# Resolved: On balance, Turkey’s membership is beneficial to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

#### Overview

In 1952, Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a defense alliance between states in Europe hoping to counter Soviet aggression. Since then, Turkey has been an important member. Its position gives NATO access to the middle east and the Black Sea, it houses many integral airbases, and its military is one of the largest in NATO.

However, Turkey’s membership has also presented the organization with many difficulties. Recently, President Erdogan has consolidated control of Turkey, causing human rights violations and a loss of democratic institutions. He has also moved Turkey closer to Russia. The two countries partner together militarily and economically, creating concern among NATO members seeking to limit Russian power. Turkey’s involvement in recent armed conflicts have also gone against some of NATO’s wishes. Therefore, a lot of tensions have arisen between Turkey and the other members of NATO, threatening the organization’s cooperation.

Turkey’s current involvement with Russia, stance on global conflicts, and domestic affairs have pushed some people to call for an end to Turkey’s membership in NATO. Other experts have warned that NATO must shift the way it operates to better accommodate Turkey. These questions about the usefulness of Turkey’s membership in NATO have sparked a debate about how beneficial Turkey is to this organization.

When considering Turkey’s role in NATO, it is important to understand the current context. Russia has amassed over 100,000 troops on the border with Ukraine, and NATO is allocating resources to Ukraine in an attempt to counteract these efforts. If Russia invades Ukraine, war could break out, and NATO may choose to fight. Turkey has supplied Ukraine with important weapons, and it is trying to broker peace between Russia and Ukraine before fighting breaks out.

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# Pro

#### We stand in affirmation of the following:

On balance, Turkey’s membership is beneficial to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

### Definitions

#### The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Masters 21

Jonathan Masters (Deputy Managing Editor for Council on Foreign Relations), Council on Foreign Relations, “The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)”, 5/6/2021, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/north-atlantic-treaty-organization-nato

Founded in 1949 as a bulwark against Soviet aggression, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) remains the pillar of U.S.-European military cooperation. An expanding bloc of NATO allies has taken on a broad range of missions since the close of the Cold War, many well beyond the Euro-Atlantic region. President Joe Biden has sought to recommit the United States to NATO and mend transatlantic ties that became strained under the Donald Trump administration. In 2021, NATO remains focused on deterring Russian aggression in Eastern Europe and is continuing a full withdrawal of its security forces from Afghanistan. Meanwhile, alliance members carry out several operations: peacekeeping in Kosovo, patrolling the Mediterranean, training Iraqi security forces, supporting African Union forces in Somalia, and policing the skies over Eastern Europe.

### Framework

#### Cost benefit analysis

The framing for today’s round ought to be cost benefit analysis. If we demonstrate that Turkey’s membership produces more good than harm for NATO, we should win the round.

### Contention 1: Weapons

#### Turkey has been developing a more effective arsenal of weapons that benefit NATO.

Brimelow 21

Benjamin Brimelow (journalist), Business Insider, “Turkey is building new ships, tanks, and missiles to boost its military and send a message to the rest of NATO”, August 6, 2021, https://www.businessinsider.com/turkey-is-modernizing-its-military-to-send-message-to-nato-2021-8

In June, the Turkish navy successfully test-fired the Atmaca, Turkey's first domestically produced long-range anti-ship cruise missile. The missile was fired from the TCG Kınalıada, one of the newest Ada-class corvettes, which are also domestically designed and built. In its final test, the missile sank an old research vessel, and it is now set to replace the US-made Harpoon as the Turkish Navy's standard anti-ship missile. It is the most recent in an impressive string of achievements for Turkey's defense industry, which has historically relied on US and European companies to outfit its military. In recent years, though, Turkish firms have increased their efforts to manufacture high-quality defense equipment — including guns, missiles, tanks, and warships. That increased investment has made Turkey's military more self-reliant and is turning Turkey into a top arms exporter. Turkey has long had a large and relatively capable defense industrial base. For decades it has built a variety of infantry weapons under license from foreign manufacturers, and it is one of only five countries licensed to build F-16s. The recent focus on domestic design and production stems from an increase in potential threats from Russia and various militant groups and from sanctions placed on Turkey's defense industry by its NATO allies, which have prevented the sale of critical technology or entire systems to Ankara. Turkey has had a long-standing conflict with Kurdish PKK militants in its southwest, which regularly bleeds into northern Iraq and was a major factor in Turkey's military intervention in Syria's civil war. Turkey is also dealing with a stronger Russia, its longtime state rival. Turkey enjoyed a sense of security in the Black Sea in the decades after the Cold War, when Russia was considerably weaker, but Moscow's recent actions pose a new challenge. "The military balance in the Black Sea has shifted rather significantly in Russia's favor after the seizure of Crimea and the further militarization of the peninsula," Stephen Flanagan, a senior political scientist at the Rand Corporation, told Insider.

#### NATO lacks readiness and defense capabilities, making Turkey’s involvement and sophisticated weapons crucial.

Bermann & Cicarelli 21

Max Bergmann(senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and served in the Department of State from 2011-2017), Siena Cicarelli (program associate for American Progress and previously interned for the Department of State), Center for American Progress, “NATO’s Financing Gap”, 1/13/2021, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2021/01/13/494605/natos-financing-gap/

Since the summit, some progress has been made in strengthening the alliance. NATO members have increased defense spending, deployed forces in Central and Eastern Europe, and begun investing in needed capabilities. In 2019, almost all NATO allies increased their defense spending, with nine countries hitting the 2 percent goal. Most allies have put plans in place to substantially increase defense spending by 2024. The alliance is stronger and better prepared to deter Russia than it was six years ago, despite the divisive approach of President Donald Trump, but significant gaps remain. Marginal spending increases by various NATO members were inherently fragmented and often yielded few new major capabilities or failed to address some of NATO’s serious shortfalls. Meanwhile, many member states still have yet to adequately invest in their forces, leading to very low states of readiness and operational strain. Lack of progress toward the 2 percent benchmark has also caused major diplomatic tension within the alliance between the countries meeting their commitments and those that are not. Now, with the COVID-19 crisis hammering the balance sheets of all NATO members, the prospect for European defense spending looks bleak. It seems unlikely that there will be significant new investment to address some of NATO’s critical capability gaps. Indeed, the European Union—which had planned to increase funding to upgrade the dual-use infrastructure critical to moving NATO forces—has reduced its planned allocations in its recent budget. NATO members seeking to keep their economies alive are unlikely to prioritize defense.

### Contention 2: Ukraine

#### NATO is gearing up to fight a war with Russia in Ukraine.

CBS 22

CBS News, “Russia's reaction to U.S. and NATO leaves Ukraine crisis to fester on the brink of war”, January 28, 2022, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/russia-reaction-united-states-nato-ukraine-crisis-war/

Russia and NATO are continuing their military buildup around Ukraine, including more Russian fighter jets just across Ukraine's northern border in Belarus. Russia's ongoing military exercises with its Belarusian allies have fueled fears that Russia could launch an invasion into Ukraine, as it did in 2014. The U.S. and its NATO allies presented President Vladimir Putin's government with a written response to his demands for "security guarantees" on Wednesday, hoping to keep the crisis on a diplomatic track. But in the meantime, CBS News senior foreign correspondent Holly Williams says America and its allies continue preparing for a possible Russian invasion. On Thursday, Russia's foreign minister said Putin had personally reviewed the response hand-delivered by the U.S. ambassador in Moscow. The reaction from Moscow indicated disappointment, but also a decision to keep talking, for now.

#### Turkey could tip the balance of power in favor of Ukraine and NATO.

Bryza & Wilson 21

Matthew Bryza (former US diplomat with two decades, including serving as assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs) and Grady Wilson (assistant director at the Atlantic Council IN TURKEY), Atlantic Council, “Turkey could tip the balance in the Ukraine-Russia standoff”, December 16, 2021, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/turkeysource/turkey-could-tip-the-balance-in-the-ukraine-russia-standoff/

As the United States and its European allies scramble to deter Russia from invading Ukraine again, the use of direct military force seems to be off the table. Yet there’s one NATO member state that successfully persuaded the Kremlin to sue for peace twice in recent years using that very tactic: Turkey. Now, Ankara is raising the stakes by doubling down on its defense cooperation with Kyiv and recommitting itself to the continued sale of dozens of Bayraktar TB2 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), much to Russia’s ire. This may come as a surprise to anyone who has watched Turkey seemingly drift toward Russia—and away from NATO—in recent years. In 2017, Ankara signed a deal to purchase the highly sophisticated Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile defense system, to which the United States responded by banishing Turkey from the F-35 fighter jet program and eventually sanctioning the country under the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). Years earlier, Turkey had joined Russia and Iran as a co-chair of the so-called Astana Process, an alternative to the United Nations-led effort to mediate the Syrian civil war. But in reality, Turkish-Russian relations are complex and characterized by both competition and cooperation across multiple theaters and dimensions. Looming in the background are centuries of diplomatic antagonism and military conflict often centered on the Black Sea region—a balancing act that’s playing out again now. Despite Turkey’s shared economic interests with Russia in energy, tourism, construction, and agricultural exports, Ankara joined its NATO allies in rejecting Moscow’s annexation of Crimea and reaffirming Ukraine’s territorial integrity. That stance, which has hardened over time, was partially explained by its historical anger over ethnically Turkic Crimean Tatars falling under Russian rule again. Even more compelling is Turkey’s growing concern over an expansionist (and revanchist) Russia near its borders in the Black Sea and South Caucasus regions. Ankara has responded to Moscow’s aggression by becoming one of the strongest proponents of enlarging NATO membership to include both Ukraine and Georgia—even while offering to mediate the conflict in Ukraine. Ankara has simultaneously pursued a strategic partnership with Kyiv based largely on defense industry cooperation, which apart from drones also includes the sales of naval ships with stealth capabilities and the joint development of a jet engine for military aircraft. But Turkey’s drone sale, which came five years after Israel balked at selling its own models to Ukraine for fear of antagonizing Russia, is particularly significant. Having witnessed the devastating impact of Turkey’s innovative drone-based tactics— combining the UAV’s battlefield intelligence and precision rocket strikes with closely coordinated standoff artillery assaults aimed at neutralizing defenses and capitalizing on air superiority—Russia has plenty of reason to worry. Such attacks fought Russian and Syrian government forces to a standstill in Syria’s Idlib province in March 2020 and prompted Russia to recommit to its previous agreement with Turkey to protect Idlib as a “safe zone.” Just months later, Turkey reversed an offensive by Russian mercenaries and Libyan fighters that had already reached the outskirts of Tripoli. And during last year’s Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, the Azerbaijani military—another early purchaser of Turkish drones—employed the same tactical approach to neutralize Armenia’s advanced Russian weaponry, including air defense systems and armor, with startling precision and speed. That’s why Russia has signaled its concern about Turkish UAVs on numerous occasions, most recently when Russian President Vladimir Putin warned his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, during a December 3 phone call that the drones helped enable “destructive” behavior by Ukraine. Ankara responded the next day by affirming that drone deliveries to Ukraine would continue—then, days later, sought to restore the diplomatic balance by offering its mediation efforts. Though Moscow did not take up this offer, it has been careful to avoid incendiary rhetoric toward Ankara. Turkey’s combination of military firmness and diplomatic sobriety offers important capabilities for NATO as it struggles to deter further Russian aggression against Ukraine. As scholar Francis Fukuyama recently observed, Ukraine’s use of Turkish UAVs could be a “complete game-changer,” while analysts at the Royal United Services Institute think tank believe Turkey’s massed drone and artillery strikes could even render the battle tank obsolete. Moscow, for its part, has also been careful not to alienate Ankara—perhaps because of mutual economic interests, or because it simply wants to deepen the wedge between Ankara and its NATO allies. Whatever the Kremlin’s motivation, the United States and NATO would be wise to make use of the assets which the Alliance’s second-largest military brings to the table—especially the diplomatic wisdom gained from managing centuries of conflict and cooperation with Russia.

