu ve Türkiye” *Yeni Türkiye* 3:16, p.1885.

¹⁹⁵ According to the possibility of Turkey’s this card, RF has exploited the Kurdish issue. It permitted the establishment in Moscow on 1st November 1994 of a Confederation of Kurdish Organization of the CIS. In Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2000, p.49.

¹⁹⁶ Gareth Winrow. 2000. *Turkey and the Caucasus – Domestic Interests and Security Concerns*. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.17.

¹⁹⁷ Igor Torbakov, “Expanding Turkish-Georgian Strategic Ties Rankle Russia,” Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav042503_pr.shtml

¹⁹⁸ January 18, 2000. “The Caucasus Region and Turkey”. *Turkish Daily News*.

Ivanov came to Ankara to conduct discussions with his Turkish counterparts. With this visit, it can be concluded that Turkey's involvement in the Caucasus region has become more apparent in the eyes of the RF.¹⁹⁹ So, in line with the all abovementioned and implied thoughts, RF has a strategic view that it does not want close relationship between Turkey and Georgia and takes every measure to keep Turkey away from the region at the cost of harming Turkey's security policies.

¹⁹⁹ January 18, 2000. "The Caucasus Region and Turkey". *Turkish Daily News*.

CHAPTER 3

3. THE UNITED STATES' POLICY TOWARD GEORGIA

“Russian Federation is using a ‘stick’ when dealing with Georgia while the United States is holding a ‘carrot’.”²⁰⁰

In this chapter, the US's role in the region and its policy towards Georgia are examined in order to assess its political, economic and military initiatives in this republic from the Turkish security policy aspect. It is no doubt that together with many reasons which make Georgia attractive to US, there are also several for the contrary. But, inevitably, most of them stem from the characteristics of the region.

3.1 The United States' South Caucasian Policy After the Cold War

“The United States will not allow a hostile power to dominate any region of critical importance to our interests.”²⁰¹

The United States is the final important player in the Caucasian region, despite its remoteness.²⁰² After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the South Caucasasia presented both several challenges and opportunities in the political, economic and military domains to the US as the unique super power of the world. However, initially, the US neglected the South Caucasian states in its foreign policy making in the early 1990s because of the

²⁰⁰ During her official visit to Moscow in January 2003, then Speaker of the Georgian Parliament Nino Burdzhaneladze stated this. Furthermore, because of this statement, for a long time, a new concept was used in order to emphasize this relationship: ‘Stick and Carrot Diplomacy’. In Aleksandr Chigorin. 2003. “Russian–Georgian Relations” *International Affairs* 49:4, p.136.

²⁰¹ The 1998 National Security Strategy. In Stephen J. Blank, “US Military Engagement with Transcaucasia And Central Asia,” Available at www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/pubs/2000/milengag/milengag.pdf

fact that “[its] preoccupation with the four ‘nuclear successor states’ [Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus] prevented the South Caucasian and Central Asian states from getting much serious attention [by US] until 1994”.²⁰³ In other words, the US gave its strategic priority to dismantle the Soviet military machines and nuclear arsenals in order to confine them within the RF’s space.²⁰⁴ Naturally, this thought paved the way for RF a free hand in the South Caucasia.

On the other hand, at first, the US was not enthusiastic about asserting its influence in the region since it had acknowledged the South Caucasia as RF's sphere of influence.²⁰⁵ Moreover, it had also been aware of RF’s security concerns in the South Caucasia as in the statement of the then US President Bill Clinton: “You [Russians] will be more likely to be involved in some of the areas near you, just like the United States has been involved in the last several years in Panama and Grenada near our area”.²⁰⁶

Actually, the event that changed the US politics was the war in Chechnya. Because, this battle indicated to the US that RF does still have conventional military capabilities, and for that reason, it could create substantial amounts of trouble. In this context, the South Caucasia’s importance for the US was strongly emphasized for the first time in the speech of the then National Security Advisor, Sandy Berger, in March 1997, “China, Turkey and the Caucasia are areas of special emphasis [for US] and Washington's intent is to step up its involvement in the Caucasia and Central Asia.”²⁰⁷ Consequently, the US policy in the Caucasian region became increasingly assertive from the second half of 1997. Furthermore, the US declared that it considers the Caucasia of

²⁰² As will be explained in the following parts, PFP activities, B–T–C pipeline project, East–West Transport and Energy corridor and US troops in Georgia indicate that the US actually became regional power without being one in geographical terms.

²⁰³ Elizabeth Sherwood–Randall, “US Policy and the Caucasus,” Available at <http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~bsp/caucasus/newsletter/1998-05.pdf>

²⁰⁴ Fiona Hill, “A Not-So-Grand Strategy: United States Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia since 1991,” Available at www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/views/articles/fhill/2001politique.htm

²⁰⁵ Svante E. Cornell, “The Caucasian States and Eurasian Strategic Alignments,” Available at www.geocities.com/svantec/geopl.html

²⁰⁶ Halil Siddik Ayhan, *Dynamics of the Alliance Between Turkey and USA: The South Caucasus Case*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2003, p.97.

‘vital US interests’ together with Caspian region. Likewise, US Defense Ministry has included Caucasia in US Armed Forces’ duty zone since October 1998.²⁰⁸

As a result, the US accepted the South Caucasia as a free competition area. In addition, it also began to pursue active politics to prevent Russian imperialistic hegemony in the region.²⁰⁹ It started realizing this policy by: First; strengthening regional economic (markets), political (government and civil societies) and military (armed forces) mechanisms, second; providing support to the stability and independence of the Caucasian states through multilateral and bilateral conflict resolution efforts, and third; developing an East–West energy and transportation coalition, supported by Turkey, between Georgia and Azerbaijan. The latter also constitutes one of the main outlines of US’s regional policy, for it has strongly supported the ‘multiple pipelines strategy’²¹⁰ since the end of 1995. So, the regional priorities in the US policy has changed. Besides, on 21th July 1997, the political objectives of the US in the Caucasia became obvious with the speech of then Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, at the Central Asia Institute. He outlined four dimensions of the US support to the countries of the Caucasia:²¹¹

1. Promotion of democracy;
2. Creation of free market economies;
3. Sponsorship of peace and cooperation among the countries of the region;
4. Integration into the larger international community.

²⁰⁷ James Macdougall, “The New Stage in US-Caspian Sea Basin Relations,” Available at www.ca-c.org/dataeng/st_04_dougall.shtml.

²⁰⁸ Svante E. Cornell, “The Caucasian States and Eurasian Strategic Alignments,” Available at www.geocities.com/svantec/geop1.html

²⁰⁹ Ilgar Aliyev, *The U.S. Strategic Engagement in the South Caucasus 1991 – 2002*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2002, p.87.

²¹⁰ The US’s Caucasian policy aims to diversify global energy supplies through multiple East–West pipelines. By achieving this goal, it plans to increase its own and its allies’ energy security, eliminate traditional energy monopolies, support the new states of Central Asia and the Caucasia, and invigorate their ability to defend their borders against transnational threats like arms, drug smuggling, and ethnic conflict. In Stephen J. Blank, “US Military Engagement with Transcaucasia And Central Asia,” Available at www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/pubs/2000/milengag/milengag.pdf

For example, considering the fourth dimension, the US has fostered these states' ties with the West by supporting their membership in the OSCE and NATO's PfP. Actually, the main reason behind these supports is to end the dependence of Caucasian states on RF for trade, security, and other relations.²¹² On the other hand, from the critical theory point of view, it can be concluded that the US wants to ensure the Caspian oil's not being under the sole control of RF, who sees the US policy as an attempt to limit its influence in the Caucasia. Because, as stated in its national security strategy, one of the main objectives of the US's regional policy is to prevent any hostile state from obtaining a monopoly over the local energy supply and from gaining influence in the politics of the region.²¹³ However, there are other geostrategic and geo-economic priorities for the US involvement, such as containing Iran's influence and promoting the US business interests and strategic plans, in the region.²¹⁴

Besides these economic, geostrategic, and political interests, there are also security interests, which derive from the US's concerns about threats posed by terrorist groups in the Caucasian region. According to its security policy whose priorities have changed, the US, since after the 9/11, has been desiring to prevent the conflicts and weak states that may serve as safe place for terrorism. That implies that it cannot afford any Russian involvement that may destabilize the balance in the South Caucasia.²¹⁵ For example, in this context, in February 2002, the US for the first time indicated that the South Caucasian region could play a key role in the second act of its military campaign

²¹¹ James MacDougall, "The New Stage in US-Caspian Sea Basin Relations," Available at www.ca-c.org/dataeng/st_04_dougall.shtml

²¹² Jim Nichol, "Transcaucasus Newly Independent States: Political Developments and Implications for US Interests," Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/95-024.htm.

²¹³ Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.85.

²¹⁴ Mustafa Aydın. 2000. *New Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus – Causes of Instability and Predicament*. SAM Papers No. 2 / 2000. Ankara: Center for Strategic Research, p.44.

²¹⁵ Jaba Devdariani and Blanka Hancilova, "US Involvement in Caucasian Security Architecture Grows," Available at www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=8

against terrorism.²¹⁶ Therefore, considering this strategy, first of US's regional security interests is to keep weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists or illegal factions and curtail the proliferation of such weapons not only through the region but outside it as well. Second is to prevent a nuclear attack on the US or its allies with the weapons from arsenals of the Former Soviet Union.²¹⁷ Third is to prevent the emergence of a Russian hard-line military threat to Europe, Turkey, and the Middle East.²¹⁸

Finally, the question of what the US will gain if it realizes these objectives is also significant to understand its post-Cold War Caucasian policy. As mostly perceived, the US cannot afford to neglect any region of the world which are economically and strategically important. The Caucasus is one of the such crucial geopolitical regions. For that reason, supporting the states in Caucasus will allow the US to protect its future investments in energy resources. Second, they will allow American companies to participate in building the new Silk Road into Central Asia and the Far East. Third, infrastructure projects in the region are especially profitable for the US heavy equipment, aircraft, transportation, petrochemical, and telecommunication industries.²¹⁹

In line with the abovementioned considerations, it can be concluded that the US has had four sets of interests in the region: an economic interest of access to oil²²⁰; a geopolitical interest in terms of recreating stability in the region; a political interest in seeing the social and political transformation of these countries; and a security interest in preventing terrorism to find safe places within the Caucasian states. All of them are also

²¹⁶ Jean-Christophe Peuch, "Georgia: What Are The Motives For U.S. Sending Elite Troops?" Available at www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/02/27022002095326.asp

²¹⁷ In mid-1998 American military personnel conducted a highly secret operation to remove over 9 pounds of highly enriched weapons-grade uranium from a facility near the Georgian capital of Tbilisi.

²¹⁸ In Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.86.

²¹⁹ Ariel Cohen, "Ethnic Interests Threaten U.S. Interests in the Caucasus," Available at www.heritage.org/Research/RussianandEurasia/BG1222.cfm

²²⁰ Clinton said "we want to ensure access to world markets for countries of the region, while helping diversify sources of energy supply for consumers in the US and around the globe". In Weekly Compilation Of Presidential Documents, 05.08.2000, Vol 36, p. 943.

related with the US's geopolitical and strategic objectives on Georgia. But, there are more in detail.

3.2 The United States' Geopolitical and Strategic Objectives on Georgia

The main target for the US policy applications in the region has been Georgia since the end of Cold War. So, it has quite a lot of objectives on it. For example, former Secretary of State James A. Baker assessed the importance of Georgia in US policy that "it is in the strategic interests of the US to build the strongest possible economic, cultural and political ties to Georgia".²²¹ In this part of the chapter, only the main objectives of the US are examined in order to understand the US's approach to Georgia.

As mentioned above, the US's interest in the Caucasian region has intensified since the late 1990s. In fact, its efforts has increased in order to gain access to the Caspian gas and oil. Therefore, since it serves as an important transportation route for these energy substances that begin from Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan and go to Western markets via its ports on the Black Sea, Georgia has become a key actor of US's economic interest in the region. 'Multiple Pipelines Strategy' should be evaluated in this manner too. Because, if the natural gas and petroleum in the Caspian Sea Basin will be run and transport to Western markets by the US's companies, then, undoubtedly, Georgia will be so important for US because of its indispensable location. The US Georgian Ambassador, Kenneth Spencer Yalowitz, also stated Georgia's this crucial regional role by proclaiming, "Georgia can be a 'beacon' not only for the Caucasia but also this whole region as part of the development of the Silk Road and oil pipelines through this region."²²² Also, James A. Baker emphasized that "Georgia's importance to the US is derived from its location at the nexus of Europe and Asia with ports on the Black Sea,

²²¹ Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.96.

which will enable it to become the principal outlet for bringing Caspian oil and gas to international markets.”²²³ So, a confident Georgia could protect the US’s access to the oil pipelines on the Caspian Sea by stabilizing the South Caucasia. Consequently, benefiting from Georgia as an energy corridor for the Caspian Basin is an important element of the US energy policy in the region, but it is also corresponding with the US’s concern for Georgia’s security.

Georgia’s security is very significant for the US’s vital interests in the region. Baker also emphasized the same objective as “Georgia’s future security is important to America’s security.”²²⁴ Therefore, supporting Georgia’s territorial integrity and independence, and struggling to solve its domestic problems are parallel with the US’s this objective. Strobe Talbott also stressed how important Georgia and the resolution of its internal conflicts are to the US foreign policy when he stated that “none of the business objectives of transporting Caspian oil will be successful so long as the people of the Caucasia are living and dying in a state [Georgia] of hostilities.”²²⁵ In this context, the US has made clear to RF at the highest levels that no excuse which endanger Georgia’s stability and territorial integrity would be acceptable.²²⁶ In return – while the US supported Georgia against RF – the former Georgian President Shevardnadze’s administration strongly backed the US campaign to Iraq. For example, before the Operation in Iraq, the US officials inspected air facilities in Georgia for possible use in Iraq military operations.²²⁷ This action indicates that Georgia is the US’s chief strategic partner in the Caucasia. As a result, in order to realize this objective, the US aims to

²²² Jared Feinberg, “Armed forces in Georgia,” Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

²²³ Jared Feinberg, “Armed forces in Georgia,” Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

²²⁴ Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2000, p.97.

²²⁵ Testimony by Deputy–Secretary of State Strobe Talbott at the Subcommittee on Foreign appropriations of Senate Appropriations Committee 31 March 1998. In Jared Feinberg, “Armed forces in Georgia,” Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

²²⁶ Zeyno Baran “United States Will Help Georgia Fight Terrorism and Strengthen Internally,” Available at www.csis.org/ruseura/georgia/gaupdate_0203.htm

²²⁷ Eric A. Miller, “Georgia Struggles To Develop National Security Framework,” Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav032803.shtml

support Georgia's efforts to resolve separatist conflicts; to cause withdrawal of Russian military bases, troops and equipment; to improve border defenses and to transform its armed forces, and to help to prepare Georgia for eventual NATO membership. For that reason, the US have used NATO's PfP and bilateral arrangements extensively to expand security cooperation with Georgia and to establish a foothold in the South Caucasus.²²⁸ Miles, a career Foreign Service Officer said that the US goal "has been and will continue to be an independent, democratic, and prosperous Georgia that is at peace with itself and its neighbors."²²⁹

Another important objective of the US on Georgia is the war on terrorism. As emphasized above, the Caucasian region has become an important factor for US in the struggle against international terrorism. As a result, the US has stepped up its engagement in Georgia and declared it as an outpost in the war against terrorism in February 2002.²³⁰ In response, Georgia gave unequivocal support to the US and offered unlimited access to its air space after the September 11 attacks. This is so important for the US, because, since September 11, the only air corridor used by the US military from Europe to Central Asia and Afghanistan has gone through Georgia and Azerbaijan. In other words, the US cannot supply its military bases in Central Asia from Russia, China or Iran. Therefore, this leaves either the Pakistan–Afghanistan or the Turkey–Georgia–Azerbaijan corridors.²³¹ For that reason, it is imperative for the US to support Georgia's stability not only for recent events, but also for the future occasions.

²²⁸ James Detemple, "Expanding Security Eastward: NATO and US Military Engagement in Georgia" Available at www.bu.edu/iscip/bbn.html

²²⁹ "Ambassador-designate to Georgia Richard Miles's Senate Testimony," Available at www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02031409.htm

²³⁰ At the same date, Washington announced the decision to send 150 military instructors to the country, and 10 military transport helicopters. In Martha Brill Olcott. 1998. "US Policy in the South Caucasus." in Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth, *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.66.

²³¹ Ariel Cohen, "Ethnic Interests Threaten U.S. Interests in the Caucasus," Available at www.heritage.org/Research/RussianandEurasia/BG1222.cfm

In proportion to the abovementioned objectives, for the first time in its history the US decided to deploy its troops in the Caucasian region, in Georgia.²³² There are also many other initiatives of the US in Georgia as will be examined in the next part. But, what are the reasons of these objectives that have motivated the US to undertake? First, the US wants to make sure Georgia, which – if become stable – could become a more effective partner in tracking, stopping and punishing terrorists, does not become another camp for terrorism. Second, the instability in Georgia threatens the West's attempts to make the Caspian Sea region a major source of oil. And third, the US aims to keep RF from reasserting any imperial plan on any regional country.²³³ In addition to them, Georgia – and thus the South Caucasia – is also important for the US's 'Great Middle East Project',²³⁴ which has been being pronounced recently and frequently. In this project, one of the aims of the US is to expand the democratization process of Georgia to the other neighbor countries.

Consequently, many of the goals of the US policy in the Caucasian region are tied to Georgia's viability. So, to ensure its leadership role and access to the resources in Central Asia and the Caucasia, and to guarantee the continued independence of the regional states, the US should continue to strengthen Georgia. Actually, since its interests comply with Georgia's location and strategy to integrate with West, the US has been realizing several political, economic and military initiatives to boost its diplomatic interference, and extend its support in the foreign policy and security domains with Georgia.