### Contention 3: Strategic Location

#### Turkey occupies an important geographical location.

BBC 18

BBC, “Turkey Country Profile”, July 10, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17988453

Straddling the continents of Europe and Asia, Turkey's strategically important location has given it major influence in the region - and control over the entrance to the Black Sea. Progress towards democracy and a market economy was halting after Ataturk's death in 1938, and the army - seeing itself as guarantor of the constitution - repeatedly ousted governments seen as challenging secular values. Joining the European Union has been a longstanding ambition. Membership talks were launched in 2005, but have stalled over serious misgivings about Turkey's human rights record.

#### NATO needs involvement in the Black Sea to effectively counter Russia, so it benefits from Turkey’s membership.

Tol & Işık 21

Gönül Tol (professor at George Washington University’s Institute for Middle East Studies) and Yörük Işık (worked on foreign policy for the Green Group in the European Parliament, followed by 17 years in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, working for a Washington DC based NGO), Middle East Institute, “Turkey-NATO ties are problematic, but there is one bright spot”, February 16, 2021, https://www.mei.edu/publications/turkey-nato-ties-are-problematic-there-one-bright-spot

When it comes to Turkey-NATO ties, Ankara is regarded as more of a problem than an ally these days. Not only did it purchase a Russian S-400 air defense system, but its gunboat diplomacy in the eastern Mediterranean also raised the specter of military conflict between NATO allies when Greek and Turkish naval flotillas steamed directly toward each other this past summer. There is one region, however, where Turkey can help NATO efforts: the Black Sea. Since its annexation in 2014, the Crimean Peninsula has become a Russian military fortress. Moscow has significantly increased its military presence in a region that Russian President Vladimir Putin considers the centerpiece of Russia’s power projection into the Mediterranean. It has now enough assets, reinforced with new ships and submarines with powerful Kalibr missile systems, to overwhelm any coalition in these waters. But Moscow wants more. In 2021, the Russian army will receive almost 3,500 pieces of new equipment, and two-thirds of the military budget will go toward purchases of armaments and upgrades. This includes the Ministry of Defense’s latest Strategiya automatic surface surveillance system in the Black Sea. A growing American presence and a new Turkish strategy In response, the U.S. Navy has stepped up its own military presence in the Black Sea. In the last two weeks, the USS Donald Cook and the USS Porter, guided missile destroyers, and the USNS Laramie, a refueling ship, entered the Black Sea in what has been the largest deployment in the region since 2017. Both destroyers are armed with Raytheon Tomahawk cruise missiles, bringing real firepower to the Black Sea theater. The U.S. Navy’s appearance is an unmistakable show of force, demonstrating that it can operate in a wide geography and without help from regional allies, if necessary. America’s presence in the Black Sea is important to check Russian expansionism, but a more effective strategy calls for a coordinated response from regional allies such as Turkey. Turkey’s relationship with NATO and the U.S. in particular has been rocky of late. Ignoring warnings from NATO and the threat of sanctions from the U..S, Turkey went ahead with its purchase of the Russian S-400 air defense system, taking delivery of the first shipment in mid-2019. But despite its growing defense partnership with Moscow, Ankara is equally uneasy about the growing Russian military presence in a region where Turkey once had the edge. In a 2016 plea to Turkey’s NATO allies, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said the Black Sea had become a “Russian lake” and called for a greater NATO presence, reversing a decades-old Turkish policy of keeping the alliance out. Turkey has developed a multi-pronged strategy to counter Russian influence in the Black Sea. One important leg of that strategy is on the home front, where Turkey is strengthening its navy. A project called MILGEM, a contraction of the Turkish for “national ship” (milli gemi), was launched to design and construct naval vessels in-country, including ADA class corvettes. In 2018, the Pakistani Navy signed a contract to acquire four of these ships from Turkey’s state-run defense contractor ASFAT, the first successful export of these vessels. Turkey has also been building up its anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities to counter Russia’s growing A2/AD assets in the Black Sea by ordering four new frigates, called both Istanbul and MILGEM II. The frigates are based on the ADA class corvette design but extended by 14 meters to enable the inclusion of a vertical launching system for surface to air missiles. The naval version of the army’s Korkut low-altitude air defense system, Gökdeniz, will be added to the inventory for the first time with the frigate. The national Atmaca anti-ship missile will also be integrated into the first unit of the class, TCG Istanbul, which is forecast for entry into service later this year. Balancing Russia through regional military cooperation Turkey is taking steps on the foreign policy front as well, stepping up its cooperation with Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. Ankara views these countries as instrumental in its efforts to balance the Russian military presence in the Black Sea and South Caucasus. Since Russia’s annexation of Crimea, Turkish-Ukrainian relations have expanded significantly. Last year, Erdoğan unveiled a $36 million military aid package for Ukraine. The two countries agreed to cooperate on the design and manufacture of aircraft engines, radar units, drones, and navigation systems and consider collaboration on advanced technology projects, such as ballistic missile systems. Turkey also plans to sell its ships to Ukraine as part of a much bigger defense deal, which, if it comes to fruition, could change the balance of power in the Black Sea. Besides cooperation in defense industries, the Ukrainian and Turkish navies also conduct joint training in the Black Sea to showcase their ability to operate "in accordance with NATO standards." Turkey has also invested in shoring up the defenses of Georgia, another Black Sea country threatened by Russia’s growing influence in the region. Turkey has allocated millions of dollars to the Georgian Ministry of Defense to reform the country’s military logistics and transfer defense capabilities to its northeastern neighbor while advocating for the extension of NATO membership to Georgia, a move Russia opposes. Turkey’s defense cooperation with Azerbaijan has been growing as well, which was on full display in the fighting in the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh late last year, when Ankara threw its full military support behind Baku. Turkish drones provided Azerbaijan a huge advantage in the conflict, which ended with Azerbaijan capturing significant swathes of territory from Armenian forces. Turkey’s military exports to Azerbaijan rose six-fold in 2020, with Azerbaijan jumping to the top of the list of Turkish arms buyers in September. NATO and the Black Sea NATO should support these Turkish efforts. It should also establish a permanent “Black Sea Maritime Patrol” group modeled on the successful Operation Sea Guardian in the Mediterranean. Operation Sea Guardian is a flexible effort that can potentially cover the full range of NATO’s maritime security needs. In accordance with NATO’s “framework nation” concept, Turkey can be assigned the leading nation role in the Black Sea and smaller members can integrate their own, more limited capabilities into an organizational structure provided by Ankara. Mirroring other NATO missions in the Baltic or Mediterranean, Turkey can play a coordinating role to bring in other NATO allies willing to participate and provide support. Such a force would require NATO’s coordination and political pressure among non-Black Sea members to commit in advance to a regular and rotational maritime presence in the Black Sea, in line with the 1936 Montreux Convention, which limits the presence of warships from non-littoral states to a maximum of 21 days. Although the development of such a multinational unit would require a sustained diplomatic effort, once active, it would boost NATO’s deterrence in a strategic region that has become a springboard for Russia to project power from Georgia all the way to Syria and Libya.

### Extra Cards:

#### Turkey has a strong military.

WION News 19

WION News (unbiased news source that primarily reports on the Middle East and Asia), “How Turkey's military might measures up to US' - A comparative analysis”, October 17, 2019, https://www.wionews.com/photos/turkeys-military-might-256531

The Turkish Armed Forces are the second largest standing military force in NATO, after the US Armed Forces with estimated active military personnel of 6,85,862. With a Military budget of $18.2 billion, Turkey spent 2.2 per cent of its GDP on defence in the year 2018. The United States on the other hand spent $610 billion that is 3.1 per cent of its GDP in the same year.

#### NATO has little interest in protecting the Kurds, so Turkey’s actions in Syria are not a harm to NATO.

Landler, Gall, & Schmitt 18

Mark Landler, Carlotta Gall and Eric Schmitt (contributors to the New York Times), The New York Times, “Mixed Messages From U.S. as Turkey Attacks Syrian Kurds”, January 23, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/23/world/middleeast/us-nato-turkey-afrin-manbij.html

The White House sent out a message aimed at mollifying Turkey’s president on Tuesday, suggesting that the United States was easing off its support for the Syrian Kurds. That message was quickly contradicted by the Pentagon, which said it would continue to stand by the Kurds, even as Turkey invaded their stronghold in northwestern Syria. The conflicting statements appeared to reflect an effort by the administration to balance competing pressures. Turkey, which has been furious over American support for the Kurds, is a NATO ally, while the Kurds have been critical American partners in the war against the Islamic State. For its part, the White House disavowed a plan by the American military to create a Kurdish-led force in northeastern Syria, which Turkey has vehemently opposed. Turkey, which considers the Kurdish militia a terrorist organization, fears the plan would cement a Kurdish enclave along its southern frontier. That plan, a senior administration official said Tuesday, originated with midlevel military planners in the field, and was never seriously debated, or even formally introduced, at senior levels in the White House or the National Security Council. The official, who spoke to reporters on condition that he not be identified, also said that the United States had no connection to the Kurds in the northwestern Syrian city of Afrin, where the Turkish military has launched an invasion in recent days. And he drew a distinction between allies — a term he said had legal connotations — and partners in a combat mission, like the Kurds. America’s actions on the ground in Syria, he said, would be driven by a calculation of its interests. Taken together, the administration’s statements appeared to be a significant attempt to reassure Turkey’s president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who considers the Kurds a threat to his country’s internal stability. But the Pentagon issued its own statement on Tuesday standing by its decision to create the Kurdish-led force. And a senior American commander praised the partnership with the Kurds, whose help was critical in a major American airstrike on the Islamic State, also known as ISIS, over the weekend. “U.S. forces are training local partners to serve as a force that is internally focused on stability and deterring ISIS,” Maj. Adrian Rankine-Galloway, a Pentagon spokesman, said in the statement. “These local security forces are aimed at preventing the potential outflow of fleeing ISIS terrorists as their physical presence in Syria nears its end and pending a longer-term settlement of the civil war in Syria to ensure that ISIS cannot escape or return.” President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey was among those at the funeral of a soldier killed in the country’s operation in Syria. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey was among those at the funeral of a soldier killed in the country’s operation in Syria. The Pentagon has engaged in a rebranding effort, however, as the force was initially described as a border force, leading Turkey to fear the presence of thousands of American-backed, Kurdish troops on its border. Military officials are now saying that its duties will be mainly internal. The debate over the partnership with the Kurds is taking place as the Kurds continue to play a major role fighting alongside the Americans in Syria. The military’s Central Command said Tuesday that about 150 Islamic State fighters were killed in American airstrikes near As Shafah, Syria, on Saturday, in one the largest strikes against ISIS in the past year. The Kurdish-led militia, called the Syrian Democratic Forces, or S.D.F., helped guide the airstrikes, American officials said. “The strikes underscore our assertion that the fight to liberate Syria is far from over,” Maj. Gen. James Jarrard, the commander of Special Operations forces in Iraq and Syria, said a statement. “Our S.D.F. partners are still making daily progress and sacrifices, and together we are still finding, targeting and killing ISIS terrorists intent on keeping their extremist hold on the region.” Senior Pentagon officials and American commanders say that the Syrian Kurds will most likely serve as the backbone of the allied forces on the ground in Syria for months to come. Echoing earlier comments by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, the commander of the United States Central Command, General Joseph L. Votel, said in an interview last month that American forces would remain in eastern Syria, alongside their Syrian Kurdish and Arab allies, as long as needed to defeat the Islamic State. “What we don’t want to do is leave a mess,” General Votel said, something “worse than what we found.” Coalition forces are attacking the last remnants of the Islamic State in the Euphrates River valley of Syria, near the Iraqi border. But as that campaign begins to wane, the American partnership with the Kurds is bringing it into ever-more-direct conflict with Turkey. While the Turkish military incursion into Afrin has seized the world’s attention, American, NATO and Turkish officials have directed their eyes east, to the strategic city of Manbij. Home to a contingent of United States Special Operations troops who are training and equipping Kurdish forces that control the city, Manbij is increasingly emerging as the ultimate target of the Turkish operation and a far more serious source of tension than the Afrin offensive. A Turkish assault on Manbij could bring its forces into direct conflict with the Americans, with unpredictable results. Is Turkey’s Syria Offensive Endangering U.S. Troops? Turkey's president has said he wants his forces to take the Syrian city of Manbij. The problem is that the United States is already there. Two senior U.S. generals show up at a small city in northern Syria — Manbij. Why were they there? And why now? The answer begins last March when images emerged showing U.S. troops flying the American flag on patrol there. It was unusual to see such a public display of American boots on the ground in Syria. And that was the point. The Pentagon deployed these troops to keep the peace between nearby Turkish troops and Kurdish fighters. “You know we are very clear about our presence there. These patrols are overt.” Both are sworn enemies of each other. But both are also U.S. allies. Turkey is a NATO ally, and the Kurds have been key to helping the U.S. defeat Islamic State. So to keep the peace in the city an American show of force was necessary. Now the common enemy for everyone had been Islamic State. But with that fight winding down, old rivalries have again taken center stage. The Turks consider Kurds terrorists and say they are protecting their own border. And so Turkey has launched an offensive against the Kurds just a three hour drive from Manbij in Afrin. Turkey’s president has said Manbij is his Army’s next objective after Afrin. The problem is American troops are still there. Here’s what we know about their presence. They’ve been advising Kurds there since 2016 and still continue overt patrols in the city. Plus there’s a U.S. air base that’s just a 45-minute drive away. At times, U.S. patrols near the city have also received fire from Turkish-backed rebels. “We identified this to our Turkish allies, and they have taken appropriate measures to get that under control.” These rebels operate in territory just north of the city. It’s part of a buffer zone Turkey already controls along its border with Syria. The U.S. has said it has no intention of leaving, that it will support the Kurds there despite Turkey’s rhetoric. And that’s what this visit by the generals tried to show. But if the offensive turns towards Manbij, U.S. troops could find themselves stuck between two bitter enemies putting American lives at risk. One of the generals said that if U.S. Is Turkey’s Syria Offensive Endangering U.S. Troops? Turkey's president has said he wants his forces to take the Syrian city of Manbij. The problem is that the United States is already there. “It may bring a direct military confrontation, as American forces are there,” said Gonul Tol, director of the Center for Turkish Studies at the Middle East Institute in Washington. “The death of even one American soldier may completely break ties.” Turkey’s foreign minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu, raised Manbij when briefing Turkish journalists on Tuesday morning, having met the day before with Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson in France. “Terrorists in Manbij are constantly firing provocation shots,” Mr. Cavusoglu said. “If the United States doesn’t stop this, we will stop it.” Mr. Tillerson said the United States would keep working with Turkey to stabilize the situation and address its security concerns. The level of concern about Turkish-American relations was reflected in the flurry of meetings this week between officials of the two countries. American officials, led by the deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, Jonathan R. Cohen, flew to Ankara, Turkey’s capital, for meetings scheduled for Wednesday, including with security officials. Rose Gottemoeller, the deputy secretary general of NATO, who was in Turkey for a planned, two-day visit, was also there. In an interview with the NTV news channel, Ms. Gottemoeller treaded carefully, saying that “Turkey has legitimate reasons to be concerned about the Kurdish armed organizations in Syria,” but adding that “one should keep a balance between the threat and the reaction to it.”

#### Turkey has important air bases.

TRT World 19

TRT World, “Why are US military bases in Turkey so crucial for Washington?”, December 16, 2019, https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/why-are-us-military-bases-in-turkey-so-crucial-for-washington-32243

Turkey’s Incirlik air base alone has been a crucial military location for Washington’s overseas missions since the 1950s, holding at least 50 nuclear bombs. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has recently signalled that Ankara may close down its Incirlik air base and Kurecik radar station, which host US forces and military equipment including nuclear warheads. In the Incirlik air base, the US has a sizable Air Force personnel estimated to be about 5,000 military men. For decades, the base has been directly used by Washington for its military deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. It has served as a crucial location for US overseas missions in the Middle East and Central Asia, acting as a transit stop for the American troops that are deployed back and forth between different destinations. The air base’s long history has shown its importance to the US from the years of the Cold War to the Middle East’s current turbulent period. Ankara began considering closing the military bases in retaliation for Washington’s possible sanctions and the Congress’s passing of a resolution favouring the Armenian allegations on the 1915 events, accusing Turkey of an alleged “genocide”, a charge Ankara denies. "When necessary, we will discuss with all our delegations, and if necessary, we may close Incirlik [which is located in Turkey’s southern province of Adana] and Kurecik [which is located in the southeastern province of Malatya]," Erdogan said during a TV interview. The US also allied with the YPG, the Syrian wing of the PKK, which is recognised as a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the US and NATO. Turkey is the second biggest army in NATO. Since the 1950s, its bases have helped the alliance in protecting its southern wing against perceived threats emerging from the former Soviet Union and its successor state Russia. But Washington’s recent moves endanger the relations between the two NATO allies a great deal as the US domestic political turbulence puts both countries’ regional interests at stake. Why is Incirlik air base a crucial station for the alliance? Since 1956, the US has operated strategic reconnaissance missions from Incirlik air base to the areas close to the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and Central Asia, mainly to follow the moves of the former Soviet Union and later Russia and its allies. In 2004, the base was reportedly one of the centres of Washington’s largest military movement concerning Iraq in the US history, providing its troops what they need during their stops there after their comeback from deployments. In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the base had also been a principal focal point for Washington’s Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Since 2014, the base was used to conduct for operations against Daesh in Syria and Iraq. Beyond regular military missions, the Incirlik base hosts at least 50 B61 nuclear bombs in its hangars, demonstrating its strategic significance for Washington and NATO. The base has been one of the unique locations, holding US nuclear weapons alongside with Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, since the Cold War.

#### Turkey has maintained leadership in military readiness and operated in essential NATO roles.

NATO 21

NATO, “Turkey takes charge of NATO high readiness force”, January 1, 2021, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\_180627.htm

The Turkish army will take the lead of NATO’s Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) on Friday (1 January 2021), placing thousands of soldiers on standby, ready to deploy within days. Turkey takes over from Poland, which provided the core of the force in 2020. Built around Turkey’s 66th Mechanised Infantry Brigade of around 4,200 troops, a total of around 6,400 soldiers will serve on the VJTF. Units from Albania, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, the UK, and the United States will also serve on the force, which is part of the Alliance’s larger NATO Response Force. Turkey has made substantial investments into the unit – amongst the most mobile in NATO - particularly in its logistics and ammunition requirements planning. The latest models of Turkish armed vehicles, anti-tank missiles and howitzers have been allocated to the force. NATO heads of state and government decided to create the VJTF at the Wales Summit in 2014 in response to a changed security environment, including Russia’s destabilisation of Ukraine and turmoil in the Middle East. NATO members take turns heading the VJTF. Poland led the VJTF in 2020, Germany in 2019, and Italy had rotational control of the force in 2018.

#### Turkey’s foreign policy is not committed to Russia.

Kusa 21

Iliya Kusa (Analyst at the Ukrainian Institute for the Future), Wilson Center, “As Russia Escalates, Where Do Turkey-Ukraine Relations Stand?”, April 22, 2021, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/russia-escalates-where-do-turkey-ukraine-relations-stand

Finally, Turkey still pursues a pragmatic foreign policy. It is neither pro-Ukraine nor pro-Russia. It is entirely pro-Turkey. With a military escalation brewing in Ukraine’s East, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s statements during Zelensky’s visit vividly demonstrated the twofold approach Ankara clings to with respect to the unfolding situation. Although he reconfirmed Turkey’s political support for Ukraine (especially with regard to the Crimean issue), Erdoğan emphasized that Russian-Ukrainian tensions must be resolved peacefully and a political solution be found based on the Minsk agreements of 2015, which are perceived as not beneficial by over 28 percent of Ukrainians. In addition, Turkey is embroiled in a number of regional processes, from Syria and Libya to the southern Caucasus, in which Russia is Turkey’s main counterpart. This forces Ankara to sustain close ties with Moscow and avoid direct confrontation. Erdoğan sees the Ukraine-Russia conflict as an opportunity to expand its geopolitical clout over the Black Sea basin, Eastern Europe, and Crimea by using the war in Ukraine as an excuse to push for Crimean Tatar autonomy in Ukraine.

#### Turkey and Russia are not as close allies as the negation wants you to believe.

Belbagi 21

Zaid M. Belbagi (political commentator), Arab News, “Clash between unlikely allies Turkey and Russia is inevitable”, March 17, 2021, https://www.arabnews.com/node/1827171

Having gone to war at least 12 times over the centuries, Turkey and Russia are unlikely allies. In 2015, when Turkey shot down a Russian warplane, any accord between the two seemed unlikelier still. And the gunning down of Russian Ambassador Andrei Karlov in Ankara a year later was a cause for war if ever there was one. Startlingly, however, the reality since that low point in relations between the countries is that they have grown closer together. As Russian President Vladimir Putin tries to drive a wedge between Turkey and its NATO allies, how this relationship between historical adversaries continues remains to be seen.

#### Turkey provides a host of strategic benefits.

Ellehuus 19

Rachel Ellehuus (Deputy Director, Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program), Center for Strategic and International Studies, “Turkey and NATO: A Relationship Worth Saving”, December 2, 2019, https://www.csis.org/analysis/turkey-and-nato-relationship-worth-saving

NATO leaders will gather this week in London to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the alliance; reflect on past accomplishments; implement the remaining deterrence and defense measures agreed at the 2014 Warsaw Summit; and lay the groundwork for future cooperation in new areas, such as emerging technologies and space. And while the military machinery that is the core of NATO continues to run smoothly—generating levels of interoperability, integrated operational planning, and force generation that are unmatched—NATO’s political cohesion is being challenged by both internal divisions among members and by external actors who seek to exploit these differences to their own advantage. Perhaps the most pronounced case of this fractured political cohesion is the Turkey-NATO relationship, where internal challenges and pressure from external actors uniquely intersect. Internally, allies are alarmed by President Erdogan’s walking back of democracy, press freedom, and civic society in Turkey; Turkey’s repeated unilateral incursions into northern Syria; and its willingness to hold the NATO agenda hostage to domestic concerns, for example, Turkey’s current hold on approving the Graduated Response Plan for the Baltic States and Poland pending NATO recognition of the threat posed to Turkey by the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG). Conversely, Turkey (and many other southern flank allies for that matter) believes that NATO does not fully recognize or address its legitimate security concerns, in particular migration and terrorism. Externally, Russia quickly capitalized on the fissures between Turkey and NATO, offering to assist Turkey in managing the YPG along the Turkey-Syria border and to sell it Russian equipment, such as the S-400 surface-to-air missile system, which would compromise NATO capabilities and has led to a halt in delivery of F-35 aircraft to Turkey. Turkey’s subsequent decisions to fly its F-16 against the S-400 over Ankara and to enter negotiations with Russian on purchasing the Russian Su-35 fighter aircraft have reinforced concerns that Turkey has little interest in maintaining or rebuilding its relationship with NATO as instead plans to continue to test its boundaries. The EU-Turkey relationship is not faring much better, with accession negotiations (initiated in 2005) frozen since June 2018 due to Turkey’s backsliding on democracy, rule of law, and fundamental rights. The 2016 EU-Turkey refugee agreement, whereby Turkey receives EU financial assistance in exchange for continuing to host some 3 million refugees, is creating further tension, with both sides accusing the other of not living up to the terms of the agreement. What’s next? Presently, mutual mistrust is so high that many allies are questioning whether Turkey still shares NATO’s interests and values, and many in Turkey are struggling to see the benefits of NATO membership or a renewed EU accession process. Both sides seem to have forgotten the historical ties and shared interests that led Turkey to join NATO in 1952, such as countering Russian (then Soviet) influence in Central Asia and the Middle East and maintaining stability in the Middle East. Yet these foundational factors remain valid: Turkey’s geopolitical position at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa still provides NATO with needed political and operational reach, and Turkey continues to benefit from the collective military power of NATO. With the relationship close to (if not at) its nadir, Turkey and NATO, with the support of the EU, need to take active measures to anchor it for the future, while avoiding steps that could destroy the relationship entirely.