²³² In this context, US dispatched its special forces units to help train Georgian forces.

²³³ Paul Starobin. 2002. "Marching into the Unknown". *Business Week*, issue:3804.

²³⁴ This project consists of approximately 22 states, most of which Arabian countries. It starts from Morocco in North Africa, then includes respectively Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Cyprus, Turkey, the South Caucasian States, Israel, Afghanistan, some of the Central Asian States, South Asian States such as India and Pakistan, and the whole Middle East. The objective of this project is to support the democratic reforms in these countries, which are governed 'anti-democratic' systems. It is also planned to include some of the Islamic countries in the Central Africa. Furthermore, it has three steps: first one is to make

3.3 The United States' Initiatives in Georgia

Although the relations between the US and Georgia had started right after the dissolution of the USSR, the US, at first, had acted prudently to attempt any initiative in Georgia. There were mainly three reasons for this hesitation: First, in the early years of 1990s the US had had the 'Russia First' policy in its regional strategy and had not given any important to the other Newly Independent States (NIS). Second, there were domestic crises in Georgia and civil strife among political leaders' supporters. Third, Georgia had started good relationship with RF since after the Shevardnadze, Former Soviet Foreign Minister, had assumed power throughout the first years of 1990s. For these reasons, the US had not been effective in Georgia during the first half of the 1990s.

Actually, the first initiative in the region, and thus in Georgia, can be deemed the 'Act of Freedom Support' which President George Bush proposed in early 1992. Signed into law in the same year, it authorized funds for the NIS for humanitarian needs, democratization, creation of market economies, trade and investment, and other purposes.²³⁵ On the other hand, the largely relations between Georgia and the US could only start in 1997. During their July 18, 1997 meeting in Washington, Presidents Clinton and Shevardnadze underscored the special importance to the close and productive relationship between the US and Georgia. They committed to work together actively to expand cooperation throughout the foreign policy, security, economic and commercial spheres. The Presidents also noted that the growing US–Georgia partnership was firmly based on common goals and values and reflects the national interests of both states. Furthermore, the Presidents called for expanded cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral, to promote Georgia's further integration into emerging European security

democracy become widespread, second is to make these countries a part of globalization, and the third – the most current one also – 'struggle with terrorism'.

²³⁵ Jim Nichol and Julie Kim, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf

structures.²³⁶ Since then, Georgia's relations with the US, which has been Georgia's largest donor of bilateral development cooperation funding as well as its largest foreign investor, have intensified.

So, the main outlines of the US's initiatives, which will be explained in the following parts in detail, have been based on categorically:²³⁷

1. providing monetary and material help to assist Georgia's military reforms and to train officers and non-commissioned officers at the US military schools;
2. assisting the streamlining of the Georgian Ministry of Defense (MOD) through the US-Georgian Defense Resource Management Plan that teaches the Georgians about US programming, planning, and budgeting;
3. assisting internally displaced Georgians with economic developmental assistance;
4. providing continued law enforcement assistance such as the US Coast Guard transfers of equipment and providing training for the Georgian border department;
5. assisting the growth of sub-regional organizations that promote regional economic development and conflict resolution in Georgia, e.g. the BSEC;
6. supporting UN efforts within the Geneva peace process as a 'Friend of Georgia' and other avenues of conflict resolution.

3.3.1 The US's Political Initiatives in Georgia

Initially, the US's political initiatives in Georgia were limited mostly to humanitarian assistances, which had been useful for the newly independent Georgia as

²³⁶ Joint Statement on Republic of Georgia-United States Relations [Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents], Available at <http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=89194222815+0+0+0&WAIAction=retrieve>

²³⁷ Jared Feinberg, "Armed forces in Georgia," Available at www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/gastudy.pdf

Former President Shevardnadze stated “the US humanitarian aid made a critical difference in averting famine in Georgia in the early 1990s and helping it maintain its stability and independence”.²³⁸ For example, the US provided Georgia \$70 million in humanitarian aid, which was distributed through nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), in 1994 for the purpose of preventing the danger of famine.²³⁹

So far, the US’s political initiatives have been mostly about Georgia’s domestic problems such as Abkhazian and Ossetian crises in which the US supported the territorial integrity of Georgia. Therefore, in order to provide Georgia’s entirety, the US has performed several political initiatives: First, it has arranged extensive bilateral assistance programs that aimed at improving administration and governance under the Tbilisi regime. Second, it has allocated funds to international NGOs such as the ‘International Committee of the Red Cross’ to help Georgia’s social problems. Third, it has supported the efforts of multilateral intergovernmental institutions such as the OSCE in Georgia.²⁴⁰ In addition, the US had also become a member of the FOG grouping (Friends of the UN Secretary-General for Georgia)²⁴¹ to promote a movement toward a settlement in the Abkhazia conflict.²⁴² On the other hand, the US’s political involvement in the regional conflicts of Georgia has been based on the assumption that RF’s attempts to reach a peaceful settlement of these conflicts have been ineffective. So, the US has aimed to

²³⁸ Jim Nichol and Julie Kim, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf

²³⁹ Liz Fuller, “Transcaucasia and Central Asia: Shevardnadze in Washington,” Available at www.naukanet.org/friends/news/omri/1994/03/940308.html

²⁴⁰ The presence of OSCE in Georgia constitutes a guaranty, which is aimed at border violations both by Russians and Chechen fighters. Besides, it has been viewed that RF’s military pressure has decreased to a great degree since the beginning of OSCE border observation operations. Robert Cutler, “Tskhinvali (South Ossetia), Georgia,” Available at www.selfdetermine.org/conflicts/ossetia.html

²⁴¹ This grouping consists of the United States, Germany, France (coordinator), the United Kingdom, and the Russian Federation (facilitator). Its main task has been “the creation of the document on distribution of constitutional competencies between Sukhumi [Abkhazia] and Tbilisi, with full respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.” In “Georgia and International Organizations,” Available at www.mfa.gov.ge/intorg.html

²⁴² Robert Cutler, “Georgia/Abkhazia,” Available at www.selfdetermine.org/conflicts/abkhaz.html.

replace Russian attempts of conflict resolution with the instruments of the United Nations (UN)²⁴³ as will be examined in its military initiatives.

Consequently, the US has developed close ties with Georgia since the end of Cold War. When the recent events are considered, it is explicitly understood that the US is going to continue to attempt other possible political initiatives as seen in the inauguration of the Saakashvili in February 2004. Colin Powel, the Foreign Minister of the State, participated in the inaugural ceremony and implied that the US is strongly supporting the territorial integrity of Georgia how and who the president is.

3.3.2 The US's Economic Initiatives in Georgia

The US's economic initiatives have shown themselves as a financial aid to Georgia. For example, for the fiscal year (FY) 1998, the US Congress passed a legislation — popularly known as the 'Silk Road Strategy Act of 1997' — making available \$250 million for assistance for the South Caucasian states. Of this, \$92.5 million would be available for Georgia.²⁴⁴

But, before that, for the FY1996, the US Congress had allocated \$15 million for the creation of a 'Transcaucasus Enterprise Fund', which is for the US's interest in providing capital resources and technical assistance to both privatized and new enterprises in the region. Accordingly, in the same year, the US announced a grant of \$500,000 to support Georgia's August 1996 participation in PfP land-sea amphibious operations in North Carolina.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ Ilgar Aliyev, *The U.S. Strategic Engagement in the South Caucasus 1991 – 2002*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2002, p.100.

²⁴⁴ Mamuka Kudava and Cassady Craft. 2000. "Developing Nonproliferation Export Controls in Georgia in the Context of the Emerging Eurasian Transportation Corridor" in Gary K. Bertsch, Cassady Craft, Scott A. Jones and Michael Beck, eds., *Crossroads and Conflicts: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*. New York / London: Routledge, p.224.

²⁴⁵ Jim Nichol, "Transcaucasus Newly Independent States: Political Developments and Implications for US Interests," Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/95-024.htm

However, the turning point of the US's economic initiatives is the meeting held in Washington in July 18, 1997. In this meeting, Presidents Clinton and Shevardnadze agreed on the need to expand commercial relations between the US and Georgia, including higher levels of trade and investment. In support of these goals, the instruments of ratification for the 'US–Georgia Bilateral Investment Treaty' were exchanged during the visit. Since then, the US supported Georgia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), which would further Georgia's integration into the global economy.²⁴⁶ As a result, with the help of US's initiatives, Georgia was formally admitted to the WTO in June 2000, as the second NIS after Kyrgyzstan to gain admission.²⁴⁷ As well, the trade relations between two countries have also improved since then.