#### Turkey is helping Ukraine withstand Russian aggression.

Kramer 22

Andrew E. Kramer (reporter based in the Moscow bureau of The New York Times), New York Times, “Turkey, a Sometimes Wavering NATO Ally, Backs Ukraine”, Febraury 3, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/world/europe/ukraine-turkey-russia-drones.html

KYIV, Ukraine — President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey agreed on Thursday to expand supplies of one of the Ukrainian Army’s most sophisticated weapons, a long-range, Turkish-made armed drone whose use in combat for the first time in Ukraine last fall infuriated Russian officials. Mr. Erdogan’s decision to provide weapons and diplomatically back Ukraine was a public rebuke to Moscow and another complicating factor in the mix of cooperation and conflict between Turkey and Russia, historical rivals for supremacy in the region around the Black Sea. The promise of more arms for Ukraine, especially an offensive weapon like the Turkish drone, is an extremely sensitive issue for Moscow, which claims that its security is threatened and that it has no choice but to mass troops on the Ukrainian border. The Ukrainians, while welcoming diplomatic support, have said that what they primarily need are more weapons to deter any attack. The Turkish leader’s visit to Ukraine’s capital, Kyiv, to announce the arms deal came as diplomatic dividing lines are being drawn in the crisis, with the United States, Britain and Eastern European nations sending weaponry to bolster Ukraine in the event of war with Russia. An American airlift of anti-tank missiles and small-arms ammunition continued Thursday with the arrival of a seventh cargo jet of weaponry to Kyiv. At the same time, Russia denounced the Biden administration’s announcement that it would send additional troops to NATO countries, with the Kremlin spokesman, Dmitri S. Peskov, accusing the United States of “igniting tensions on the European continent.” Russia’s defense minister, Sergei K. Shoigu, said Thursday that the Russian military would send additional troops and equipment for military exercises in Belarus, which borders Ukraine to the north, adding to tens of thousands of soldiers already deployed there. President Emmanuel Macron of France pressed a diplomatic effort in separate phone calls with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine. The calls are intended to lead to a summit of Russian, Ukrainian and European leaders to help defuse the threat of a Russian military incursion. Mr. Erdogan’s visit to Kyiv was mostly a show of support for Mr. Zelensky’s government, but the Turkish leader also offered to play a mediating role between Russia and Ukraine, showing he is walking a fine line between backing Ukraine and disrupting a complicated relationship with Russia. “We are ready to fulfill our part to end the crisis between two friendly countries that Turkey neighbors across the Black Sea.” So far, neither government has taken him up on the idea. Mr. Erdogan’s visit to Kyiv was mostly a show of support for Mr. Zelensky’s government, but the Turkish leader also offered to play a mediating role between Russia and Ukraine, showing he is walking a fine line between backing Ukraine and disrupting a complicated relationship with Russia. “We are ready to fulfill our part to end the crisis between two friendly countries that Turkey neighbors across the Black Sea.” So far, neither government has taken him up on the idea.

#### Turkey’s complex relationship with Ukraine could stop a war.

France24 22

France 24, “Erdogan seeks payoff from Russia-US clash on Ukraine”, February 2, 2022, https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220202-erdogan-seeks-payoff-from-russia-us-clash-on-ukraine

The veteran Turkish leader hopes mediation between Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky can avert a Russian offensive that Washington warns could start by mid-February. His high-profile efforts -- met with caution in Moscow -- carry huge stakes and potentially rich rewards. Analysts believe a serious conflict in Ukraine could upend Turkey's economy and imperil Erdogan's chances of extending his rule into a third decade in elections due by mid-2023. It could also force Ankara to pick sides between Putin -- a leader who holds several economic and military trump cards over Turkey -- and traditional Western allies that have grown impatient with Erdogan's rule. Kyiv's acquisition of battle-tested Turkish drones is a particular worry for Russian-backed separatist fighters in eastern Ukraine and for the Kremlin. But analysts think success in averting a Russian invasion could highlight Turkey's importance to the Western defence alliance and warm Erdogan's chilly relations with US President Joe Biden. "This is an opportunity for Turkey to elevate its status and come out of the doghouse, metaphorically speaking, in NATO," Asli Aydintasbas of the European Council on Foreign Relations told AFP. "Ankara will also use this as an opportunity to improve ties with Washington," she added. "Erdogan has developed this unique personal relationship with Putin that is simultaneously competitive and consensual -- allowing them to support different sides in Libya, the Caucasus and Syria." Erdogan's evolving relationship with Putin has been one of the defining features of diplomacy across southeastern Europe and the Middle East. Their relations imploded after Turkey shot down a Russian warplane near the Syrian border in 2015. They improved markedly after Putin became the first head of state to call Erdogan on the night he survived a Turkish coup attempt in 2016. Most Western leaders waited days before publicly supporting Erdogan -- indecision that analysts say pushed Turkey closer to Russia in subsequent years. This bond has withstood repeated tests since. Their support for opposing sides in Syria and Libya did not keep Turkey in 2019 from acquiring a Russian missile defence system at the heart of current tensions with Washington. Putin also appeared to take in stride Turkey's game-changing supply of drones to Azerbaijan during its 2020 war with Moscow-backed ethnic Armenians in disputed Nagorno-Karabakh. "This is a person who keeps his word -- a real man," Putin said of Erdogan weeks after the Karabakh conflict wound down. Istanbul Medipol University scholar Abdurrahman Babacan said Erdogan and Putin share what "most leaders do not have in their bilateral relations: timely intervention and playing their cards face up". 'Counter the Bayraktars' Ukraine represents one of the leaders' points of friction. Erdogan vocally opposed Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea because of the historical presence of ethnically-Turkic Tatars on the peninsula. He has backed Kyiv's NATO ambitions and approved Ukraine's acquisition of Turkey's Bayraktar TB2 combat drones. Ukraine's release of grainy footage of a TB2 destroying a separatist military target prompted Putin to raise the issue during a December 2021 call with Erdogan. Eastern separatist leader Denis Pushilin cited the drones as the main reason Russia should start openly arming Ukraine's rebel fighters. "First and foremost, we need to counter the Bayraktars," Pushilin said. Military analysts play down the drones' importance in case of all-out war. "Yes, in an asymmetric fight that pits the Ukrainian army against the forces in the Donbass, a few TB2s can tilt the balance of forces," the Foreign Policy Research Institute's Middle East Program director Aaron Stein told AFP. "However, in the event Russia invades, the TB2 isn't going to matter." 'All about Erdogan' Most analysts doubt Erdogan would openly confront Putin on Ukraine. "If Turkey does escalate, Russia can respond in kind -- pressure (against Turkish soldiers and proxies) in Syria, economic sanctions," said Oxford University scholar Dimitar Bechev. "Given its weakness, the Turkish economy can ill afford a boycott by tourists from Russia," veteran Turkey watcher Anthony Skinner added. Washington Institute fellow Soner Cagaptay said Erdogan's immediate worry was to keep the economy strong enough to give his sagging approval numbers a chance to recover before the next election. "Turkey is all about Erdogan right now, and Erdogan is all about winning the election in 2023," Cagaptay said. Analysts said this made Erdogan's mediation efforts all the more important. "Russian (military) actions will exacerbate Turkish economic weakness, such as increasing the cost of oil," said Stein. "This will not be pleasant."

#### Fears about Turkish expansionism are generally unfounded.

Aydıntaşbaş 19

Asli Aydıntaşbaş (Senior Policy Fellow), European Council on Foreign Relations, “From myth to reality: How to understand Turkey’s role in the Western Balkans”, March 13, 2019, https://ecfr.eu/publication/from\_myth\_to\_reality\_how\_to\_understand\_turkeys\_role\_in\_the\_western\_balkans/

Ankara’s actual strategy in the Western Balkans, in fact, differs markedly from these knee-jerk assessments; more importantly, its capacity to implement any sort of expansionist strategy in the region is simply non-existent. Yes, Turkey has emerged as a player in the Balkans in the past decade, and its economic and political influence has grown since the end of the 1990s Balkans wars. True, Ankara does view the Balkans as part of its geographical and emotional hinterland: many citizens of Turkey have ancestors that came to Anatolia during the Balkans wars of the early twentieth century. But Turkish and European leaders alike have greatly exaggerated the country’s power and intentions. Turkish leaders like the myth of Turkish power for internal propaganda reasons. Whatever dreams of Ottoman glory Turkish leaders may have in their private moments, these do not form the basis of Ankara’s Western Balkans policy. In reality, Turkey is neither an alternative or even the biggest economic actor in the region. It does not seek to peel the Western Balkans away from the EU. Nor does it see itself as a counterbalance to Russia. Turkey is indeed taking steps to strengthen its relationship with Western Balkans countries; it would like to be taken seriously in the region, and it retains its interest in the protection of Muslims there. But none of this is on a par with the EU’s economic and political influence in the region or a threat to it – at least for the moment. This paper pulls back the many layers of myth and misperception that shroud the issue. It takes a sober look at what Turkey is doing, what its fundamental goals in the Western Balkans are, and how far the country still is from achieving them. It provides an Ankara-centric view of the region, with the aim of identifying areas of cooperation and potential points of divergence between Turkey and the EU. The paper identifies three distinct phases of Western Balkans policy under Turkey’s Justice and Development Party (AKP) government, charting its shift from: ongoing Atlanticism in the party’s early years of government; to an extended period under foreign minister and, eventually, prime minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who accentuated the Ottoman inheritance; to a pragmatic shift back under a newly empowered Erdogan, retaining some emphasis on the imperial past, but mostly focusing on trade. Underpinning all these shifts are Turkey’s ongoing commitment to: transatlanticism; trade links; and Muslim communities in the region. And, as with much else in contemporary Turkey, Erdogan towers over all this: his pragmatic approach to the region and, more recently, his rivalry with influential religious leader Fethullah Gulen, have also left their imprint on Turkey’s Western Balkans policy.

# Con

#### We stand in negation of the following:

On balance, Turkey’s membership is beneficial to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

### Definitions

#### The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Masters 21

Jonathan Masters (Deputy Managing Editor for Council on Foreign Relations), Council on Foreign Relations, “The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)”, 5/6/2021, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/north-atlantic-treaty-organization-nato

Founded in 1949 as a bulwark against Soviet aggression, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) remains the pillar of U.S.-European military cooperation. An expanding bloc of NATO allies has taken on a broad range of missions since the close of the Cold War, many well beyond the Euro-Atlantic region. President Joe Biden has sought to recommit the United States to NATO and mend transatlantic ties that became strained under the Donald Trump administration. In 2021, NATO remains focused on deterring Russian aggression in Eastern Europe and is continuing a full withdrawal of its security forces from Afghanistan. Meanwhile, alliance members carry out several operations: peacekeeping in Kosovo, patrolling the Mediterranean, training Iraqi security forces, supporting African Union forces in Somalia, and policing the skies over Eastern Europe.

### Framework

#### Cost benefit analysis

The framing for today’s round ought to be cost benefit analysis. If we demonstrate that Turkey’s membership produces more harm than good for NATO, we should win the round.

### Contention 1: Losing Credibility

#### Turkey’s actions and their effects on NATO have harmed the credibility and legitimacy of the organization.

Got 20

Antoine Got (Canadian Staff Officer at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe), War on the Rocks, “TURKEY’S CRISIS WITH THE WEST: HOW A NEW LOW IN RELATIONS RISKS PARALYZING NATO”, November 19, 2020, https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/turkeys-crisis-with-the-west-how-a-new-low-in-relations-risks-paralyzing-nato/

As Ankara grows more defiant, NATO members are indeed finding it difficult to reign in their southeastern ally. With the 2011 Arab Spring and its aftermath, the rapid deterioration of Turkey’s regional and domestic security environments has coincided with a growing perception that its Western allies are not giving enough credence to its core security interests. The stalled European Union membership project, together with America’s disengagement from the Middle East, support for the Kurdish People’s Protection Units militia, and persistent refusal to extradite cleric Fethullah Gülen, the presumed mastermind of the failed 2016 coup attempt, have all contributed to strengthening the conviction that Turkish security interests are likely best served through autonomous action — and not by relying on a suspicious and divided West. This impression is reinforced by Europe’s vocal criticism of Erdoğan’s concentration of executive power, and by the country’s worsening economic and social woes. Overall, these factors have eroded NATO’s credibility and influence over Ankara, just as the latter has become more conscious of its own considerable leverage over Europe due to its key role in Syria, which NATO sees as the defense of its southern frontier, and in easing the pressure to accommodate large arrivals of refugees on European shores. The former is linked to Turkey’s vetoing of NATO’s defense plan for Poland and the Baltics, which aimed at compelling NATO to provide greater support in Turkey’s defense of the alliance’s southern flank — something Ankara has demanded for years. Likewise, Turkey’s handling of its four million-strong refugee population, the largest in the world, has contributed to Ankara’s influence over Brussels through its instrumentalization of fears that it would “open the gates” to Europe for migrants and refugees, which Erdoğan announced earlier this year in violation of a 2016 E.U.-Turkish agreement. Given its shrewd sense that the tables have turned, Ankara has lost many incentives to cooperate. Of course, one key risk is that Turkey’s bold strategy backfires and leads to a fresh round of retaliatory measures such as collective sanctions or cutbacks in E.U. funds, with damaging effects on Turkey’s weakening economy. For NATO, another conceivable consequence lays in the reinforcement of calls for greater European “strategic autonomy” in the realms of defense and security, with potentially harmful repercussions on the future of the transatlantic community. Against a backdrop of deteriorating Euro-Atlantic relations, several leaders have begun to publicly question the relevance and effectiveness of NATO as an organization. A staunch advocate of the “strategic autonomy” concept, Macron reacted to the clash with Turkey over the arms embargo on Libya by reiterating his assertion that NATO was “brain dead” for being unable to temper Turkish adventurism. In a recent interview, Armenian President Armen Sarkissian echoed these remarks by putting at stake NATO’s credibility over the organization’s seeming inability to influence its member’s involvement in the Caucasus. Were NATO to become increasingly paralyzed by souring internal relations, doubts about the effectiveness and reliability of the organization could further incentivize E.U. countries into acting beyond the NATO framework. Regrettably, this could result in accelerating E.U. states’ ostracizing of Ankara, while persuading some allies into seeking additional bilateral arrangements as more reliable forms of security guarantees.

#### Turkeys actions in Syria have harmed the credibility of NATO as well.

Dempsey 20

Judy Dempsey (Nonresident senior fellow at Carnegie Europe and editor in chief of Strategic Europe), Carnegie Europe, “Europe and NATO’s Shame Over Syria and Turkey”, March 3, 2020, https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/81191

Nothing came of her proposals, which were politely listened to by NATO and the EU and then discarded. Both organizations are now paying a heavy moral and political price for the devastation and suffering taking place in Syria. They will pay a very high price for Russia’s military and political role—as well as Iran’s—in this part of the Middle East. They will pay a heavy price over the way Turkey has consistently blackmailed NATO and the EU. The war in Syria has left both organizations morally high and dry. The moral consequences for NATO and the EU are clear. NATO is supposed to be a military and political organization made up of democratic countries that uphold certain values. As a civilian organization, the EU boasts about values too and defends its democratic principles based on solidarity, the rule of law, and international obligations. The way in which Turkey, as a leading NATO member and a candidate member country of the EU, has run roughshod over these principles has weakened the credibility of both organizations. They have been unable to respond to Turkey’s instrumentalization of citizens who are fleeing daily bombardments in Syria and who had been given refuge in Turkey. In order to stop refugees and migrants from entering the EU via bloc members Greece and Bulgaria, Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, spearheaded in 2016 a plan to keep them in Turkey. In return, the EU agreed to pay Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan €6 billion for their upkeep. Since then, at least 3 million refugees have remained in Turkey. Merkel needed the deal because the EU was bitterly divided over agreeing a refugee and asylum policy—with Germany, in particular, and a handful of other countries taking in hundreds of thousands of refugees in 2015. Merkel’s decision, based on international law, morality, and decency, was “rewarded” by a surge in support for anti-migrant, populist movements. The deal with Turkey was fragile from the beginning. Instead of using the arrangement to agree on a common refugee and asylum policy, the EU continued to squabble over the political, social, humanitarian, and legal need to protect refugees. That gave Erdoğan ample opportunities to blackmail the EU—threatening to end the deal over refugees if either the EU didn’t pay more or if NATO didn’t play ball. Erdoğan demanded the latter do so on February 28, 2020. After thirty-three Turkish soldiers were killed by Russian-backed forces in Syria on February 27, Ankara sought help from NATO by demanding an emergency meeting of the organization’s ambassadors. This is despite the fact that Turkey invaded northeastern Syria in October 2019 and—along with Russia and Iran—has helped prolong the war in Syria. In addition, Turkey signed up to buying Russian S-400 missile systems, a decision that NATO resented but was unable to prevent. Now that Erdoğan’s relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin is under strain, to say the least, Turkey has turned to NATO for political if not defensive support. After the emergency meeting on February 28, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg had no option but to utter words of solidarity for Turkey. “Allies offer their deepest condolences for the death of Turkish soldiers in last night’s bombing near Idlib,” he said. “Today’s meeting is a sign of solidarity with Turkey. Turkey is the NATO ally most affected by the terrible conflict in Syria, which has suffered the most terrorist attacks, and which hosts millions of refugees,” he added. The United States said it might be prepared to provide Turkey with Patriot missiles. But that’s not going to ease the suffering in Idlib. As for the EU, its bosses have called several high-level meetings, not because of Idlib per se but because of the fear of an influx of tens of thousands of hapless refugees who are now trying to cross into Greece after Erdoğan said he would no longer protect the border. Greek security forces are now stopping the refugees from entering their country, because Athens knows other EU countries won’t accept them and help process their asylum requests. Greece, which has used live ammunition to stop refugees from leaving Turkey, has asked Frontex, the EU’s border protection agency, to send a rapid intervention force. No doubt, there’ll be more hand-wringing by the EU and NATO about the dire humanitarian circumstances in Idlib and Turkey’s actions. Unless they go back to Kramp-Karrenbauer’s proposals, there’ll be more Idlibs, more refugees desperate to flee, and more fodder for populists across Europe. So much for the geopolitical EU that European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen advocated when she took office.

### Contention 2: Inability to Act

#### Turkey’s membership has made it more difficult for NATO to act swiftly.

Got 20

Antoine Got (Canadian Staff Officer at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe), War on the Rocks, “TURKEY’S CRISIS WITH THE WEST: HOW A NEW LOW IN RELATIONS RISKS PARALYZING NATO”, November 19, 2020, https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/turkeys-crisis-with-the-west-how-a-new-low-in-relations-risks-paralyzing-nato/

Within NATO, the escalation in tensions and growing entanglement of the two camps’ now numerous disputes reflects European allies’ mounting frustration over what they perceive as Turkey’s self-serving and aggressive regional posturing, and its unwillingness to consult allies before acting. A NATO member since 1952, Turkey has always occupied a somewhat unique role in the alliance. Its size, military resources, and key position at the doorstep of Asia — in other words, as NATO’s southern flank — give it important strategic relevance within the context of renewed interest in the Middle East. Though relations have often been fragile, especially since the 2016 coup attempt, the current rift marks a new low in the recent history of the alliance, with potentially damaging consequences. Given this backdrop, NATO should take advantage of its own resources to try to address its members’ deteriorating relations, and work to reconcile their diverging security interests. This is a lot easier said than done, but it may be the only option to prevent a more fundamental rupture in the relationship. Divided We Stand As tensions grow, a key risk for NATO relates to the crisis’ potential to hamper its cohesion and ability to act decisively, as the alliance relies on the principle of consensus to successfully operate. Every major NATO decision embodies the collective will of all allies and results, therefore, from a complex but fragile process of negotiation wherein nations are invited to compromise on matters of mutual interest. The inevitable drawback to this is that every ally possesses a de facto right to veto any NATO issue if its demands are not met, which they may be incentivized to use as leverage to pursue national interests. The same can be said of the European Union, which operates on unanimity and where Cyprus recently made headlines for blocking sanctions on Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko’s regime, insisting on the imposition of E.U. measures on Turkey for its energy exploration in Mediterranean waters. The European Union was criticized for failing to agree on timely sanctions. Unlike the European Union, NATO consultations are held behind closed doors, and disagreements largely avoid public scrutiny. In principle, however, any nation’s objections could stall key alliance policy or business. Last year, leaks revealed that Turkey had threatened on the eve of a NATO summit to block a key defense plan to protect the Baltic states and Poland against Russian aggression unless NATO backed its own recognition of the Kurdish People’s Protection Units militia as terrorists. Likewise, for years, Turkey had vetoed NATO cooperation with neutral Austria under its partnership program in response to Vienna’s calls for the European Union to halt membership talks with Ankara. Though in both cases deals were eventually reached to break the deadlock, and though such negotiation tactics are not uncommon, these incidents highlight a mounting climate of uncooperativeness and unwillingness to compromise between allies, making interaction increasingly difficult.

#### Turkey has rifts with key NATO allies, making agreement and cooperation more difficult.

Reuters 21

Reuters, “Factbox: Rifts that divide NATO allies Turkey and United States”, June 13, 2021, https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/rifts-that-divide-nato-allies-turkey-united-states-2021-06-14/

Joe Biden holds his first meeting as U.S. president with Tayyip Erdogan on Monday, ending a five-month wait for the Turkish leader which underlines the cooler relations between Ankara and Washington since Biden took office in January. The two leaders must navigate an array of disputes, most of which pre-date Biden's taking office in January and which have strained relations between the two allies for years. Turkey, a NATO member, has angered the United States by buying Russian S-400 ground-to-air defence missiles. Washington imposed sanctions on Turkey's defence industry and cancelled the sale to Ankara of 100 F-35 stealth fighter jets, the most advanced U.S. warplane. It is also ending the role of Turkish firms in making F-35 parts, although some have continued in the absence of alternative producers. Turkey is furious about U.S. support in Syria for the Kurdish YPG militia, which Ankara sees as a terrorist group. Turkish forces have carried out three incursions into northern Syria since 2016 to push the YPG back from the border. Biden's only phone call with Erdogan since entering the White House came in April, when he gave notice that he planned to describe the World War One massacres of Armenians by the Ottoman Empire, forerunner of modern Turkey, as a genocide. Erdogan said the designation was baseless, unjust and harmful to ties, and called on Biden to reverse it. Turkey demands that the United States extradite Islamic cleric Fethullah Gulen, who Ankara has said orchestrated an attempted 2016 military coup against Erdogan. U.S. officials have said courts would require sufficient evidence to extradite the elderly Gulen, who has denied any involvement in the failed coup. Turkey's Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu has accused the United States of being behind the coup attempt, a charge Washington says is wholly false. After the failed coup Turkish authorities launched a crackdown which continues nearly five years later. More than 91,000 people have been jailed and over 150,000 people have been sacked or suspended from their jobs over alleged links to Gulen. In February a bipartisan majority of the U.S. Senate urged Biden's administration to push Turkey to do more to protect human rights, accusing Erdogan of marginalizing domestic opposition, silencing critical media, jailing journalists and purging independent judges. An Istanbul court sentenced a Turkish employee at the U.S. consulate to five years in jail last year for aiding Gulen's network. Nazmi Mete Canturk, a security officer at the Istanbul consulate, denied the charges and is free pending appeal. Canturk is the third U.S. consulate worker to be convicted. Hamza Ulucay served two years in jail on terrorism charges. Metin Topuz, a translator for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration at the consulate in Istanbul, was sentenced last year to nearly nine years in jail for aiding Gulen's network. Erdogan accused Biden last month of "writing history with bloody hands" after he approved weapons sales to Israel during its conflict with the militant Hamas group which runs Gaza. The United States condemned as anti-Semitic some of Erdogan's comments during the conflict, in which he described Israelis as murderers and child-killers.