The first year of new millennium, 2000, was also important for the US's economic initiatives. Because, in the FY 2000 the US government provided an estimated \$149.6 million in assistance to Georgia, including \$108.64 in 'Freedom Support Act Funds'.²⁴⁸ But, in the last year, for the FY2003, the US allocated only \$82.6 million to Georgia.²⁴⁹ This is so low when compared with the previous ones relatively. However, Saakashvili, the new President of Georgia, explained that he had received assurances from members of the US Congress that Georgia would obtain upwards of \$200 million in aid from the US in 2004,²⁵⁰ although the US announced it would cut its financial assistance to Georgia: In 24th September 2003, a US State Department official responsible for aid-related issues in the former Soviet Union, Thomas Adams, declared

²⁴⁶ Joint Statement on Republic of Georgia–United States Relations [Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents], Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 07/28/97, 33:30, p.1105.

²⁴⁷ Jim Nichol and Julie Kim, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf

²⁴⁸ Martha Brill Olcott. 1998. "US Policy in the South Caucasus." in Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth, *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.63.

²⁴⁹ "Overview of USAID's Focus In Georgia," Available at www.usaid.org/ge

²⁵⁰ Alex van Oss, "Saakashvili Seeks to Secure Long-Term US Commitments For Georgia's Democratization Process," Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav022504.shtml

that Washington's assistance to Tbilisi would decline in 2004 from the roughly \$100 million that Georgia received in 2003.²⁵¹

So far, the US aid to Georgia has also included setting up a business service center in Tbilisi to encourage small business development, and technical aid for monetary and fiscal reform, and creation of a 'Center for Economic Policy Analysis and Reform' (CEPAR).²⁵² Moreover, the US has also been helping Georgia obtain substantial funding from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. In addition, today the US advisors control the Georgian law-enforcement and economic departments and are working in close contact with the parliament, parties, and the media.²⁵³

In this context, it can be concluded that the US has made a great deal of financial assistances to Georgia. Thus, Georgia has been the US's the second highest aid recipient per capita, following only Israel, with the assistance amounting to \$1.1 billion, roughly five times more than the US aid to neighboring Azerbaijan, since its independence.²⁵⁴

On the other hand, the US is the first among the foreign investments to Georgia with the 28.5 percentage. The second one is England with the 13.3. It has been viewed that the US's investments have recently turned towards energy, transportation and communication sectors. For example, the most important thermal energy distribution facility of Georgia is run by a US company, AES. Apart from direct investments, the US, in order to solve Georgia's economic crisis, has also provided technical assistance and consulting service. For example, USAID, the technical assistance establishment of the US, has allocated more than \$300 million financing to Georgia so far.²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ Natalia Antelava, "United States Cuts Development Aid to Georgia," Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav092903.shtml

²⁵² Jim Nichol and Julie Kim, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," Available at www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf

²⁵³ Aleksandr Chigorin. 2003. "Russian-Georgian Relations" *International Affairs* 49:4, p.130.

²⁵⁴ Natalia Antelava. 24 March 2003. "No War Blues Here". *Transition Online*.

²⁵⁵ Aleksandre Kurakhçişvili, *Gürcistan Türkiye İlişkilerinin Dünü, Bugünü ve Yarını*, Istanbul: Turkish War Academy, Thesis, 2002, p.4-57.

Overall, the most important US's economic initiative in Georgia and also in the region is the B–T–C pipeline. Although it has endorsed the idea of multiple pipelines, the US has actively promoted the B–T–C pipeline, which would carry Caspian Sea oil from Azerbaijan through Georgia to Ceyhan, a Mediterranean terminal in Turkey. Transportation of Caspian oil to the west is an important strategic interest for the US since it helps to diversify the West's energy sources and lessen its dependence on Middle East. And, its support for B–T–C is part of the US's policy of promoting an 'East–West corridor' for Caspian oil and gas pipelines. The B–T–C pipeline, in particular, would serve mainly three aims for the US: enhancing Turkey's regional importance by supporting it for it is a strategic country for the US's regional interests; isolating Iran and RF by preventing them from the outlet for Caspian energy and thus excluding them from becoming a potential transit state for the export of Caspian oil and gas; and strengthening the independence of former Soviet states such as Azerbaijan and Georgia.²⁵⁶

3.3.3 The US's Military Initiatives in Georgia

Although, the US supported the UNOMIG, which has been responsible for monitoring the activities of the CIS peacekeepers in Georgia, military initiatives of the US was not realized in the beginning of the 1990s as its economic initiatives explained in the last part. However, since 1997, the US began to assist Georgia in the military domain. On 17th July 1997, the US and Georgia signed 'Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Assistance (Nunn–Lugar) Program'²⁵⁷, which provided Georgia equipment and

²⁵⁶ Robert Ebel and Rajan Menon (eds.) 2000. *Energy and Conflict in Central Asia and the Caucasus*. Maryland: Roman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, p.130.

²⁵⁷ This is also an umbrella agreement that was put in action in November 10, 1997. There are three programs under which CTR assistance for export control of Georgia has been implemented: 1) DOD–Custom Service Counterproliferation Program 2) DOD–FBI Counterproliferation Program 3) Military–to–Military Counterproliferation Program. These programs aim to assist the development of legal bases and export control regulations in Georgia; to improve professional skills of servicemen; support institutionalization of respective state structures. The training is being implemented in the International Academy in Budapest and Marshall Center. In the framework of the program law–enforcement bodies are

training for export controls and the safe storage of weapons materials. In the framework of this program, the US has made several military agreements with Georgia that include assistance in army building, ceding military hardware and equipment, training and technical assistance, anti-aircraft defense and aviation management, financial aid, open skies observation, flight agreement and PfP cooperation.²⁵⁸ Also, the agreement on the ‘Cooperation in the Area of Prevention of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Promotion of Defense and Military Relations’ signed between Georgia and the US in 1997. This treaty refers to the cooperation in promoting defense and military contacts and other cooperative military activities.²⁵⁹ In this context, the US granted two coastal patrol boats to Georgia in order to guard its Black Sea borders in 1997 and \$20 million in 1998 to replace RF’s border units along the Georgia Black Sea coastlines and set up maritime and land border controls.²⁶⁰

Likewise, in March 1998, the then US Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, signed an agreement on military and security cooperation with Georgian Defense Minister, Vardiko Nadibaidze. According to this agreement, the US decided to grant Georgia some \$1.35 million to finance the purchase of the US military radios for a Georgian infantry company that will regularly participate in maneuvers under PfP.²⁶¹

It is no doubt that the US has played a vital role in resurging the Georgian Armed Forces. For example, for this purpose, the US approved the ‘Foreign Military Financing (FMF) Program’ that resulted in Georgian purchases of military equipment from the US.

getting special equipment necessary both for training and exercises and for checking mass destruction weapons and connected materials. Available at www.lib.berkeley.edu/Collections/Slavic/army0499.html.

²⁵⁸ Murat Tosun, *Military Power in the Caucasus*, İstanbul: Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2002, p.121.

²⁵⁹ Mamuka Kudava and Cassady Craft. 2000. “Developing Nonproliferation Export Controls in Georgia in the Context of the Emerging Eurasian Transportation Corridor” in Gary K. Bertsch, Cassady Craft, Scott A. Jones and Michael Beck, eds., *Crossroads and Conflicts: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*. New York / London: Routledge, p.224.

²⁶⁰ Ariel Cohen, “Ethnic Conflicts Threaten U.S. Interests in the Caucasus,” Available at www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/BG1222.cfm

In the framework of the FMF, the US has granted Georgia 14 transport (UH-1H) helicopters in 2001 and provided finance for the production of Su-39 combat aircraft at the Tbilisi Aircraft Works.²⁶² Besides, the US granted to Georgia \$17.5 million aid between 1997–1999 and 140 Georgian officers have received military training since 1997. Moreover, it also committed over \$10 million in FY2000 to facilitate the closure of Russian military bases in Georgia, which is an obstacle in front of Georgia's independence and provided Georgia with an additional \$20 million in funding for 'Border Security and Law Enforcement Training'. Georgia also received \$3 million for military education from the US as well.²⁶³

Furthermore, Georgia has significantly improved its military capabilities with the \$64 million US-funded 'Georgia Train And Equip Program' (GTEP) started by the US Department of Defense (DoD) in April 2002.²⁶⁴ The program includes training for defense ministry command staff, border guards, and other security officials; tactical training in radio operator procedures, land navigation, and human rights education at the platoon level; and the transfer of fuel, uniform items, small arms and ammunition, medical and communications equipment, and construction materiel. It is a time-phased training initiative, but has built strong military-to-military relationship between the twocountries since the end of the Cold War, and further underscored the US's military

²⁶¹ Erhan Altın, *NATO Enlargement in the Caucasus: Implications for the Caspian Security*, Istanbul: Institution of Social Sciences Yeditepe University, Thesis – Master's -, 2000, p.97.

²⁶² Georgia also received "...\$5.35 million in FMF funds in 1998, and \$7.9 million in 1999." See Robin Bhatti and Rachel Bronson. Autumn 2000. "NATO's Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia," *Survival*, 42:3, pp.133-134.

²⁶³ Aleksandre Kurakhçişvili, *Gürcistan Türkiye İlişkilerinin Dünü, Bugünü ve Yarını*, Istanbul: Turkish War Academy, Thesis, 2002, p.4-57.

²⁶⁴ With the help of the program, 1600 Georgian troops have been planned to train. The initial program consisted of command center staff training for members of the Georgian Ministry of Defense as well as staff training for units of the Land Forces Command. Border Guards and other Georgian security agencies were ensured interoperability among Georgia's security forces. The program's goal is to build strong and effective staff organizations capable of creating and sustaining standardized operating procedures, training plans, operational plans, and a property accounting system. So far, the first command battalion has completed training in the process of earning compliments from its instructors. Training of the second unit, the Sachkhere Mountain Battalion, began on 1st February 2002. In addition, the second phase of the program involves training four 400-men battalions and a 250-man mechanized company for 100 days each. In "U.S. Begins Anti-Terrorism Train and Equip Program in Georgia," Available at www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02043006.htm

support for Georgia's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.²⁶⁵ Besides, the US transferred 10 additional combat helicopters to Georgia, where seven Defense Department officials — a military trainer and six civilian contractors — advised on their use and maintenance in 2002.²⁶⁶

It can be concluded that Georgia has gained most among the South Caucasian states from the 9/11 events and the anti-terrorist campaign as regards military cooperation with the US. Generally, the military initiatives on anti-terrorism purposes for Georgia included \$64 million on training and another \$100 million in development aid, equipping approximately 1,200 Georgian forces, deployment of 180 troops, who will provide training and tactical direction to Georgian forces. This deployment further reduced RF's influence in the region and defended Georgia from Russian attacks to a certain degree. The US also sent up to 200 military instructors, who trained a Georgian anti-terrorist force (1200 servicemen) and supply equipment (light arms and communication systems) for dealing more effectively with the situation in the Pankisi Gorge, to Georgia in April 2002.²⁶⁷

In addition to the abovementioned initiatives, on 21st March 2003, the Georgian Parliament ratified an 'Agreement on Cooperation in the Defense Sphere' between Georgia and the US that goes beyond the GTEP and is aimed at greater US military initiatives in the country. Under this agreement, the US military personnel do not need visas to enter Georgia. Moreover, the US acquired the right to deploy its military

²⁶⁵ "U.S. Begins Anti-Terrorism Train and Equip Program in Georgia," Available at www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02043006.htm

²⁶⁶ "Georgia: Bush Says U.S. Helping Tbilisi Against Terrorists," Available at www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/02/27022002103251.asp.

²⁶⁷ Jaba Devdariani and Blanka Hancilova, "US Involvement in Caucasian Security Architecture Grows," Available at www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=8

equipment and weapons on Georgian territory and to freely move them across the country.²⁶⁸

On the other hand, the US has also attempted several military construction initiatives in Georgia. For example, in the FY2000 the ‘International Engineering Center’ (IEC) provided master planning²⁶⁹ support to the US Customs Service for the development of four Border Guard sites, the Tbilisi Aviation Detachment Site (260 man/8 aircraft); the Poti Coast Guard Station (350 man/10 ships); the Red Bridge Border Guard Station (50 man/6 motor vehicles), and the Lilo Training Facility, in Georgia. Moreover, In the FY01 the IEC provided overall project management and contract administration and supervision for the \$2.9 million renovation of the Tbilisi Maintenance Hanger in Georgia.²⁷⁰

When the recent events are examined, it is explicitly viewed that the US’s military initiatives in Georgia are going to continue as President Saakashvili explained after a meeting with Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz that the US would expand a military assistance program with Georgia: “We have received a promise from the Americans that a new program will start in April that will last for five years and will result in the creation of ... an American style brigade [structured] deployed in eastern Georgia according to American standards – consisting of 5,000 troops.”²⁷¹

The US also encouraged Georgia to cooperate with NATO within the framework of Partnership for Peace (PfP)²⁷² program, which is a project for NATO’s engagement in

²⁶⁸ Aleksandr Chigorin. 2003. “Russian–Georgian Relations” *International Affairs* 49:4, p.130.

²⁶⁹ Master planning includes assessing existing real estate and facilities, analyzing force structure missions, issues, goals, and assumptions, determining actual facility requirements, and developing a future installation plan. Available at www.nau.usace.army.mil/Center/Web/georgia.htm

²⁷⁰ Available at www.nau.usace.army.mil/Center/Web/georgia.htm

²⁷¹ Alex van Oss, “Saakashvili Seeks to Secure Long–Term US Commitments For Georgia’s Democratization Process”, 25 February 2004 Available at www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav022504.shtml

²⁷² PfP constitutes NATO’s chief engagement tool in the former Soviet republics and the cornerstone for deepening NATO and the US military engagement in the South Caucasia. The program contains 19 NATO members and 27 partner states (The last one is Tajikistan) including all three South Caucasia states. PfP

the South Caucasus. Georgia has been one of the members of PfP since 1994. With the help of the PfP program, Georgia has built close military and security ties with NATO. In addition, the PfP program has provided for Georgia's participation in a number of military exercises and training initiatives. For example, in 2000, Georgian troops participated more than 100 NATO maneuvers. Likewise, Georgia was the host of NATO's 'Cooperative Partner 2001' in the framework of PfP, involving 4,000 mostly US, Georgian, and Turkish troops. On the other hand, the US 6th Fleet regularly visits Georgian ports under PfP. Consequently, it can be concluded that of all three South Caucasian states, Georgia has played the most active role in the NATO PfP program.²⁷³

Finally, the reasons of US's military initiatives have been to help Georgia develop military capabilities necessary to preserve its territorial integrity and become more self-sufficient in defense matters such as border security and military reorganization. In this context, the US European Command (USEUCOM) has also conducted a defense assessment of Georgia's military and made several recommendations for restructuring the Georgian Armed Forces.²⁷⁴

3.4 Similarities and Divergences in Turkish and the US's Policies in Georgia

In the aftermath of the demise of the USSR or in other words after the end of the Cold War, Georgia has become important both for the US as the unique super power of the world and for Turkey as a strong regional power. Turkey and the US give great

activities focus on civil emergency planning, officer training, civil-military relations, defense policy and strategy, and military reform. This initiative reflects the alliance's desire to share its experience and expertise with other countries, particularly Georgia and successors to the former USSR, and the perception that it is in NATO's strategic interest to promote the democratic transformation of these countries. NATO members, such as the US and Turkey, provide military assistance to Georgia on a bilateral basis in a way that often complements PfP. For more information see www.nato.int/issues/pfp/index.html

²⁷³ Rovshan Sadıgbeyli, *Stability in the South Caucasus: The Role of Russia and Turkey*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master's -, 2002, p.107.

²⁷⁴ James Detemple, "Expanding Security Eastward: NATO and US Military Engagement in Georgia" Available at www.bu.edu/iscip/bbn.html

importance to Georgia because of its location, which is also RF's shortest gateway to the Middle East and Mediterranean Sea.

The common theme of their Georgian strategy is to support the territorial integrity and independence of this republic, since their interests are parallel with each other to a great degree in the region, while they intersect with Russia. Furthermore, they have also worked closely to strengthen ties with Georgia and encouraged it to adopt a stronger pro-Western position. In fact, the reasons behind this strategy are, mainly, to secure oil transportation routes and to prevent RF's imperialistic policies on Georgia. In other words, it is in Turkey and the US's strategic interests to ensure the flow of oil and gas from the Caspian Sea Basin via Georgia and Turkey rather than north to RF. Moreover, Turkey and the US also have started to work together at the highest institutional level on the issues about Georgia. For example, the Pentagon and Turkish General Staff have been on dialogue for a couple of years in order to find way to create synergy and rationality with the assistance that the two countries provide Georgia (Caucasian Labor Group). Likewise, the US also presented Turkey as a model for Georgia to strengthen its democracy and free-market economy.

Hence, main similarities between Turkey and the US's Georgian policies are:²⁷⁵

1. encouraging the development of democratic pro-Western regime and free-market economy,
2. curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism,
3. expanding NATO's membership,
4. opening of new oil pipeline routes in Georgia,
5. ensuring access to energy resources via Georgia.

²⁷⁵ Ariel Cohen, "Ethnic Conflicts Threaten U.S. Interests in the Caucasus," Available at www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/BG1222.cfm

6. preventing every pressure of RF on Georgia (Actually, what they are apprehensive about is the reestablishment of Russian dominance in Caucasia).

In order to realize these interests both states have dispatched diplomats to Georgia; signed cultural, trade and security protocols; beamed radio and television broadcasts (TRT–INT); provided loans; trained students and officers; increased commercial relations; and proffered export credits. So, all these indicate that both states, whose interests converged as stated above, have been pursuing active politics in Georgia as a duty on behalf of their own global and regional interests²⁷⁶ as explained above.