### Contention 3: Russia

#### Turkey’s friendly relationship with Russia undermines NATO.

Saidel & Finkelstein 18

Nicolas Saidel (CERL Fellow) and Claire Finkelstein (CERL Faculty Director), The Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law at the University of Pennslyvania, “Turkey's Eastern Pivot: A Challenge for NATO and a Threat to US National Security”, January 19, 2018, https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/7539-turkey-nato-1192018

On December 29, 2017, Turkey signed an accord for the purchase of the S-400 surface-to-air missile system from Russia. NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defense Investment Camille Grand has called interoperability “the critical element” of the alliance’s ballistic missile defense focus. The S-400 missile system is not technologically compatible with, and thus must be used independently of, NATO hardware. As one commenter noted, instead of NATO operators, advisors and trainers, “at the top of the Turkish air force defense architecture, you're going to have Russians.” The S-400’s non-integrative component could potentially reduce NATO operational synergy or cause battlefield confusion with Alliance allies. It could also reduce information sharing with Turkey regarding how to evade or electronically disrupt the S-400 system. Finally, Turkey is scheduled to purchase more than 100 F-35 fighter jets from the US, a plane used by the US military. Equipped with the S-400, Turkey would be able to determine how best to track and lock-on to the F-35, information that could then be shared with NATO enemies. While NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has downplayed the impact of the transaction, recent statements from other NATO officials have been more antagonistic. Gen. Petr Pavel, chairman of NATO’s Military Committee, echoed the concerns over the F-35, and talked of “necessary consequences” for Turkey, stating that considering the purchase, Ankara would be precluded from being part of any integrated air-defense system with NATO allies, and may suffer from other technical restrictions. The S-400 purchase signifies the latest and perhaps the most dramatic shift in Turkey’s strategy with respect to NATO and its relations with Russia. In a September 2017 letter to President Trump, Senators John McCain and Ben Cardin pointed to the transaction as a potential violation of section 231 of the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (P.L. 115-44), which relates to business dealings with the Russian defense sector.55 In 2015, Turkey shot down a Russian aircraft, which briefly chilled relations between the two countries. This diplomatic rift ended quickly, however, and a reconciliation took place. Russia took a quick and firm position supporting Erdoğan after the attempted coup in 2016, which helped to solidify relations. By contrast, Turkish officials, pro-government media, and much of the general populace believe the coup was a US-backed plot. Referring to the West and NATO’s perceived tepid response to the coup, Erdoğan said: “Those we considered friends are siding with coup plotters and terrorists.” Erdoğan’s criticism of the American response in particular relates to the continued US hosting of his rival-in-exile, Fethullah Gülen, whom Erdoğan thinks was the mastermind behind the coup. Erdoğan has repeatedly demanded Gülen’s extradition to Turkey, a request that has yet to be met. With the above in mind, Erdoğan’s post-coup purge targeted Turkey’s entire staff of NATO representatives, nearly 400 military officials. As the prospect of becoming a member of the EU dwindles due to Erdoğan’s illiberalism and antidemocratic policies at home, he is pivoting eastward toward Russia. This is an explicit slight to NATO and Western “allies,” many of whom Erdoğan now refers to as Nazis and fascists, e.g. Germany and the Netherlands. Russia and Turkey have conducted joint military drills in the Black Sea region and rumors persist that Russia will establish a naval base in Mersin, Turkey. Russia and Turkey are also cooperating in Syria as evidenced by joint military operations and Turkey’s invitation to join both Russia and Iran at the Astana talks regarding the creation of deescalation zones in the war-torn country. Joint operations between Russia and Turkey in Syria against ISIS began in early 2017. This marks “the first Russian cooperation with a NATO member in recent history - now, of all times, when NATO is expanding its presence throughout Eastern Europe to keep Russia out.” While the Astana meetings between Russia, Iran, and Turkey center on Syria, there are worries this trilateral relationship could grow into a more traditional alliance that would be a bulwark to NATO and US interests in the Middle East. Some experts view the Russian courtship of Turkey as an effort to drive a wedge within NATO. Others have gone further, arguing that Russia is luring Turkey away from NATO to form a Russo-Islamic pact that includes Iran, part of a grander Russian strategy of “unwinding the US-led global order.” A similar mole allegation is being made within the context of US-Turkish relations. Just days before President Donald Trump took office, former NSA Michael Flynn rejected a proposal by the Obama administration for a military operation in Raqqa, Syria that was also opposed by Turkey. No reason for his decision is on the record. Flynn, through his lobbying firm Flynn Intel Group, was paid over $500,000 to advocate on behalf of Turkey based on a contract that did not end until November 15, 2016, a week after Trump was elected president.69 Ekim Alptekin, the Turkish businessman whose company paid Flynn Intel Group, has business ties to Russia. Notably, Flynn’s termination was based upon him misleading Vice President Mike Pence about his conversations with Russia’s ambassador to the U.S. The Trump transition team was aware of Flynn’s Turkish lobbying and that he would likely have to register his firm as a foreign agent pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) before officially being named National Security Advisor. However, Flynn didn’t register his firm as a foreign agent with the Justice Department until March 2017, a retroactive filing made well after the conduct in question. Former CIA Director and fellow Trump transition team advisor James Woolsey accused Flynn of discussing with Turkish officials the prospect of extrajudicially returning Gülen to Turkey. In a somewhat ironic twist, Woolsey himself is now being accused of competing against Flynn for the lucrative deal with Alptekin, allegedly pitching a multi-million dollar contract to Alptekin in late 2016 for the purpose of discrediting Gülen. Woolsey wasn’t awarded the contract. Federal investigators for Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s probe into Russia’s interference in the last US election are now examining whether Flynn was to be paid over $15 million if he could have either kidnapped or used his influence as NSA to effectuate the extradition of Gülen to Turkey and freed Turkish-Iranian gold trader Reza Zarrab. Zarrab is currently imprisoned in the US, facing federal charges that he assisted Iran in eluding US sanctions. As part of Flynn’s plea deal for lying to federal investigators regarding his contacts with Russia’s ambassador to the US, he is cooperating with Mueller on the issue of whether the Trump campaign colluded with the Kremlin. The Flynn and Woolsey cases add to the concern that the Trump administration is sympathetic to Turkey as part of its sympathy to Russia. It furthermore lends credence to the argument that Turkey may be a threat, with or without Russian assistance, to democratic institutions outside its own borders, in clear violation of NATO principles.

#### Turkey’s relationship with Russia produces a conflict of interest with NATO and its involvement in Ukraine.

Farooq 22

Umar Farooq (journalist), Aljazeera, “Why is Turkey trying to mediate the Ukraine-Russia crisis?”, January 28, 2022, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/28/turkey-hopes-to-diffuse-tensions-as-russian-ukraine-crisis-rages

Turkey is hoping to help defuse tensions between its NATO allies and Russia over the Ukraine crisis, with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expected to meet his counterparts on both sides of the conflict in the coming weeks. Turkey was “ready to do whatever is necessary” to avoid a war, Erdogan said on Wednesday night during a televised interview. “I hope that Russia will not make an armed attack or occupy Ukraine. Such a step will not be a wise act for Russia or the region,” he said. “There is a need for dialogue that will listen to Russia and eliminate their reasonable security concerns.” For months, Ankara has been calling for NATO and Russia to tone down their rhetoric. Erdogan frequently meets with and talks by phone to Putin, and on Thursday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the Russian leader was ready to visit Turkey, although the exact timing of such a visit would depend on scheduling and concerns over the coronavirus. Meanwhile, Erdogan is already scheduled to visit Kyiv sometime in February, to meet President Voldomyr Zelenskyy. Russia has put about 100,000 soldiers near the Ukrainian border, raising fears among NATO members that Putin is planning an attack, in particular, to take eastern portions that have a large ethnic Russian population, where in the past Moscow has attempted to exert its influence. Moscow says it has no plan to launch such an invasion, and instead has asked NATO to keep Ukraine from joining the alliance, and to give assurances missiles and other military assets are not put near its border – demands that Washington and the alliance have turned down. “By virtue of both geography and history, but also beyond that, more in practical terms, by virtue of economic, security, and defence interests, Turkey has a stake in what’s going on between Russia and Ukraine, or what is sort of simmering,” said Alper Coşkun, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment, and former Turkish ambassador to Azerbaijan. By making a point to reach out to both sides, Coskun said, Turkey is making sure it is understood that it has a part in the crisis. Turkey is invested in the Ukrainian defence industry, having sold it Bayraktar TB2 drones starting in 2019, which Kyiv has deployed and used to attack pro-Russian forces in Donbas in recent months. That use of Turkish drones drew a sharp rebuke from Moscow, with Putin telling Erdogan in a phone call in December that Ankara was involved in “provocative” and “destructive” activity. Turkish officials have since said it should not be blamed for what Ukraine does with the drones; Ankara has signed agreements to sell more drones to Kyiv and committed to joint production. In September, Turkish drone-maker Bayraktar signed a deal to build a TB2 production factory near the Ukrainian capital, and in December, Ukrainian officials said they would produce the long-endurance Anka drone, made by Turkish Aerospace Industries, in facilities in the country, with the engine being produced by Ukraine. At the same time, Turkey is involved with Russia militarily in a number of conflicts. In Syria, Turkey and Russia coordinate joint military patrols and ceasefire agreements in a highly complex dance where US, Iranian, Kurdish, and Syrian government forces frequently cross paths. In Libya, Turkey has backed a United Nations-recognised government that is at war with groups backed by Russia. Turkey is also economically reliant on Russia, with millions of Russian tourists bringing much-needed foreign currency each year to the country, and Ankara relies heavily on natural gas from Russian suppliers. There are also the very real implications of Turkey’s geography: under the 1936 Montreux Convention, it is duty-bound to ensure access to the Black Sea not just for Russian naval ships, but also for those that would end up on the other side in a war, including Ukraine, Romania, and Bulgaria. As the second-largest army in NATO, Turkey would be on the front line in any protracted war the alliance would enter with Russia. “Turkey does not want to be put in a position to choose between Russia and Ukraine, because it has a relationship with Russia in other theatres, particularly in Syria, where it relies on Russia to control the situation and prevent it from escalating,” said Sinan Ulgen, a former diplomat and director of the Istanbul-based Center for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies. He added that Turkey also needs Ukraine, “where there is a burgeoning relationship focused on defence industries”. So far, Turkey has walked a fine line on the issue of Russian expansion in the region. During the 2008 Russian intervention in Georgia’s South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions, Turkey refused to lift restrictions on the size and number of US warships it would allow through the Bosphorus to enter the Black Sea and confront Russia. This was despite the fact that Turkey, as a fellow member of NATO, had backed programmes to train and equip Georgian armed forces by the alliance. After 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea, Turkey refused to implement US and European Union sanctions on Russia. Since then Turkey has refused, along with its NATO allies, to recognise the Russian annexation as legal – but it has still not implemented those unilateral sanctions on Moscow over the occupation. That contradictory policy towards Russia would have to change if a war involving NATO broke out, said Ulgen. “If there is talk of conflict, Turkey will come under pressure also to align itself with the sanctions policy firstly, and that would [be] a major dilemma,” Ulgen said. “And the second major dilemma would be on the ongoing relationship with Ukraine, in particular, whether Turkey will continue to supply armed drones or not. And there, there is very little neutral ground, in the sense that the answer can be only ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ and both would put Turkey firmly in one camp.”

### Extra Cards:

#### Turkey has come under fire for attacking the Kurds.

Saeed 19

Yerevan Saeed (former White House correspondent for Kurdish Rudaw TV), NBC, “Turkey's attack on Kurds in Syria betrays those doing the fighting against ISIS — and dying”, October 14, 2019, https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/turkey-s-attack-kurds-syria-betrays-those-doing-fighting-against-ncna1066061

The Oct. 6 phone call between President Donald Trump and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan spelled disaster for Kurds in northern Syria. The Kurds have been the United States’ strongest allies in the fight against the Islamic State militant group since 2014 and have controlled the most peaceful and democratic part of Syria, known as Rojava, since the start of its civil war in 2011. Even so, Trump tacitly gave a green light to Erdogan to launch a military invasion against the Kurds, which began days later. The Turkish military assault, which is backed by some Syrian rebel forces with questionable ties to the terror groups al-Qaeda and Jabhat al-Nusra, has already displaced over 130,000 Kurds, Arabs, Yazidis and Christians and killed at least 38 civilians and wounded hundreds more. Ankara declared this war on Kurds under the pretext of “security concerns” along its border with Syria, claiming that the Kurdish YPG fighters in Syria are linked to the Turkey-based Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) — which has been in conflict with Ankara for the last three decades and launched attacks in cities such as Istanbul. But there has never been an attack from the Kurdish-held territories in Syria into Turkey. On the contrary, Rojava has been a buffer zone preventing extremist fighters from launching attacks into Turkey and, on a larger scale, the European countries.