In addition, both the US and Turkey has strongly supported the construction of the B–T–C pipeline, which they see as an important means to strengthen the independence of Georgia and Azerbaijan vis-à-vis Moscow and as a cornerstone of their regional policy. Because, both insist that this project will bolster the political and economic freedom of the South Caucasian and Central Asian states. It will also expand Turkey’s role in the region. Moreover, using B–T–C to channel Caspian oil west and not north is going to erode RF’s influence in the region. Because, by this way, the B–T–C will help diversify the West’s energy resources and lessen somewhat its dependence on the Middle East, whereas a north–south main route would allow Russia to control an even larger share of the world energy market than they do now.

As a result, since there are not any divergence between Turkey and the US’s Georgian policy, both countries can be deemed as close allies on Georgia, which is viewed as an important geopolitical key player and strategic partner by the two states in the Caucasian region. Therefore, Turkey should add the US’s positive and negative contributions in its designated security policies stemming from Georgia, and then re-evaluate its prospective security policies.

²⁷⁶ Halil Siddik Ayhan, *Dynamics of the Alliance Between Turkey and USA: The South Caucasus Case*, Ankara: Bilkent University, Thesis – Master’s -, 2003, p.95.

CHAPTER 4

4. ASSESSMENT OF TURKEY’S GEORGIA RELATED SECURITY POLICIES

It is no doubt that security is one of the most important central concepts of international relations. But, as strictly mentioned in the previous chapters of the thesis, since threats to security do not only stem from military domain, security is not merely a product of military; instead, a mix of military, economic and political policies. Therefore, peace and stability within and around a country are among the indispensable components of the security of that country. So, Turkey is obliged to consider its security because of the reasons stem from its geography and geopolitics.

In that respect, Turkey has attempted to establish peace, welfare and stability in the neighbor Caucasia. But, unfortunately, it has not consider the region sufficiently as one of its ‘backs’. Nor has it given enough importance to Georgia. So, in this chapter of the thesis, Turkey’s Georgia related security policies will be assessed by considering the RF and US’s initiatives. In the first part of the chapter, Turkey’s designated security policies towards Georgia will be summarized specifically. And then, considering all the reasons mentioned in above chapters, what and how Turkey’s prospective security policies should be towards Georgia will be examined. On the other hand, this chapter also constitutes the conclusion part of the thesis with its several futuristic comments.

4.1 Turkey’s Designated Security Policies

The research done for the thesis has indicated that Turkey’s designated security policies towards Georgia has so far largely been about military domain, which has a

certain emphasis. In other words, hitherto, Turkey has followed military strategies as for its security policies aimed at Georgia. However, this is only one of the parts of the general security perception. But, it should have pursued many-sided security policies which are combined with other politic and economic domains too. In short, Turkey should have put mixed politics on top of the pyramid rather than merely military.

The general frame of Turkey's security policies toward Georgia has been to support its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence, which is a right and important approach. Turkey's security strategies has always been based on the authority of the central government rather than giving so much importance to the autonomous regions in Georgia. Because, Turkey has been aware and also anxious of the fact that the new status, which would occur in case of Georgia's division, would give more harm to its interests in Georgia, and thus in the region. On the other hand, Turkey has permanently expressed its demand at all level to see an independent neighbor, which can stand on its own feet. Furthermore, it has also stated that Georgia's all problems are not only its own matters, but the support of European states is needed in this case. For that reason, Turkey has proposed to establish 'Caucasian Stability Pact', which is also backed by Georgia, under the auspices of OSCE.

Turkey has been conscious about the importance of Georgia's domestic problems and their effect to its regional benefits. So far, Turkey's security policies has included this reality. For that reason, Turkey has consistently supported a peaceful resolution of these ethnic origin conflicts within the framework of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia. In this manner, Turkey has kept its neutrality in Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts, and backed both the UN observer force in Abkhazia and international endeavors to solve the crises. For example, in order to contribute the

solution process of the Abkhazian conflict, Turkey arranged a conference in Istanbul on 7–9 June 1999 and brought the parties together.

Turkey, to some extent, has also designated economic-sided security policies aimed at Georgia. Because, it has believed that the enhancement of economic activities will also serve the regional peace and stability. The BSEC is the most important example in this context. Because, Turkey has expected that active membership with Georgia within the BSEC would bring security returns in the long run. The economic process, which started with Turkey's giving electricity to Georgia, was followed by its initiatives oriented towards to gain some market share in Georgia after the end of Cold War. But, unfortunately, these schemes have been limited with private sector, meaning that Turkey has not realized so much state-level attempt in the economic domain. Likewise, after the year 2000, Turkey's foreign trade volume in Georgia has reduced significantly.

Turkey has also not been unaware of Georgia's characteristic as a gateway to Caucasasia and Central Asia. So, Turkey has participated some initiatives such as Kars–Tbilisi railway, TRACECA, and INOGATE projects in order to secure the transit roads that pass through Georgia. But, what is lack in this strategy is an alternative policy for the unstable situation that would somehow occur in Georgia and in the region. On the other hand, Turkey has also given importance to Georgia as an energy transit country. Because, it has been aware of the fact that it could meet most of its energy need such as oil and gas thorough that country. Therefore, in order to provide energy security, Turkey has supported several projects related to Georgia's this feature. B–T–C pipeline is the most important and best example for this policy. For that reason, Turkey has pursued an active policy in order to realize B–T–C. The main necessity of Turkey's this security policy is to have a stable Georgia. So, unless Turkey does contribute to or provide Georgia's stability, it cannot get what it desires as an energy meaning from the region.

Another type of Turkey's Georgia related security policy has been to develop relations that prevent Armenia and RF's creating a 'influence zone' in the region. In this kind of situation, the Azerbaijan–Georgia–Turkey axis would be so important. For that reason, Turkey has strived to establish this kind of regional structure. 'Security Cooperation Agreement' is one of the tangible examples for this purpose. Moreover, the probable 'Caucasian Stability Pact' may also serve for the same intention.

The other trivet of Turkey's designated security policies has been the assistances done to Georgia in every field. It can be concluded that Turkey has assisted Georgia to a considerable extent in order to secure its east. \$45 million military aid is the most significant evidence for this strategy. Within these military assists there are lots of donations and trainings, which are perceived by Turkey as one of the parts of the necessary security policies. The exercises done by the TGS and GAF together is also one of the illustrations of this strategy.

However, the analysis has so far indicated that Turkey has pursued security policies without so much considering the other and important values in the equation. In other words, Turkey has not regarded RF as a crucial player in the region. But, RF is not so ineffective as it is suggested. Nevertheless, it can be accepted that Turkey to some extent has designated security policies that are to balance the existence of RF in its eastern border. On the other hand, since last years of the 1990s, it is viewed that Turkey has pursued policies that are parallel with that of US since their interests have covered each other mosteffectively as mentioned in the third chapter. These two NATO members has cooperated especially in the military domain concerning Georgia.

As a conclusion, Turkey has established close and friendly relations with Georgia and followed these types of security policies. But, when get down the details of these policies, it is seen that Turkey has not been able to pursue strategies that would create

permanent effect in Georgia, although it has well-known the importance of it. Besides, it could not reach most of its regional interests, either. So then, what should Turkey's prospective security policies towards Georgia be?

4.2 Turkey's Prospective Security Policies Towards Georgia²⁷⁷

It has been emphasized throughout the thesis that what is so critical from the Turkish security point of view is Georgia's whole independence. In that respect, Turkey should produce logical security policies toward Georgia, where it borders both from land and sea. Its policies must not be established on dreams and imaginary scenarios, instead; they should be based on rational reasons. In other words, Turkey should determine effective, long-term, and permanent security policies that are suitable for its own possibility and capability, and for Georgia's importance. Since the security in Georgia is not only single-dimensional, Turkey should bear in mind the necessity of establishing security policies that have politic, economic and military contents too. In other words, the main objective of Turkey's prospective policies should be the political, economic and social stability and development in Georgia.

Apart from Georgia's independence, its territorial integrity and stability have also crucial importance in respect to Turkey's strategic interests in the region. For that reason, Turkey should continue to provide every support for Georgia's territorial integrity and stability as its general frame of Georgian policy. In addition, Turkey should carry on expressing its desire to see an independent Georgia that can stand on its own feet at all international level. Because, together with Azerbaijan, a stable, independent and integrated Georgia would by all means serve for Turkey's regional interests. For instance, it could impede RF's direct connection with its strategic ally, Armenia, in the region. On the other hand, Georgia's being under control of another state in Caucasia and

²⁷⁷ This part of the chapter has been gathered together mostly from the theses about Georgia and Caucasia region written by the staff officers in the 'Military Academy' in Istanbul.

its division owing to the inner conflicts are completely contrary to Turkey's regional benefits. So, Turkey should act by taking into consideration of all these main facts. But, there are also some in detail.

The effect of RF on Turkey's Georgia related security policies is of great immense, since it is not as weak as it now seems. Therefore, Turkey should take into consideration the RF and its initiatives while determining its security policies. Because, a serious shift in Georgia's position back toward RF would no doubt endanger Turkey's interests in the region. So, Turkey should designate policies that will erase RF's 'negative' impact on Georgia. On the other hand, it is so obvious that RF will never allow regional initiatives that are for the benefit of Turkey. So, Turkey should follow policies that are against the RF's imperialistic interests in Georgia, where it deems a part of its backyard.

Furthermore, Turkey should attempt against the RF's plan for Baku–Novorossiisk pipeline as an alternative for B–T–C. Because, this would be one of the tangible means that could increase RF's influence in the region. Additionally, Turkey should make an international effort to block RF's interference in Georgia's domestic affairs and its support for separatist moves in Georgia. On the other hand, Turkey should develop strategies that will balance RF's unequal visa regime policy, that will eliminate RF's energy policy by decreasing Georgia's dependence on RF for energy sector, and that will break its terrorism policy by acting together with US. Because, if Turkey was late or neglected and RF somehow captured Georgia, Turkey most probably would be deprived of its connection with Caucasian and Central Asian countries.

RF wants to create military and economic effect by having strong bridgeheads, like Georgia, in Caucasia. Therefore, Turkey should improve security policies aim at decreasing and erasing RF's potential weight in Georgia and in the region. In order to

realize this strategy, Turkey should try to establish a kind of regional structure among the Caucasian states without RF. In this way, Turkey could also remove RF's influence on ethnic groups in Georgia. But, in this strategy, it should be so careful not to damage Georgia's social balance. In short, Turkey should designate security policies that will end RF's all Georgia related interests, which were explicitly emphasized in its 'Near Abroad Policy' and 'Military Doctrine'.

Nevertheless, Turkey should also think the US and its interests while determining its security policies. It should carry on following strategies parallel with that of US. Especially, Turkey should back US's efforts to get rid of the terrorism in Georgia and in the whole region, and hence, settle on policies in this manner. However, besides the US and RF, Turkey should also care the activities of the other countries that have interests on Georgia. In this way, Turkey can take necessary measurements against its security.

Turkey can play an active role as a bridge about the increasing integration of Georgia with West. Because, a pro-Western Georgia is also among the Turkey's objectives. So, Turkey should prepare strategies that will provide Georgia's face turn towards the West, rather than to RF. In this context, Turkey should encourage Georgia's active membership for all political and military organizations such as NATO and EU. Thus, it can provide a security foundation for Georgia in the region. In this purpose, Turkey should prefer to play the non-zero-sum game, rather than zero-sum one. That is to say Turkey can realize its aims while the other countries and organizations reach theirs. In addition, Turkey should also cause Georgia to try to use the methods that will be accepted by international community in the solution of its inner and external problems. For this purpose, Turkey ought to make its upper-level international relations become also widespread at lower and technical levels. Moreover, Turkey should support the validity of the regional economic associations such as BSEC. Within this kind of

organizations, Turkey ought to set up economic cooperation with Georgia, which is also necessary for security. Besides, being aware of the importance of NGOs, Turkey should provide the contribution of the state-supported NGOs while it is carrying out the determined security policies. Thus, it can create a political atmosphere that gives itself an opportunity to increase its influence in Georgia.

It is so important for Turkey that Georgia's domestic problems be solved with peaceful methods and dialogs within the basis of Georgia's territorial integrity. For that reason, Turkey, as it has done so far, should continue to produce security policies that consistently support Georgia's integrity, and should back the efforts of UN and OSCE in this manner. Furthermore, when considered carefully, it is obviously perceived that Ajaria and Javakhetia are the vital regions, which Turkey should consider watchfully. Additionally, Turkey should determine policies with regard to establishing the authority of the central government of Georgia in these regions. Otherwise, they could be used as a base for the illegal organizations. For example, recently, there has been formed some illegal Armenian terror associations in Javakhetia. So, this would be the situation that could form threat for Turkey from another direction.

Turkey should not allow to be a kind of Karabakh *fait accompli* in Javakhetia. Because, Armenians live in this region would most probably harm the integrity of Georgia. Furthermore, the security of B–T–C pipeline, which will pass so close to the region that these ethnic component lives, would be endangered by their activities. So, Turkey, in order to impede Javakhetia's separation from Georgia and integration with Armenia, should look for other alternatives except for military intervention as a guaranty for these unwanted situations. One of the ways for his purpose could be Akhaltsian Turks. As mentioned in the previous chapters, approximately 115.000 Akhaltsian Turks (Today, it is estimated that there are about 350.000 Akhaltsian Turks live out of Georgia)

were forced to migrate to the Central Asian republics in 1944. If they returned their motherland – the European Security Council had already given right them to turn back – they would balance the population structure which is now in favor of Armenians. In the negotiations done in the year 2000, since Georgia laid Akhaltsian Turks' returning the region only under the Georgian identity down as a condition, both parties could not make an agreement about the issue. But, today, in line with the abovementioned security considerations, Turkey should persuade Georgia to give up the conditions that it asked previously about Akhaltsian Turks. Thus, Armenians would continue to be minority in the region. Turkey should also declare that it is ready to assist financially to Georgia in this matter. In this context, Turkey and Georgia would be able to solve a potential problem in accordance with their own national benefits.

Another Armenian related problem for Turkey is the 'Greater Armenia Ideology'. Turkey should take every precaution to hinder this ideology, which is for the detriment of Turkey's own security. On the other hand, Turkey should insert the 'Kars Agreement' in its security policies. Up to today, Turkey has not talked so much about this treaty and its importance. But, the recent events in Ajaria have indicated that Turkey must know what this agreement is and how it can contribute – negatively or positively – to its policies. Because, Turkey may get in a difficult situation in the region as in Cyprus, since this agreement gives Turkey right to be a guarantor on Ajaria. In this kind of situation, Turkey should benefit from the 'Kars Agreement' on the way of finding a peaceful solution to the probable Ajarian conflict, rather than ignoring Georgian central government.

Another important subject is the Russian military bases in Georgia. Turkey, by taking into consideration the geostrategic importance and priority of Georgia, should attempt to support the efforts of Georgia to get rid of the Russian bases in its territory.

Because, they are the most important threat to the integrity and stability of Georgia. Moreover, the continuation of the two Russian military bases in Georgia makes Turkey doubtful that RF's expansionist desires will not die easily and also creates a cause of security anxiety for Turkey. On the other hand, if Russian military existence withdrew from Georgia completely, the Russian forces in South Caucasia would only be in Armenia, meaning that the military cooperation between RF and Armenia would increase more. Therefore, Turkey should determine security policies that will decrease the possibility of increasing cooperation between the said states, and at the same time, that will abolish the bases. As well, Turkey should oppose the RF's efforts with regard to change the limits of CFE on behalf of itself by increasing them.

That the Caspian oil and gas will be transported to the West with the pipelines that pass through Turkey is viewed by RF as a development against its vital interests in the region. It also strives to impede these pipelines. So, Turkey, first of all, in order to make RF's these efforts turn out to be nothing, should establish strategies that will make Georgia act together with Turkey in this subject. What is more, Turkey should also provide every support to the realization of B-T-C pipeline at any cost. Because, this project will have a lot of various effect and results. For example, B-T-C will be able to bring high technology to Georgia. Moreover, this project will also form a many-sided cooperation atmosphere between the two countries, which will be beneficial for Turkey. With the help of this project, Turkey could increase its solidarity not only with Georgia, but also with Azerbaijan. Besides, this scheme will also stiffen the characteristic of Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan as an 'energy bridge' in the world. Consequently, B-T-C must constitute one of the most important components of Turkish security policy.

On the other hand, Turkey should determine policies, which will be within the oil and gas geopolitics that has newly been developing in the region. Because, in a contrary

situation, Turkey's energy security anxiety would come into agenda. In this context, Georgia's stability is necessary for Turkey's strategic energy interests.

Besides energy, securing the transportation roads are also important for Turkey. Since Georgia is on the ways of Central Asia, Turkey should consider Georgia's this characteristic as a factor of its security policy. For that reason, the ancient Silk Road project, TRACECA, has the quality to create a positive impact on Georgia in the economic domain, and also an important opportunity to eradicate the Russian influence directed towards Georgia. With this project, the goods of the Central Asian states would be presented to western markets. Also, it would pave the way for investments that would create new employing opportunities in the Caucasian states. Turkey, in order to participate in this project, must complete the Kars–Tbilisi railway as soon as possible. This scheme is also important for Georgia, who has not been able to reach its planned foreign trade figures owing to the lacks in its transportation networks. The other sub-schemes are Sarp–Hopa–Trabzon highway and Çıldır–Aktaş border gate. Turkey should accelerate the completion of these projects. Turkey ought not to forget that the connection through Georgia is the shortest and, if it is provided, the most secure one to reach Azerbaijan and Central Asian states. As a conclusion, Turkey should bring Georgia in a bridge position which is passable easily from the point of transportation roads with Central Asia.