#### Turkey has disobeyed NATO’s priorities.

Got 20

Antoine Got (Canadian Staff Officer at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe), War on the Rocks, “TURKEY’S CRISIS WITH THE WEST: HOW A NEW LOW IN RELATIONS RISKS PARALYZING NATO”, November 19, 2020, https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/turkeys-crisis-with-the-west-how-a-new-low-in-relations-risks-paralyzing-nato/

NATO’s most important challenge today may not come from Russia, but from within. With the number of disputes between Turkey and several European allies yet again on the rise, the two parties’ souring relations have begun undermining the organization’s cohesion and ability to make timely collective decisions. If left unaddressed, these tensions could cause serious damage to the world’s most powerful alliance. The latest flashpoint came from Turkey’s open backing of Azerbaijan’s war effort in the small landlocked enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, which ended abruptly in early November thanks to a Russian-brokered deal. Reports of military assistance and alleged Syrian mercenaries sent by Turkey placed Ankara at loggerheads with its NATO allies’ calls for a peaceful, negotiated resolution to the conflict. The deal, which foresees Baku reacquiring sizeable portions of the disputed enclave, has made Turkey one of the obvious winners of the recent flare-up, while its Western allies remain on the sidelines. For some, this could be the straw that breaks the camel’s back, adding to a long list of complaints they have recently leveled against their NATO ally.

#### Turkey has considered denying NATO access to the key military benefits it provides.

Saidel & Finkelstein 18

Nicolas Saidel (CERL Fellow) and Claire Finkelstein (CERL Faculty Director), The Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law at the University of Pennslyvania, “Turkey's Eastern Pivot: A Challenge for NATO and a Threat to US National Security”, January 19, 2018, https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/7539-turkey-nato-1192018

One of the main assets Turkey provides NATO and the US is use of its İncirlik airbase, which houses approximately 90 US tactical nuclear weapons. Turkey currently allows the US-led coalition to use İncirlik for air operations in Syria and Iraq. However, there have been calls within Turkey to close the air base to NATO and the US, compounded by security concerns about US troops stationed there. In 2015, US commanders at İncirlik decided it was unsafe for troops and their families to leave the base, and in 2016, all family members of US troops were ordered to leave. Fellow NATO member Germany has had worse problems with Turkey regarding İncirlik. Turkey refused to let German government officials visit German soldiers stationed there, which in turn, led to Germany pulling its troops out of the base entirely. A repeat circumstance nearly happened at the NATO base in Konya, Turkey, where Germany’s armed forces conduct AWACS surveillance operations pursuant to a NATO agreement. Turkey once again would not allow German officials to visit. However, due to the intervention of NATO Chief Jens Stoltenberg, another crisis was averted. The diplomatic row with Turkey, coupled with Erdoğan’s increasingly totalitarian tendencies at home, has led Germany, as well as France, the Netherlands, and Denmark, to attempt to halt next year's NATO leaders’ summit in Turkey. Germany relocated its formerly İncirlik-based troops to Muwaffaq Salti airbase in Jordan, and there are signs the US may end up following its lead. The new Department of Defense budget, approved by Congress in November 2017, allocates $143 million into upgrades at Muwaffaq Salti, more than any other operational site abroad. As Steven Cook of the Council for Foreign Relations recently noted in his prepared statement to Congress, it may be time for the “Department of Defense to study the costs and modalities of leaving İncirlik airbase or shifting some of its operations to other facilities in the area, and making the results of this study public.”

#### Turkey is dependent on Russia for most of its energy, exacerbating the conflict of interest.

Rahimov 20

Rahim Rahimov (an independent political analyst with an MA in international relations), Wilson Center, “The Russian-Turkish Economic Partnership Takes Shape, but Tensions Persist”, March 4, 2020, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/russian-turkish-economic-partnership-takes-shape-tensions-persist

Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, met in Istanbul on January 8, 2020, to mark the launch of TurkStream, the new natural gas pipeline stretching from Russia to Turkey. The occasion highlighted the growing economic partnership between the two countries while also serving to underscore continuing tensions, including pushback from Erdoğan’s domestic critics and disagreement between the two leaders over the way forward in Libya and Syria. The pipeline arrangement encapsulates many points of tension. Turkey currently imports roughly half its gas from Russia, around 25 billion cubic meters (bcm) per year. When TurkStream is fully operational, Turkey is expected to import an additional 16 bcm from Russia, significantly increasing its energy dependence on that country.

#### Erdogan’s leadership of Turkey is far from democratic.

Human Rights Watch 21

Human Rights Watch, “Turkey: Erdoğan’s Onslaught on Rights and Democracy”, March 24, 2021, https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/24/turkey-erdogans-onslaught-rights-and-democracy#

The government of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is dismantling human rights protections and democratic norms in Turkey on a scale unprecedented in the 18 years he has been in office, said Human Rights Watch today. The government took further dangerous measures over the past week to undermine the rule of law and target perceived critics and political opponents. On March 19, 2021, the president issued a decree suddenly withdrawing Turkey from the Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, a groundbreaking treaty strongly supported by the women’s rights movement in Turkey. The move came two days after the chief prosecutor of Turkey’s top court of appeal announced that he was opening a case to close down the opposition Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), only hours after the Erdoğan-controlled parliament improperly expelled an HDP deputy. “President Erdoğan is targeting any institution or part of society that stands in the way of his wide-ranging effort to reshape Turkey’s society,” said Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch. “The latest developments against parliamentary opposition, the Kurds, and women are all about ensuring the president’s hold on power in violation of human rights and democratic safeguards.” President Erdoğan’s dramatic move to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention with an overnight presidential decree is part of efforts to shore up support from religious conservative circles outside his party and shows his readiness to use the convention as a pretext to promote a highly divisive and homophobic political discourse. That discourse disingenuously claims women’s rights undermine so-called family values and promotes a hateful and discriminatory view of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. The president’s communications chief on March 21 issued a written statement defending the decision to withdraw Turkey from the treaty, saying that it was “hijacked by a group of people attempting to normalize homosexuality – which is incompatible with Turkey’s social and family values.” The claim stems from the convention’s language prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Women’s groups across Turkey have been staunch supporters of the convention as it legally obligates governments to take effective steps to prevent violence against women, protect survivors, and punish abusers. Given the hundreds of murders of women by partners and former partners in Turkey each year, Erdoğan’s move to withdraw from and weaponize the treaty for political ends and to ignore the treaty’s desperately needed protections for women is shocking, Human Rights Watch said. “The decision to withdraw is a profoundly backward step in the struggle to protect women’s rights in Turkey and a major blow for all women across the political spectrum,” Roth said. In response, on March 20, thousands of women protested in cities across Turkey, declaring that the women’s movement in Turkey will continue the struggle and demand government action to combat the entrenched problem of domestic violence and femicide. The move by the chief prosecutor of the Court of Cassation on March 17 to close down the Peoples’ Democratic Party, the second-largest opposition party in parliament, came shortly after parliament expelled the HDP deputy Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu on the pretext of his conviction for a social media posting. Gergerlioğlu’s expulsion was in reprisal for his consistent focus on the thousands of victims of Erdoğan’s human rights crackdown, while the effort to close the HDP targets the rights of millions of Kurdish voters and subverts the principle of parliamentary democracy, Human Rights Watch said. Over the past 30 years, Turkey has closed down five pro-Kurdish political parties. As in earlier cases, the chief prosecutor’s indictment accuses the Peoples’ Democratic Party of acting “against the indivisible integrity of the state with its country and nation” (separatism) and violating the constitution and laws, necessitating its full and permanent closure. The prosecutor also asked the court to ban 687 named individuals, including current and former members of parliament and hundreds of party officials, from political life for five years and to cut the treasury funding that the HDP, like other parties, is entitled to. The evidence cited includes speeches and political activities by parliamentary deputies in office at various times over the past eight years. “Initiating a case to close down a political party that won 11.7 percent of the vote nationally in the 2018 general election and has 55 elected members of parliament is a major assault on the rights to political association and expression,” Roth said. “The move could deny close to six million voters their chosen representatives in violation of their right to vote.” On March 20 and 21, Peoples’ Democratic Party voters turned out in force at Kurdish new year (Nowruz) assemblies in Turkey’s major cities, turning the gathering into a powerful expression of support for the party and protest at the onslaught on the rights of its predominantly Kurdish base. On March 22, the Diyarbakır prosecutor initiated an investigation into the party’s co-leader for his speech during the Nowruz celebrations. And an Istanbul court sentenced the party’s former co-leader Selahattin Demirtaş to three years and six months in prison for “insulting the president” in a 2015 speech. The major developments of the past few days follow a series of grave setbacks for human rights in Turkey in 2020 and 2021. The Erdoğan government has repeatedly flouted binding European Court of Human Rights judgments ordering the release of the rights defender Osman Kavala and politician Selahattin Demirtaş. In December 2020, the government rushed in a law giving it much wider powers to target civil society organizations on the pretext of combatting terrorism financing and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The government wrongly contended that the new rules are in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions. In January, the president moved to deepen his control over higher education, with the appointment of a rector to one of Turkey’s top universities and subsequent restructuring of the institution in the face of widespread protests by the university staff and students. Anti-LGBT speeches and social media posts by top government officials have become common – most recently against students arrested for an artwork with LGBT flags and on International Women’s Day. The publication of a Human Rights Action Plan on March 2 is completely at odds with the reality on the ground, where arbitrary detentions and prosecutions of journalists, activists, and others are routine and intensifying. Two weeks after the President announced the Human Rights Action Plan, Öztürk Türkdoğan, the co-chair of a prominent human rights association, was arrested during dawn raids in Ankara. He was later released. The European Union and US administration have acknowledged the profound setbacks for human rights but continue overwhelmingly to focus on Turkey’s strategic importance in the region, its foreign policy, its active role in regional conflicts, and migration policies. On March 25 and 26, EU leaders are to review their relations with Turkey. The European Council should speak out over the sharp decline in the human rights situation in Turkey. The council should make clear that an EU-proposed positive agenda with Turkey would be tied to ending attacks on opposition figures and measurable progress in upholding human rights. “EU leaders should not pretend it is business as usual, while Turkey’s government is escalating its assaults on critics, parliamentary democracy, and women’s rights,” Roth said.

#### Turkey also has high tensions with France, another key member of NATO.

Jones 21

Dorian Jones (reporter), Voice of America, “Turkey and France Ease Tensions, but Africa Rivalries Remain”, June 28, 2021, https://www.voanews.com/a/europe\_turkey-and-france-ease-tensions-africa-rivalries-remain/6207563.html

Leaders of Turkey and France are pledging to ease tensions after months of trading insults, but tensions between them remain over their competing interests in Africa. French foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian declared Turkey and France are in what he described as "recovery period" after the French and Turkish President met on the sidelines of the NATO summit earlier this month and pledged to resolve their differences. French President Emmanuel Macron and Turkey’s Recep Tayyip Erdogan had engaged in a war of words as the two leaders competed for international influence. Sinan Ulgen of the Istanbul-based Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies says there has been a diplomatic breakthrough but he voices caution. "We can talk about a reset with France, but it's a question about how deep that reset will go. This is part of a broader reset that Turkey has been trying in terms of its foreign relations with the West. However, none of the areas of disagreement with France have been resolved," said Ulgen. Libya remains a crucial point of tension. France and Turkey backed rival sides in the Libyan civil war, and Paris is at the forefront of an international call for the withdrawal of Turkish troops from the north African country. Last year, Turkish and French warships almost clashed off the shores of Libya over French claims that Turkey was violating a Libyan arms embargo. But Ulgen says both sides now recognize the need for diplomacy. "There is realization both Ankara and Paris that some progress can be achieved, if the two are less confrontational and work diplomatically towards some sort of negotiated formula," says Ulgen. A Turkish presidential advisor has suggested France and Turkey could extend cooperation beyond Libya to the rest of Africa to contain China's growing influence.