The main theme of Turkey's economic policies towards Georgia should be not to submit this country to RF or any other hostile power economically. For this purpose, Turkey should coordinate the activities of all public and private organizations related with the subject while determining its economic policies. On the other hand, since Georgia has not adapted the free market system yet, Turkish businessmen hesitate to invest in Georgia. So, Turkey should take every measurement that will inspire the

investment in Georgia. Moreover, Turkey should also contribute Georgia's economic integration and improvement with world economics. Finally, Turkey should establish policies that will provide its economic relations with Georgia be permanent.

What about military strategies, which has so far taken place as the main security component in Turkey's Georgian policy? Turkey should carry on its military relations with Georgia increasingly, as it has done so far. Turkey should also assist Georgia while it has been resurging and organizing its armed forces in NATO standard. For this purpose, Turkey should transfer the modern military applications to Georgia. Moreover, Turkey should also contribute to the equipping of GAF with the military assistance done by the other NATO countries. For example, Turkey ought to continue to donate some military equipment such as airplanes, helicopters, tanks and boats to GAF. Thus, it can establish a high-level psychological impact in Georgia. In addition, Turkey should also continue to make exercises with Georgia throughout the border regions and participate in PfP activities. On the other hand, Turkey should also improve cooperative initiatives with Georgia about the defense industry. Likewise, Turkey's security policies should contain the expression that Turkey is the nearest military ally of Georgia. This belief must be created among the Georgian officials.

Furthermore, Turkey should also continue to give necessary military assistance to Georgia for its being in the qualifiedness of protecting its territorial waters in Black Sea and whole borders of its own accord. Because, it is important for Turkey that GAF has its own authority throughout the country in order to provide Georgia's integrity. What is also important for Turkey in this manner is the coordination between the government and GAF. If Turkey, together with its military possibilities, continued to present its commercial and economic advantages to Georgia, it would establish its influence in the region in the long term.

Georgia's characteristic as a buffer zone between Turkey and RF is also so important for Turkey's security as mentioned previously, and Turkey, at any cost, should carry on Georgia's this feature with the security policies concerning it. Because, this trait has provided Turkey a lot of benefits not only in the region, but also in its domestic affairs. For example, Turkey has transferred many units from its eastern borders to its problematic southeast region in the first years of 1990s. So, Turkey is obliged to use and benefit from this opportunity, which it has got after the centuries.

Turkey should also determine the policies that will impede the setting up north-south axes such as RF-Iran-Armenian from the point of view of both Georgia and its own security. Instead, Turkey should designate strategies that are directed towards the initiatives to form an east-west axis, which would also be supported by Georgia as a transit state, with the Central Asian republics. The first step in this process could be the 'Caucasian Stability Pact', which was proposed by Turkey and welcomed by Georgia very positively in order to establish stability in South Caucasia. This pact ought to be established and maintained. Because, it would provide Georgia not only security, but also opportunity to construct its infrastructure and transportation. Thus, there could also be intensive economic relations among Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan because of the technical assistances and source transfers. This kind of development would be beneficial both for Turkey and the regional states, who want to be rid of the hegemony of RF. Parallely, this probable pact would also serve as a political consultation mechanism among the said states. Furthermore, Turkey should support any enterprise, such as GUAM, that decreases the influence of RF in the region. The other subject that must be supported by Turkey is the new 'pro-Western' Georgian government, with whom Turkey should set up close and actual relations. Because, recent events in Georgia have the 'quality' to affect its opening to Caucasia and Central Asia.

Turkey should cooperate with Georgia in every field, especially in energy, transportation and terrorism subjects. Moreover, Turkey should also contribute the agricultural development of Georgia by adapting it to the new methods. On the other hand, Turkey should designate policies that aims at being ready to impede any initiatives that will spoil the stability in Georgia and in the region.

But, while Turkey is realizing its aims in Georgia, it should be careful not to interfere the internal affairs of Georgia, instead, it should give support that will set up and maintain stability, and also strengthen the integrity and regime of Georgia. The main objective of Turkey in this process must be the new government of Georgia. In other words, Turkey should establish close and strong relations with Georgia's this new central government. The other subjects that Turkey's security policies must not contain should be as follows: First, Turkey must be careful not to be viewed by the other countries as a state that has a Pan-Turkism approach to Georgia and to the region. Second, Turkey must pay attention not to create an expansionist state image in the opinion of international organizations and especially of Western countries.

As a conclusion, Turkey's Georgia related security policies should be supported and comply with its strategies applied towards the other countries and regions. It is not possible for Turkey, who is a regional power in this geography where there are many clashes and indefinitenesses, to produce fixed and rigid policies. But, Turkey could gain its strategic interests with the resolute and flexible strategies. So, in this complex equation, it is vital important to determine the interests and the expectations of the other actors. Furthermore, Turkey should certainly know the dynamics, interests and sensitivenesses of Georgia. Turkey is obliged to follow every new formation after the end of Cold War such as 9/11 attacks and be in the subsequent processes.

Turkey's Georgia related security policies should be in such a manner that will set a limit to the imperialistic objectives of both RF and Iran in Caucasia, and also make the activities of the other hostile countries ineffective in the region. In this way, Turkey could decrease the effect of negative factors such as Armenia to minimum by assisting Georgia's political, economic and military improvements. Turkey, by decreasing every problem in Georgia, will in fact reduce the threats directed towards itself; by giving priorities to the formations that serve for the establishment of peace and stability, will beginning from the peace set up a security zone in the vicinity of itself. Therefore, Turkey's security policies should provide the characteristic of lacking of any restriction – freedom of movement. Besides, Turkey should establish the permanent security policies that intend to develop bilateral many-sided relations that are based on the equality, that assist the settlement of free market and pluralistic democracy in Georgia, and that stiffen the independence and sovereignty of Georgia.

If Turkey actually realizes its abovementioned prospective policies on Georgia, it will gain a lot of benefits: two of them are as follows: First, Georgia will be in a bridge position that is easily passable from the point of view of Turkey's transportation roads with Azerbaijan and Central Asia. Second, Georgia will continue to be an important buffer zone against revival of Russian expansionism. Because, an independent and sovereign Georgia that is purified from all its problems will no doubt form a secure buffer zone between Turkey and RF.

It will be suitable to view Georgia, where we share 252km–common border, as 'Thrace on our East' and evaluate our relations from this perspective. Because, to win that country especially in the security domain will surely provide Turkey strategic depths in Caucasia and also in Central Asia.

CONCLUSION

With this thesis, the author has intended to attract attention towards one of the Caucasian states, Georgia. Since Caucasia does not constitute Turkey's first security priority under present conditions, Georgia, unfortunately, has not been paid so much attention especially from the security point of view. However, in this thesis, the author has tried to put forth the importance of Georgia and to some extent Caucasia for consideration. For this purpose, he has chosen the security field. Because, examining a country from the security domain gives a researcher opportunity to study every field such as politics, economy and military. Moreover, throughout the thesis, the author has used the descriptive method in order to explain the subject better.

The author has also intended to submit his research with the activities of Turkey, RF and US. Whereas there are sufficient reasons that make Georgia important for Turkey, there are many both for RF and US. Their initiatives certainly affect Turkey's Georgia related security policies positively and negatively. Turkey has determined security strategies concerning Georgia, but its prospective policies must be more effective, permanent and detailed as explained in the fourth chapter. As a result, the reached conclusion in the thesis is as follows: Georgia has affected Turkey's security policies since the end of Cold War, and will continue to be effective increasingly in the future. Therefore, Turkey should be careful while determining and applying Georgia related security policies.

On the other hand, the analysis has so far indicated that most of the scholars from international relations and other departments in Turkey have not considered the Caucasia

as a ‘study region’, and thus Georgia as a ‘study country’. Because, there are not so many articles, books and theses about Georgia and its effectiveness written by the well-known academicians. Therefore, the subjects, which were recognized by the author as a probable research question while preparing the thesis, are in the following list:

1. How has Georgia been viewed by the European countries since the end of Cold War? And, how have their activities and initiatives in Georgia affected Turkish security policies?
2. How has Iran viewed Georgia since its establishment? And, how have its Georgia related policies affected Turkey’s regional interests?
3. How will the Javakhetia region be effective in Turkey’s security? What could be the probable measurements should be taken by Turkey?
4. Which kind of role will EU play in Caucasia, and in Georgia? And, how will the role of EU in Georgia be effective in Turkey’s security policies?
5. What is the role of ‘Kars Agreement’ for Turkey? – compare it with the Cyprus issue. And, how will it affect Turkey’s security perception?
6. What is the role of Azerbaijan in the Caucasia region? What are the similar interests of Turkey and Azerbaijan on Georgia, and on Caucasia?
7. Could the settlement of Akhaltsian Turks in their motherland in Georgia be a solution for the Javakhetia region in the future? If so, how?
8. What is the importance of Black Sea for the Caucasia region? Could it be the main understanding to establish a regional alliance?
9. How has Armenia affected Turkey’s security policies since the end of Cold War? What are the diversities of Turkey and Armenia on Caucasia?
10. How have the Central Asian states affected Turkey’s security policies since the end of Cold War? What are the common interests on Caucasia?

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