#### Turkey’s defense industry is not as beneficial as it may seem.

Gurini 20

Ferhat Gurini (journalist), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “Turkey’s Unpromising Defense Industry”, October 9, 2020, https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/82936

Turkey’s growing defense industry is a cornerstone of Erdogan’s independent and assertive foreign policy for two core reasons. The industry steers attention away from Turkey’s currency crisis and troubled foreign policy. Turkey has undermined its traditional allies by purchasing the Russian S400 missile system, pursuing energy ambitions in the Eastern Mediterranean, expanding its sphere of influence in Libya, and pushing Operation Peace Spring which prompted NATO members to impose sanctions on Turkey. Hence, the growing defense industry gives Turkey greater maneuverability in its foreign policy by ensuring less reliance on arms imports and more autonomy. Turkey’s defense industry has boomed in the last decade. In 2010, Turkey had one company on the list of Top 100 Global Defense Companies. Presently it has seven—more companies than Israel, Russia, Sweden and Japan combined. Turkey’s share of arms imports from 2015 to 2019 decreased by 48 percent compared to the preceding five-year period. The country has transitioned from importing 70 percent of its military hardware to 30 percent. Concurrently, the Turkish arms industry grew from $1 billion in 2002 to $11 billion in 2020, more than $3 billion of which were exports, making Turkey the fourteenth largest global defense exporter. The state has invested $60 billion in defense projects, and given Greek-Turkish tensions over energy rights in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey has established a navy to match the Hellenic. Moreover, Turkey is one of only twenty-two states manufacturing armed drones, adding another dimension to its regional military might. Pro-government media coverage indicates that Erdogan’s desire to expand and develop the domestic arms industry has become a personal project. Erdogan issued a presidential decree on July 10, 2018, placing the Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSB) under the presidency’s direct control and renamed the SSB the Presidency of Defense Industries. This—Erdogan’s political ambition—is arguably the greatest driver behind Turkey’s growing defense industry. It may seem as if Turkey’s defense industry has transformed into a powerful export industry, as it exported $2.2 billion in 2018, effectively making it the 14th largest arms exporter in the world. However, much like Turkey’s other megaprojects—the Istanbul Canal, Selim Sultan Bridge, the new Istanbul Airport, and Çamlıca Mosque—Turkey’s defense industry is as much about projecting an image of power to the domestic population. Challenges to the continued boom in the industry are a testament to this. For example, the United States has blocked the export license of the partially U.S.-manufactured CTS-800A turboshaft engine to Turkey amid growing diplomatic tensions. Meanwhile, Turkey lacks the cost-effective technical capacity to develop engines to power its military designs. With Washington’s intervention, Turkey risks losing over a billion dollars in potential exports due to this technical shortfall. Specifically, a $1.5 billion export contract between Turkey and Pakistan for thirty attack choppers, signed in 2018, remains unfulfilled. The contract will likely fall through, because of the US blocking the export license for the engine needed. Consequently, Pakistan is now looking to China to update defense infrastructure that Turkey has failed to provide. Turkey’s engine dependence has also led to delays in the completion of another major contract for Turkey’s main battle tank, the Altay. The Altay is the world’s most expensive battle tank at a unit price of $13.75 million. Qatar has signed an unspecified billion-dollar contract to purchase up to 100 Altay tanks from Turkey, which would constitute one of the defense industry’s largest arms exports in decades.[1] However, Turkey relies on German engine expertise to produce these tanks, and Germany is withholding technology from Turkey due to political concerns. Similarly, Turkey’s Akinci drone—which will play a critical role in maintaining the Air Force’s operational capacity—is dependent on Ukrainian AI-450 turboprop engines. However, Ukraine is also reluctant to exchange military technology with Turkey, due to general concerns about technological and intellectual property rights. Therefore, Turkey’s engine problem has jeopardized several billion-dollar contracts and is a testament to the high level of external dependency from which Turkey is paradoxically trying to escape. Although Turkey wants to use its growing domestic arms industry to wrestle free of traditional allies, the industry remains highly dependent on these partnerships, and not only when it comes to the production of engines. The launching of Turkey’s “Operation Peace Spring,” when Turkey invaded Kurdish-held areas in northern Syria, led a series of European countries to issue an embargo on primary and vertically integrated sectors related to Turkey’s defense industry. The two-month embargo cost Turkey’s industry about $1 billion in production, a high price for an industry with just $11 billion in revenue. Much of Turkey’s defense industry is dependent on Western military technology—including beyond engines—a fact Ankara is hesitant to acknowledge. As such, Turkey’s biggest naval vessel—the 27,000-ton, amphibious assault ship TCG Anadolu—is based on the Spanish Juan Carlo I. A large chunk of Turkey’s modern navy vessels, including the Barbaross class frigates, Yavuz class frigates, and Kılıç class fast attack craft, were designed in Germany. Turkey’s attempt to build an indigenously produced fighter jet relies on a British company that has scaled back cooperation efforts, and the Altay battle tank is technologically assisted by a South Korean company. Thus, Turkey’s research and development is simply not sophisticated enough for its main prestige projects. Given that intellectual property rights are a major point of contention in the arms industry, for the foreseeable future, Turkey will most likely remain dependent on expensive foreign technological assistance. The cost of this dependency will be exacerbated by Turkey’s currency depreciation predicament. In addition, since the failed coup in July 2016, Erdogan has orchestrated a large-scale Gülenist purge which is leading to a national brain drain. Nepotism and a political climate of fear have been on the rise, and last year alone, 330,000 people migrated from Turkey. While all sectors are impacted, the nationwide brain drain has significant impact on the defense industry. In 2018, 270 senior defense contractors were either headhunted or left Turkey in pursuit of better opportunities abroad. Two of the primary immigration destinations were Germany and the United States—both of whom have shown a reluctance to share military technology with Turkey, with billion-dollar consequences. And there is reason to believe that this phenomenon will only increase as workers cite the current political climate of fear as a reason for emigrating. While the Turkish defense industry has grown exponentially, this trajectory may not continue due to chronic engine problems, sectoral brain drain, and the general lack of sophisticated know-how. Moreover, it should be emphasized that the main recipient of Turkish military technology is Turkey. With domestic markets soon saturated, and no short-term solution in sight for these very real technical structural issues, the Turkish defense industry may not be able to continue its boom. Nonetheless, creating an indigenous defense industry has been a major domestic political win for Erdogan, and for this reason alone, it will most likely continue to develop. It may not be economically feasible, but politically it remains a priority. Erdogan can now project the image of growing Turkish military might, often laden with Ottoman symbolism, to the Turkish people. While the industry’s growth has highlighted external dependence, the connotations of being a military manufacturer give Erdogan more domestic leeway to pursue an assertive foreign policy fit with that of a major military power.

#### Turkey’s domestic policies are harmful to NATO values and capabilities.

Saidel & Finkelstein 18

Nicolas Saidel (CERL Fellow) and Claire Finkelstein (CERL Faculty Director), The Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law at the University of Pennslyvania, “Turkey's Eastern Pivot: A Challenge for NATO and a Threat to US National Security”, January 19, 2018, https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/7539-turkey-nato-1192018

In 2016, Secretary General Stoltenberg discussed NATO’s values before an audience in Georgia. In relevant part, he declared: “Democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of the media, independence of the judiciary (and) protection of minorities: these are the values that unite us. They are the values NATO has defended since its foundation in 1949.” NATO’s Membership Action Plan, an advisory document created in 1999 for new applicants to NATO, states in relevant part: “Aspirants would also be expected… to demonstrate commitment to the rule of law and human rights.” Under the leadership of Erdoğan, it is clear Turkey no longer represents these values in any serious manner, especially since the attempted coup of 2016. Since that time, Erdoğan’s government has declared a state of emergency and purged approximately 130,000 people from the public and private sectors, the primary accusation being that they are Gülen loyalists. According to the NY Times: “More than 8,000 army officers, 8,000 police officers, 5,000 academics and 4,000 judges and prosecutors have been forced out…”In most cases, those dismissed or arrested are being replaced by underqualified loyalists to Erdoğan. Erdoğan’s purge gutted the Turkish military, which is a concern for NATO as Turkey has the second largest armed forces in the organization. Dismissing thousands of officers, pilots, and other critical and knowledgeable members of the Turkish military is a loss for NATO, especially because they are being replaced with individuals with far less experience. NATO’s top commander in Europe, Joseph Scaparrotti, underscored this point when he spoke of the Turkish military’s “degradation.” Scaparrotti stated: “Those are ones that have spent a career now and have a great deal of experience… I think it will take some time for them to overcome that.” One exiled officer echoed Scaparrotti’s sentiment when he told CNN: “To be very blunt over here, (the) Turkish military... have lost their war-fighting capability to a great extent.”

#### The US has supplied Turkey with weapons due to NATO membership, but Turkey uses these weapons against NATO and US interests.

Armbruster & Cohen 21

Natalie Armbruster (research associate at Defense Priorities) and Jordan Cohen (a defense and foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute, and a PhD candidate in political science at the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University), DefenseNews, “Don’t give Turkey an F-16 consolation prize”, November 18, 2021, https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2021/11/18/dont-give-turkey-an-f-16-consolation-prize/

In response, the U.S. sanctioned and booted Turkey from the F-35 program, stating that the coexistence of the two programs meant Russian President Vladimir Putin’s military could receive tactical information on U.S. weaponry and military operations. The S-400 can track the F-16 and perhaps provide tactical information to Russia, an action Turkey engaged in during 2020. Nevertheless, Erdoğan continues to prod the Biden administration for the recovery of the $1.4 billion that Turkey spent on its F-35 system. Recently, Erdoğan suggested a U.S. sale of F-16s as a way to meet this debt and continue to provide Turkey with NATO weaponry. This is not unusual. Much of Turkey’s military capability comes from U.S. weapons and training. Turkey’s entire stock of air combat fleets and the majority of its battle tanks are composed of U.S.-supplied weaponry. Between 2019 and 2020, the U.S. gave Turkey nearly $5 million for international military education and training. Washington justified this beneficence under the guise of the interoperability that Turkey’s NATO membership demands. In October 2021, a State Department representative noted that “the United States and Turkey have long-standing and deep bilateral defense ties, and Turkey’s continued NATO interoperability remains a priority.” This theory is not without merit. In 2019, Turkish forces composed the second-largest army assisting in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo. A continued partnership with Turkey does more harm than good. For starters, Turkey’s anti-Kurdish efforts are undermining American interests in the fight against ISIS. Turkey is using U.S.-supplied weapons to fight U.S.-supported Kurdish troops in Syria rather than ISIS, prolonging U.S. involvement in Syria. It is in the United States’ best interest to prevent a further Turkish incursion against the Kurds, encourage a cease-fire in northeastern Syria and withdraw troops. An easy way to do this is by limiting weapons sales to the combatants, including Turkey. Further, Turkey consistently ranks as one of the largest human rights offenders that receive U.S. weapons. U.S. defense officials have also previously claimed they believe Turkey is using American weapons to commit war crimes. A U.N. report of Turkey-led human rights abuses against civilians in Syria confirms this reality.

#### Tensions between Turkey and NATO members call into question its membership.

Boot 19

Max Boot (CFR expert) Council on Foreign Relations, “NATO’s Turkey Ties Must Change”, October 15, 2019, https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/natos-turkey-ties-must-change

Relations between Turkey and the rest of NATO—forged in the 1950s when Turkey had a secular, military-dominated regime—have been growing tense for years as Erdogan has consolidated his power and that of his Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP). He has destroyed the last vestiges of Turkish democracy, purging secular, pro-Western military officers and intellectuals. Erdogan has become a leading supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood, and has made common cause with jihadis in Syria. He has refused to abide by U.S. sanctions on Iran and has drawn closer to Russia. Turkey’s decision to purchase a Russian S-400 air defense system led the Pentagon in July to boot Turkey out of its F-35 fighter program. Media outlets aligned with Erdogan have put out vitriolic anti-American propaganda, blaming the United States for an attempted military coup in 2016 and for providing asylum to Turkish cleric Fethullah Gulen. Now the Turkish invasion of northern Syria has brought worsening relations to a head. Turkish artillery fire landed close to U.S. troop positions and Turkish-allied militias have reportedly committed atrocities against the United States’ Kurdish allies. Trump threatened that “if Turkey does anything that I, in my great and unmatched wisdom, consider to be off limits, I will totally destroy and obliterate the Economy of Turkey.” He later announced that the United States would raise tariffs on Turkish steel, halt ongoing trade negotiations, and impose sanctions on top Turkish officials. It’s questionable whether U.S. sanctions could have a devastating effect—Turkey is the United States’ thirty-second-largest trading partner. But that Trump is now threatening to “obliterate” the economy of a NATO ally shows just how incongruous Turkish membership in the alliance has become.